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VERNACULARIZATION ASPECTS IN BISRI MUSTOFA'S AL-IBRIZ TAFSIR

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Abstract

¹This study aims to explain how aspects and forms of vernacularization in Tafsir *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir Qur'an al-'Aziz* by Bisri Mustofa. As an interpretation still being studied from the beginning until today, especially in pesantren in Java, Tafsir *al-Ibriz* occupies an important position in the community. This interpretation, completed in 1964, shows the form and aspects of the Qur'an's localization in the context of Javanese society. Based on library research and the descriptive-analytical method, this article indicates that Bisri Mustofa's vernacularization can be seen from two aspects: firstly, in terms of language or terms. Generally, the language used in the interpretation of *al-Ibriz* is the Javanese language and some terms for laypeople. Therefore, some local languages and terms appear, such as *Rojo Koyo*, *Sathu Galak*, and *Celathu*. From the aspect of vernacular, it can be said that *Tafsir al-Ibriz* describes the social context of Javanese Islam well at the time when this interpretation of the Qur'an was written.

Keywords: *Local terms, Vernacularization, Bisri Mustofa, al-Ibriz*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana aspek dan bentuk vernakularisasi dalam Tafsir *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir Qur'an al-'Aziz* karya Bisri Mustofa. Sebagai tafsir yang masih terus dikaji sejak awal hingga saat ini, khususnya di pesantren di Jawa, Tafsir *al-Ibriz* menempati posisi penting di

masyarakat. Tafsir yang selesai pada tahun 1964 ini menunjukkan bentuk dan aspek lokalisasi al-Qur'an dalam konteks masyarakat Jawa. Berdasarkan studi pustaka dan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis, saya menemukan artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa vernakularisasi Bisri Mustofa dapat dilihat dari dua aspek: pertama, dari segi bahasa atau istilah. Umumnya bahasa yang digunakan dalam tafsir al-Ibriz adalah bahasa Jawa dan beberapa istilah untuk orang awam. Oleh karena itu, muncul beberapa bahasa dan istilah daerah seperti kata rojo koyo, sathu galak, dan celathu. Dari aspek vernakularitas, dapat dikatakan bahwa Tafsir al-Ibriz menggambarkan konteks sosial Islam Jawa dengan baik pada saat tafsir al-Qur'an ini ditulis.

Kata kunci: *Istilah lokal, Vernakularisasi, Bisri Mustofa, al-Ibriz*

Introduction

In general, the history of qur'anic studies in Indonesia has existed along with the arrival of Islam itself. The number of studies conducted by scholars, both from within and outside the country. It proves that Indonesia has a rich treasure of the tafsir Qur'an. This attention was done by A. H. John, who wrote several articles, including Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an (Oxford University Press, 1988), with the article "Qur'anic Exegesis in the Malay World: in Search of a Profile." In the book Islam in Asia: Volume II Southeast Asia and East Asia (Boulder: Westview, 1984), he studied "Islam in the Malay World: an Explanatory Survey with Some Reference to Qur'anic Exegesis" and in the book Approaches to the Qur'an in Contemporary Indonesia (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), he wrote "Qur'anic Exegesis in the Malay-Indonesian World: an Introduction Survey." John's study explains the method of interpreting the *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* written in the 17th century and the tafsir *Marah Labid* written in the 19th century and its influence on the work of classical interpretation and the process of Arabization of terms in the context of languages in Indonesia.¹

Another scholar, Federspiel, explained the history of studying the Qur'an in Indonesia. Federspiel chose Indonesia because it became one of Southeast Asia's Islamic studies centers. In his work, Federspiel describes the early history of Islamic studies that began in the early 12th century. In this century, there were Islamic studies in Sumatra. It is evidenced by several figures such as Hamzah Fansuri, Nurudin al-Raniry, and Shamsuddin from Pasai. They are known for their various works produced. Likewise, the 16th century became the Dutch colonial period three centuries later. Islamic studies in Indonesia still exist. This scientific tradition continues until the 20th century. In this century, many Indonesian figures appeared with various works. Federspiel, in his work, only focuses on the history of the Qur'an interpretation in the

¹ Islah Gusmian, *Dinamika Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa Abad 19-20 M* (Surakarta: Efude Press, 2015), 2.

20th century, which began from Mahmud Yunus to M. Quraish Shihab. Federspiel studied a lot of the work of interpretation in the period between the two figures.² Johanna Pink also gives attention in "Tradition, Authority, and Innovation in Contemporary Sunni tafsir: Towards a Typology of Qur'an Commentaries from the Arab World, Indonesia, and Turkey," and Majid Danesghar in "The Study of Qur'an Interpretation in The Malay-Indonesian World: a Select Bibliography."³

More attention also came from local scholars, such as Imam Taufiq in his writings, "*al-Sulhu 'Inda al-Sheikh Misbah Zainu al-Mustafa fi Kitabihi 'al-Iklil fi Ma'ani al-Tanzil': Rasah 'an Itijahi al-Tafsiri li al-Qur'an al-Karim fi Indunisiya*",³ Abdul Mustaqim with "The Epistemology of Javanese Qur'anic Exegesis: A Study of Salih Darat's *Fayd al-Rahman*",⁴ Ahmad Ali Nurdin and Jajang A. Rohmana with "*Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun And Social Critiques: Moh. E. Hasim's Critiques of the Political Policy of the New Order*". Of these four studies, it has not been seen that he paid attention to the Tafsir al-Ibriz by Bisri Mustofa. Some of Islah Gusmian's writings, among others: "Bahasa dan Aksara Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: dari Tradisi, Hierarki hingga Kepentingan Pembaca",⁵ *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*,⁶ *Dinamika Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa Abad 19-20 M*,⁷ "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa: Peneguhan Identitas, Ideologi, dan Politik",⁸ *Tafsir Al-Qur'an & Kekuasaan di Indonesia: Peneguhan, Kontestasi, dan Pertarungan Wacana*.⁹ From the study, Gusmian dialogued the works of tafsir nusantara from various aspects, ranging from the history of writing, language, characters, ideology, sociopolitical criticism, confirmation, and so on.

The history of the dynamics of Quranic studies in Indonesia is increasing. In terms of language and characters, the form of writing interpretations in Indonesia is also quite diverse, ranging from Arabic Indonesian to local. Finally came a time of spreading romanization or Latinization encouraged by the Dutch through ethical politics and nationalism awareness in the context of communication Indonesian as a

² Howard M. Federspiel, *Kajian Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: Dari Mahmud Yunus Hingga Quraish Shihab* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), 1-308.

³ Majid Danesghar, "The study of Qur'an interpretation in the Malay-Indonesian world: a select bibliography", in *The Qur'an in the Malay-Indonesian World: Context and Interpretation*, Ed. Majid Danesghar, et.all (London and New York: Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 7-22.

⁴ Abdul Mustaqim, "The Epistemology Of Javanese Qur'anic Exegesis: A Study of Sālih Darat's *Fayd al-Rahmān*", *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 55, no. 2 (2017): 357-390, doi: 10.14421/ajis.2017.552.357-390, <https://aljamiah.or.id/index.php/AJIS/article/view/55205>.

⁵ Islah Gusmian, "Bahasa dan Aksara Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: dari Tradisi, Hierarki hingga Kepentingan Pembaca", *Tsaqafah* 6, no. 1 (2010): 1-25, <https://ejournal.unida.gontor.ac.id/index/tsaqafah/article/view/136>.

⁶ Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2013).

⁷ Gusmian, *Dinamika Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa Abad 19-20 M*.

⁸ Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa: Peneguhan Identitas, Ideologi, dan Politik", *Suhuf: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an* 9, no. 1 (2016):141-168.

⁹ Islah Gusmian, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an & Kekuasaan di Indonesia: Peneguhan, Kontestasi, dan Pertarungan Wacana* (Yogyakarta: Salwa, 2019).

unifying language. It's has a broad impact on bureaucratic problems and the realm of writing books of tafsir of Nusantara scholars. Many scholars eventually shifted the writing of tafsir to roman characters and in Indonesian. However, amid the current context, the local language interpretation does not necessarily erode the flow of the times. One of the scholars who dared to go against the current while maintaining the local Language (Java) as a tafsir writing was KH Bisri Mustofa from Rembang Central Java.¹⁰

Bisri Mustofa is a pesantren kiai who wrote a tafsir entitled *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*. This tafsir is written in Javanese and Arabic-*pegon* script with a typical pesantren writing model, namely '*gandul* meaning'.¹¹ The model takes the form of writing under every word of the verses of the Qur'an. It is unknown when the tafsir was written, but in the last juz, there is information that the tafsir was completed on Thursday, 29 Rajab 1379 H/January 26, 1960. This tafsir was written in thirty juz.

Al-Ibriz is present amid the onslaught of roman writing in Indonesia, and this is worth considering because it has implications for interpretive works. So from there many mufasir who make his work with Indonesian roman characters such as Tafsir al-Azhar by Hamka, tafsir An-Nur by Hasbi ash-Shiddiqiy. However, since its presence, Tafsir al-Ibriz has been widely circulated and studied by Indonesian scholars, especially among pesantren and academics. With its advantages and disadvantages, this indicates that the tafsir survives and increasingly shows its uniqueness.

Therefore, Tafsir al-Ibriz invites the attention of scholars to study more deeply the various uniqueness, as done by Iwanebel with attention to the mystical patterns in the tafsir¹² Izzul Fahmi examines its locality¹³ and Muhammad Asif. They photographed the Tafsir al-Ibriz, which is closely related to the tradition of his pesantren.¹⁴ The author has also studied the contribution of moderation of his interpretation in the context of sharia and muamalah.¹⁵ Of these works, it is not yet seen that discusses vernacularization in Tafsir al-Ibriz. To fill this void, the author will

¹⁰ Gusmian, "Bahasa dan Aksara Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: dari Tradisi, Hierarki hingga Kepentingan Pembaca", 14.

¹¹ The use of *gandul* meaning in *pegon* interpretation seems to be an Arabic-Javanese dictionary because the translation process uses a word-by-word model. This is intended to facilitate the Javanese people in understanding the contents of the Qur'an. The use of *pegon* characters in writing Javanese pesantren interpretations also functions as a medium of learning *nahwu* science or Arabic grammatical grammar and the cultural identity of Javanese people. See, Ahmad Baidowi, "Fenomena Aksara *Pégon* Dalam Tradisi Penulisan Tafsir Pesantren", *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 21, no. 2 (2022):469-490. <https://doi.org/doi: 10.14421/qh.2020.2102-12>.

¹² Fejrian Yazdajird Iwanebel, "Corak Mistik dalam Penafsiran KH. Mustofa Bisri (Telaah Analitis Tafsir Al-Ibriz)", *Jurnal Rasail* 4, no. 1 (2014):23-40 .

¹³ Izzul Fahmi, "Lokalitas Kitab Taafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Mustofa," *ISLAMIKA INSIDE: Jurnal Keislaman dan Humaniora* 3, no. 1 (2017):96-119 .

¹⁴ Muhammad Asif, "Tafsir dan Tradisi Pesantren: Karakteristik Tafsir al-Ibriz Karya Bisri Mustofa", *Şuħuf: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an* 9, no. 2 (2016):241-264.

¹⁵ Ahmad Zainal Abidin and Thoriqul Aziz, "Javanese Interpretation of Moderatism: Contribution of Tafsir Al-Ibriz on Moderate Understanding in Sharia and Mu'amalah", *Justicia Islamica* 15, no. 2 (2018): 239-262.

examine Bisri Mustofa's vernacularization in Tafsir al-Ibriz, and what aspects and contexts are contained in it. The aspects and contexts are the author's questions and the discussion in this study.

Vernacularization

Vernacularization is an effort to translate the Qur'an into local languages, such as Malay, Sundanese, Bugis, Javanese, and so on.¹⁶ Vernacularization activities are not just translating or just switching languages. Vernacularization activities indicate ideas into the local language and culture until it becomes commonplace. From these results, we might see some words in Arabic that have been absorbed into the local language.¹⁷ Not only in the interpretation of the Qur'an, but the local language in all scientific fields is also perceived from religious texts such as *fiqh*, *hadith*, *Sufism*, and others. The term vernacularization was introduced by Indonesianists and Islamists who became the pioneers of studying Islamic history in Indonesia, namely Anthony H. John. He is a Professor of Islam at the Australian National University (ANU), Canberra.¹⁸

According to John, vernacularization activities have long occurred in Indonesia. In the context of the interpretation of the Qur'an, John saw the Malay-language *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* by 'Abd ar-Rauf as-Sinkili (1615-1693 AD) as the 'initiator' of vernacularization. This vernacularization activities is evidenced by the development of the phenomenon of religious vernacularization that has been absorbed in the text, and three parts are indicators, among others: the number of uptake words from Arabic; the use of Arabic scripts called *aksara Jawi*, and the many literary works influenced by various forms of Arabic (and Persian) literary works.¹⁹ Another one that Johns did not mention was the absorption of the Arabic language's linguistic and grammatical structures and rules. In the Perspective of Gusmian, all this is nothing more than a process of adaptation and adoption of interpretations of the Qur'an that use language and characters in the archipelago.²⁰

The history of local qur'anic language development in Indonesia yearly is increasingly dynamic. The works of tafsir were written by Nusantara Muslim scholars with various languages aimed to meet the needs of the people in their day. For example, the work 'Abd Rauf Singkel, *Tarjumān Mustafid* is written in Malay; Tafsir Qur'an *Basa Sunda* written by A. Hassan, Tafsir Qur'an *Basa Sunda* published in 1937;

¹⁶ Faried F. Saenong, "Vernacularization of the Qur'an: Tantangan dan Prospek Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia Interview dengan Profesor Anthony H. Johns", *Jurnal Studi al-Quran*, I, no. 3 (2006): 578-579.

¹⁷ Saenong, "Vernacularization of the Qur'an: Tantangan dan Prospek Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia Interview dengan Profesor Anthony H. Johns", 579.

¹⁸ Saenong, "Vernacularization of the Qur'an: Tantangan dan Prospek Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia Interview dengan Profesor Anthony H. Johns", 574-576.

¹⁹ Lilik Faiqoh, "Vernakularisasi Dalam Tafsir Nusantara: Kajian atas Tafsir Faid al-Rahmān Karya KH. Sholeh Darat al-Samarani", *Living Islam*, I, no. 1 (2018): 85-128, <https://doi.org/DOL:https://doi.org/10.14421/lijid.v1i1.1247>.<https://ejournal.uin.suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/li/article/view/1247>.

²⁰ Gusmian "Bahasa dan Aksara Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: dari Tradisi, Hierarki hingga Kepentingan Pembaca", 2.

and Tafsir *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun* by Moh. E. Hasim was published in 1984, by Ahmad Sanusi ibn 'Abd Rahim, *Tahrif fi Qulub al-Mu'minin fi Tafsir Kalimat Surat Yasin*; by Anre Gurutta Daud Ismail *Tarjamanna Nenniya Tafeserena*; and the work written by MUI of South Sulawesi is Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim.²¹

While specifically in Java, since the 18th century, the writing of the tafsir Qur'an continues to experience typical and different developments, such as in Aceh and Sumatra, which are dominated by the use of Arabic characters. A distinctive feature of tafsir writing in Java is to minimize the use of Arabic characters by simply writing the text of qur'anic verses, combined with Javanese language and characters.²² The tafsir is written with various cultural contexts and needs that surround it with tangible in various languages and characters.²³ A Javanese tafsir with *aksara cacarakan* commonly found in inland areas such as Solo and Yogyakarta. Among the tafsir works born from this context are *Serat Patekah*, *Tafsir Qur'an Jawen by Bagus Ngarpah*, *Tafsir Wal Ngasri* by St. Cahayati, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an saha Pethikan Warna-warni* collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta.

Besides *cacarakan*, there is another character used, namely *pegon*.²⁴ In general, tafsir that use *pegon* are born in coastal Islamic communities that are thick with pesantren traditions,²⁵ His interpretive products include: *Faid ar-Rahman fi Tarjamah Kalam Malik al-Dayyan*, Sheikh Muḥammad Salih ibn 'Umar as-Samarani (Kiai Saleh Darat) lived 1820-1903, Tafsir surah Yasin (1954) and *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifat Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz* (1960) by KH. Bisri Mustofa, *Iklil fi Ma'ani al-Tanzil* (1980s) and *Tajul Muslimin* by KH. Misbah Zainul Mustofa, and Tafsir Al-Balagh by Imam Ghazali. Bisri Mustofa has given many memories to his family, students, and the surrounding community during his life. One of them is dozens of book titles that became Bisri's monumental work is *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifat Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz* which the author wants to discuss below.²⁶

²¹ Faiqoh, "Vernakularisasi Dalam Tafsir Nusantara: Kajian atas Tafsir Faiḍ al-Raḥmān Karya KH. Sholeh Darat al-Samarani", 89.

²² Faiqoh "Vernakularisasi Dalam Tafsir Nusantara: Kajian atas Tafsir Faiḍ al-Raḥmān Karya KH. Sholeh Darat al-Samarani", 25.

²³ Gusmian, *Dinamika Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa Abad 19-20 M*, 172.

²⁴ *Pegon*, according to Kromoprawirto (1867: 1), derived from the Javanese word 'pego' means *ora lumrah anggone ngucapake*'is not common to pronounce it.' It is said so because the form of *Pegon* writing is Arabic writing, but the sound follows the Javanese writing system, *hanacaraka*. The number of letters of the *Pegon* Alphabet is twenty and not twenty-eight like Arabic letters, equal to the number and order of Javanese letters, *hanacaraka*. Therefore, the order of *pegon* letters is in line with the Javanese dentawyanjana. Titik Pudjiastuti, "Tulisan Pegon: Wujud Identitas Islam-Jawa", *Ṣuḥuf: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an* 2, no. 2 (2009):271-284.

²⁵ *In pesantren institutions, there are at least five pillars in it, namely: Kiai, santri, Pondok, mosque, and Kitab Kuning*. See, Moh. Asror Yusuf dan Ahmad Taufiq, "The Dynamic Views Of Kiais In Response To The Government Regulations For The Development Of Pesantren", *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies (QJIS)* 8, no. 1 (2020):1-32, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.21043/qjiss.v8i1.6716>.

²⁶ Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia: Sejarah dan Dinamika", *NUN: Jurnal Studi Alqur'an dan Tafsir di Nusantara* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1-32. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.32459/nun.v1i1.8>. <https://ejournal.ariat.or.id/index.php/nun/article/view/8>.

Biography of KH. Bisri Mustofa

Bisri Mustofa is a charismatic moslem scholar and founder of pesantren who was born in Sawahan village of Palen Rembang alley, Central Java. It is not known in detail regarding the day and date of birth. From the existing data, the author only found the year of his birth in 1915, with the actual name Masyhadi - a given name of his parents -. After completing the Hajj in 1923, the name was Bisri Mustofa. He was the first of four sons of H. Zaenal Musthofa with his second wife, Hj. Khatijah.²⁷ Bisri Mustofa was a charismatic Kiai who founded a pesantren known as Raudatu al-Talibin in Rembang, Central Java (now nurtured by his son, Mustofa Bisri [Gus Mus]).²⁸

His educational background started at the Javanese school "Angka Loro," which was in Rembang, starting at the age of seven, but it was not finished because he had to join his parents for Hajj. After returning from Hajj, he attended Holland Indische School (HIS) in the same city. Not long after, he was asked to leave by Kiai Cholil because the school belonged to the Netherlands. Finally, he returned to the school "Angka Loro" to obtain a certificate with a four-year education period.²⁹ In 1925, at the age of 10 years, he continued his education to pesantren Kajen, Rembang. Five years later, in 1930, he continued his education at the Kasingan pesantren (near pesawahan village) led by Kiai Cholil, who would later become his son-in-law.³⁰ In this pesantren, Bisri studied religious sciences as a provision for his future.³¹

He also had a *pasanan* at the Tebuireng Jombang pesantren led by KH. Hashim Ash'ari to increase his knowledge insights. He was a man who always wanted to learn, so in 1936 when he was only 21 years old, he decided to go to Makkah. Not without reason, Makkah is the center of Muslim orthodoxy and the center of teaching by most Nusantara Muslim scholars. In the 19th century, many scholars migrated to the Middle East with this goal. Besides Bisri, many tafsir writers in Javanese have also lived and studied in Makkah and KH. Saleh Darat, KH. Raden Adnan, and KH. Moenawar Chalil.

In Makkah, the young Bisri studied tafsir, hadith, and fiqh for two years. Among his teachers, there are those from Indonesia who is KH. Bakir from Yogyakarta, who

²⁷ Ridhoul Wahidi, "Hierarki Bahasa Dalam Tafsir al-Ibriz li Ma'rifah Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Aziz karya H. Bisri Musthofa", *Shuf: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an* 8, no. 1 (2015) : 141-159.

²⁸ Iwanebel, "Corak Mistik dalam Penafsiran KH. Mustofa Bisri (Telaah Analitis Tafsir Al-Ibriz)", 77.

²⁹ During the colonial period, most of the Kiai were the main drivers of indigenous peoples in fighting the invaders, both physically and non-physically. Kiai Sanusi of Sukabumi, for example, criticized many colonials through his writings Tafsir *Malja' al-Thalibin*. See Jajang. A Rohmana, "Al-Qur'an wa al-Isti'mar: Radd al-Shaykh al-Hajj Ahmad Sanusi (1888-1950) 'ala al-Isti'mar min Khilafat Tafsir Malja' al-Thalibin", *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 22, no. 2 (2015):297-332. <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.15408/sdi.v22i2.1921>.

³⁰ Maslukhin, "Kosmologi Budaya Jawa dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz Kaya KH. Bisri Musthofa", *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadis* 5, no. 1 (2015): 74-94. <https://doi.org/DOI: https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2015.5.1.74-94>.

³¹ <https://jurnal.fug.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/mutawatir/article/view/903>.

³¹ Iwanebel, "Corak Mistik dalam Penafsiran KH. Mustofa Bisri (Telaah Analitis Tafsir Al-Ibriz)", 25.

taught the book of *Lubab al-Usul* by Shaykh al-Islam Abi Yahya al-Zarkasyi and *'Umdat al-Abrar* by Muhammad bin Ayyub, in addition there is a book of Tafsir al-Kashshaf by a Mu'tazilah scholar, Imam Zamakhsari. To Shaykh Umar Khamdan, Bisri deepened the book of *sahihain* hadith. To Shaykh 'Ali Maliki, he studied the book *al-Ashbah wa al-Nadair* by Imam al-Suyuthi and al-Hajaj al-Qushairi by al-Naisaburi. To Sayyid Amin, studied *Alfiyah Ibn 'Aqil* by Ibn Malik. To Shaykh Hasan Masysyath, taught the book of *Manhaj Dzawi al-Nadar* by a Nusantara Muslim scholar, Sheikh Mahfudz Tirmasi.³² The last-mentioned book seems to influence the writing style of the tafsir.³³

After returning from Makkah, precisely in 1935, Bisri married Kiai Khalil's daughter, Ma'rufah, who was ten years younger than him. From this marriage he was blessed with eight children, namely Cholil, Mustofa, Adieb, Faridah, Najichah, Labib, Nihayah, and Atikah. Around 1967, Bisri remarried a woman from Tegal named Umi Atiyah. He was blessed with a son named Maimun from his marriage.³⁴ Bisri's life experienced a less favorable life wheel due to the socio-political state of Indonesia's stability at the time. He lived in three epochs, the dutch and Japanese colonial eras and the early days of independence (Old Order), where, at this time, there was a G/30-S.PKI rebellion and the New Order era.³⁵

After the death of his father-in-law (Kiai Cholil), Bisri became the main person in charge of the Kasingan Rembang pesantren. However, due to the Japanese occupation, the pesantren were imported. However, because of his firmness and tenacity, he moved and established a pesantren in Leteh Rembang, later named pesantren Taman Pelajar Islam Raudatu al-Talibin.³⁶ He is a person who is highly dedicated even though he is as busy as anything in his family. He always tries not to be absent in teaching his students.³⁷ Besides being a pesantren Kiai. He is also an expert in politics and his career in the Masyumi party, where there are various Islamic organizations and other parties such as NU and PPP. In this later party, he was appointed as a representative of Central Java as a member of the MPR. This is a testament to his shrewdness in the political field.³⁸ During his political career before the time of the campaign in the 1977 election, Bisri Mustofa died on Wednesday, February 17, 1977, before Ashar at Dr. Karyadi General Hospital Semarang due to a

³² Maslukhin, "Kosmologi Budaya Jawa dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Musthofa", 78.

³³ Iwanebel, "Corak Mistik dalam Penafsiran KH. Mustofa Bisri (Telaah Analitis Tafsir Al-Ibriz)", 25-26

³⁴ Wahidi, "Hierarki Bahasa Dalam Tafsir al-Ibriz li Ma'rifah Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Aziz karya K.H. Bisri Musthofa", 144.

³⁵ Maslukhin, "Kosmologi Budaya Jawa dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Musthofa", 79.

³⁶ Ahmad Syahid, "Negosiasi Hadis Dengan Tradisi Dalam Budaya Membungkuk Di Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin Rembang", *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 21, no. 2 (2020): 331- 350. <https://doi.org/doi: 10.14421/qh.2020.2102-05>.

³⁷ Iwanebel, "Corak Mistik dalam Penafsiran KH. Mustofa Bisri (Telaah Analitis Tafsir Al-Ibriz)", 26.

³⁸ Fahmi, "Lokalitas Kitab Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Mustofa."

heart attack, high blood pressure, and lung disorders.³⁹ During his life, he has given many memories to his family, students, and the surrounding community and left dozens of book titles, one of which is *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifat Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*.

Tafsir al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir Qur'an al-'Aziz

There is no accurate preliminary data on the writing of Tafsir al-Ibriz because it is not listed in the print edition since when this book was written. Only at the end of the interpretation is it said to be completed in 1960. That same year al-Ibriz entered print for the first time.

However, after in-depth research by several scholars, data was found that this interpretation was written for approximately nine years, from 1951 to 1960.⁴⁰ But the author got other data.² According to Ma'rufah, as written by Abu Rokhmad, the writing of Tafsir al-Ibriz was completed at the birth of his last daughter (Atikah), which coincided in 1964.⁴¹

In the introduction of Tafsir *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir Qur'an al-'Aziz* Bisri Mustofa said that his work is a translation of the Qur'an. However, Bisri Mustofa often provides other information, such as those marked by *tanbihun*, *faidatun*, *muhimmatun*, and others. Tafsir al-Ibriz uses *pegon* (Javanese characters) with *gandul* meanings. Not without reason, he wrote tafsir with such language and characters. The use of *gandul* meaning in Tafsir al-Ibriz is closely related to coastal Islamic traditions thick with pesantren culture.⁴² This can be proven from the research of Muhammad Asif. He concluded that other interpretations do not own the characteristics of this interpretation in Indonesian or Arabic. This interpretation of "specificity" can be seen with a writing format that uses *gandul* meanings, with *pegon* letters, and the use of animate language.⁴³

In the context of such language, Bisri has carried out hermeneutic activities. First, Bisri Mustofa translates Qur'an into everyday language, so society understands it. Second, Bisri Mustofa has understood the surrounding context in different places and times.⁴⁴ Bisri Mustofa successfully conveyed God's messages to humanity with this hermeneutic activity.

³⁹ Fahmi, "Lokalitas Kitab Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Mustofa", 102-103.

⁴⁰ Bisri Mustofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz* (Kudus: Menara Kudus, tt).

⁴¹ Rokhmad, "Telaah Karakteristik Tafsir Arab Pegon Al-Ibriz", 32.

⁴² Pesantren is an Islamic educational institution that has existed since pre-colonial. This institution is provided for those who want to study religion whose purpose is to preach in their home region. From the past until now, pesantren in Indonesia has a central position in the education system that serves many people. Nevertheless, from the modernization of the early 20th century until the end of the century, pesantren was marginalized, which remains considered a non-formal education. M. Falikul Isbah, "Pesantren In The Changing Indonesian Context: History And Current Developments," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies (QIJS)* 8, no. 1 (2020): 65-106, <https://doi.org/DOI : 10.21043/qijis.v8i1.5629>. See to, Ervan Nurtawab, "The Decline of Traditional Learning Methods in Changing Indonesia: Trends of Bandungan-Kitab Readings in Pesantrens", *Studia Islamika: Indonesia Journal for Islamic Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2019, 512. DOI: 10.36712/sdi.v26i3.11026.

⁴³ Asif, "Tafsir dan Tradisi Pesantren: Karakteristik Tafsir al-Ibriz Karya Bisri Mustofa", 262.

⁴⁴ Fahmi, "Lokalitas Kitab Taafsir Al-Ibriz Karya KH. Bisri Mustofa", 106.

Federspiel, who studies qur'anic tafsir in Indonesia, classified the authors of the interpretation and the targets of the interpretation into four categories: religious scholars, Muslim intellectuals, lay Muslims, and Muslim students. From these four categories, it can be known that the author of the interpretation of al-Ibriz is a Muslim intellectual, and the book is intended for lay Muslims.⁴⁵

Tafsir al-Ibriz, until now, has been printed in three editions. The first edition is written per juz in 30 volumes, and the second edition is written in three volumes. Both still use *pegon* Arabic characters.⁴⁶ And the third (last) edition in one complete large volume of thirty juz was published in 2015 by the publisher of the Holy Tower using roman characters in Latin Javanese copied according to the original book (*Arabic pegon*). In this tafsir, when interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, Bisri Mustofa quotes from the interpretations that mu'tabar, as well as Tafsir Jalalain, Tafsir al-Baidawi, Tafsir al-Khazin, and others. Before being printed and disseminated to the broader community, this interpretation was interpreted by several scholars, including KH. Arwani Amin Kudus, KH. Holy Hisham, KH. Sha'roni Achmadi Kudus.⁴⁷ With the tashih of some of these contemporaries, scholars confirmed that the book of Tafsir al-Ibriz is increasingly authoritative for broad audience study. This book has specific characteristics in explaining the meaning of the Qur'an. This approach and pattern of interpretation are not dominant because it combines various forms of interpretation patterns. While in terms of flow and form of interpretation, it falls into the category of traditional and *ma'thur* streams.⁴⁸ This book is still studied in various regions of many pesantren, madrasah diniyah, and tabligh councils.

Vernacularization in tafsir *al-Ibriz*

Vernacularization in tafsir al-Ibriz can be seen in the language used in it. Members of a society use language as an arbitrary sound-symbol system to interact, cooperate, and identify themselves.⁴⁹ A language is a communication tool that can transmit messages or information from one person to another. From this, it is known that the role of language is so essential. A common language used in Tafsir al-Ibriz is Javanese *ngoko*. There are three levels of the language spoken in Javanese: kromo *inggil*, kromo *Madya*, and *ngoko*. Each is used according to the speaker's opponent. In the context of an older person or something glorified like God, the prophets appropriately use *kromo inggil*. While for commensurate, people can use *kromo madya*, and for people under it use *ngoko*. The selection of Bisri Mustofa

⁴⁵ Mu'ammam Zayn Qadafy, "Qur'anic Exegesis for Commoners: A Thematic Sketch of Non-Academic Tafsir Works in Indonesia", *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies*, 26, no. 2 (2019): 247-276. <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.15408/sdi.v26i2.8144>.<http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/studiislamika/article/view/8144/6161>.

⁴⁶ Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 53.

⁴⁷ Bisri Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, (Kudus: Menara Kudus, t.th), Volume 8, 377.

⁴⁸ Rokhmad, "Telaah Karakteristik Tafsir Arab Pegon Al-Ibriz", 57.

⁴⁹ Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI). Offline, t.t.

with *ngoko* language has considered the context and audience interpretation. The practice of vernacularization in terms of language in al-Ibriz in the form of words that are familiar in Javanese society, including:

Rojo Koyo

The word *Rojo Koyo* in Indonesian has the meaning of farm animals. These animals, known as *Rojo Koyo*, are livestock familiar in the Javanese community and become pets of society in general, such as cows, buffalo, goats, and others. Bisri Mustofa uses *Rojo Koyo* to translate the word *al-an'am*, as in Surat Ali Imran [3] verse 14. The context of the verse is about the human property that is considered the jewel of the world.

Wus dadi pepaes menuso, demen opo kang dadi kesenengane nafs, koyo wong-wong wadon, anak-anak lanang, bondo akeh kang den kumpul-kumpulake saking emas lan seloko, lan jaran kang bagus-bagus, rojo koyo, lan sawah. Kabeh mau perabot seneng-seneng ono ing dunyo, kang ura antara suwe bakal gingsir, dene baguse panggonan bali iku ono ing akherot, ing ngarsane Allah ta'ala.⁵⁰

The verse tells how treasures and objects become jewelry and the desire of general humans who live in the world. They compete to find and collect it as a means of life or more than that, namely as the 'pride' of man. The jewelry is generally not only in gold gems but of many kinds, such as girls, boys, gold, silver, horses, rice fields, and *Rojo Koyo*.

This verse is not much different from the Javanese people, who also have many *pepaes* used as a pride. For example, the Javanese thought that 'many children, many sustenances' was used to referencing a more decent life during life. Not only that, Javanese people who generally work as farmers will 'calculate' how much and the area of rice fields are processed. Moreover, they usually maintain *Rojo Koyo*, used as a side job. The more *Rojo Koyo* they have, they are regarded as rich people.

Similar redactions can also be seen in Surat al-Maidah [5] verse 1. In this verse, Bisri Mustofa translates the word *al-an'am* with *Rojo Koyo*. This verse talks about animals that are *halal* to eat after slaughter.

He wong mukmin! Siro kabeh supoyo podo netepi perjanjian (ateges netepi kewajiban). Allah ta'ala ngalalake marang siro kabeh mangan rojo koyo sakwuse disembelih, (koyo untho, sapi, lan wedus), kejobo kang diterangake harome marang siro kabeh..⁵¹

Bisri Mustofa also carries out similar translations in several verses of the Qur'an, one of which is located in Surat al-Maidah [5] verse 2, Surat Fathir verse 28.⁵² In explaining the above verse, Bisri Mustofa took a cultural approach by using language familiar to the community, such as the use of the *Rojo Koyo* word. These words have

⁵⁰ Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, Volume. 3, 125.

⁵¹ Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, Volume. 6, 259.

⁵² Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, Volume. 22, 1518.

become a daily conversation in the Javanese community. *Rojo* means 'king,' and *koyo* means 'rich.' These two terms stick firmly like kings synonymous with the rich. However, in the Javanese community, this redaction is addressed to their pets, who become a source of wealth for them. This word selection is certainly easier to understand by the people of Java.

Sathu Galak

Another word Bisri Mustofa uses in his attempt to explain the Qur'an in the local language is *sathu galak*, which means wild animal. This word translates *al-sabu'u* in Surat al-Maidah [5] verse 3. The context of this verse is about animals that are allowed and forbidden to be consumed by Muslims.

Siro kabeh di haromake mangan batang, lan getih, lan daging babi, lan hayawan kang di sembelih ora kerono Alloh, lan hayawan kang mati keteken, lan hayawan kang mati sebab tibo saking duwur, lan hayawan kang mati sebab gundangan, lan hayawan kang kepangan sathu galak, kejobo hayawan kang kecokot sathu galak durung mati nuli katututan siro sembelih.⁵³

From the explanation above, Bisri Mustofa tried to explain the verse so that the surrounding community could understand it. The selection of the word *sathu galak* is not found in other communities, and only the Javanese people can capture the meaning of the word, as for what is meant by *sathu galak* are wild animals that have horns, nails, teeth or sharp fangs to pounce on their prey. Animals such as tigers, lions, dogs, and eagles are some animals referred to as *sathu galak*. The Javanese people are familiar with this word, so they immediately understand if it is mentioned the word. With the selection of this word, Bisri Mustofa has succeeded in vernacularizing the Qur'an in the Javanese community.

Celathu

The word that is also characteristic of the Javanese language in the Tafsir al-Ibriz is the word *celathu*. Bisri Mustofa uses this word to translate the word *qola* (speaking) contained in several verses of the Qur'an, one of which is Surat al-Maidah [5] verse 18, as follows:

Wong-wong Yahudi lan wong-wong Nasrani podo celathu, ingsun kabeh iki persasat putrane Allah ta'ala lan iyo kekasihe Alloh ta'ala. Kanjeng nabi kadawuhan ngunandika: yen kondo iro iku bener, keno opo Alloh ta'ala teko nyikso siro kabeh sebab anggon iro podo doso? Terang siro kabeh podo goroh, lan sakbenere siro kabeh iku menuso biasa tunggal-tunggale titahe Allah...⁵⁴

The context of the above verse tells of Jews and Christians who claim to be sons of God. They are all the same as other human beings. In the context of this verse, the

⁵³ Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, Volume. 6, 289.

⁵⁴ Musthofa, *al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*, Volume. 6, 281

underlined word '*celathu*,' which in the Javanese context means often saying something in a derogatory tone, needs to be considered carefully. Bisri Mustofa used the word because the one who said it was Jews and Christians. The word selection seemed harsh because it was used to insult the prophet. The word selection is also directed at low-status people, considering that the one who speaks is an enemy of the prophet Muhammad.

In the Javanese context, polite words can be used, such as the word *nutur*, *dhawuh*, and *ngendhiko*. However, these words are used for noble people or something exalted (God). For example, in the above interpretation, the prophet answered after the Jews and Christians spoke. To begin the prophet's speech, Bisri Mustofa used the word '*kedawuhan ngunandiko*,' which also means the same as 'said.'

Bisri Mustofa appears to use a typical Javanese language culture from the use of the word. In speaking, Javanese people have *unggah-ungguh* that need to be considered. *Ngoko* Javanese language is used for people with low social status, while people with honorable status such as parents, Kiai, or figures in society use *Kromo* Javanese language that seems smooth and polite. From the above exposure, it can be understood that Bisri Mustofa performs hermeneutic work. Furthermore, the vernacularization effort, according to the author, by borrowing the Quraish Shihab language, has 'grounded the Qur'an.' According to him, it has become an obligation for every Muslim to ground the Qur'an and make it close to the reality of life, maintaining the Qur'an by functioning it in contemporary life. The spirit of grounding the Qur'an is in the form of contextual reinterpretation without sacrificing the text and without eliminating the personality, the culture of the nation, and the positive development of society.⁵⁵ The same word in the Nur Kholis Setiawan language is called "nativization of the Qur'an."⁵⁶

Based on Bisri Mustofa's tafsir above, he has translated the Language of the Qur'an, which becomes a 'grounded' human language. Bisri Mustofa, one of the contextual mufassir, in interpreting the Qur'an, wants to position the Qur'an as problem-solving in the context of his time. From his interpretation, it also appears to dialogue the static and limited Qur'an (*al-nusus al-mutanahiyah*) with the context of dynamic and unlimited development of the times (*ghairu al-mutanahiyah*) as revealed by al-Ghazali in *al-Munqidz min al-Dhalal* and al-Syahrastani in *al-Milal wa al-Nihal*.⁵⁷ He also considered the importance of using the asbab al-nuzul method as his interpretation. Because the Qur'an is a historical text closely related to human life, he has always interpreted it historically and relevantly to the situation of the times. Finally, Bisri Mustofa's interpretation can also be understood as an attempt to confirm

⁵⁵ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Quran: Fungsi dan Peran Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*, Cet. 13 (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), 88.

⁵⁶ Abad Badruzaman, "Nahwa Andisat al-Tafsir: Muhawalah Taf'il Maqasid al- Qur'an wa Ta'qalamiha", *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 02 (2019):505-524. DOI: 10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.505-524.

⁵⁷ Faqihudin Abdul Kodir, *Qira'ah Mubadalah: Tafsir Progresif untuk Keadilan Gender dalam Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRClSoD, 2019), 118.

the relevant concept of the Qur'an at every time and place. (*shalih likulli zaman wa makan*).

Conclusion

From the discussion above, the author concluded that the vernacularization carried out by Bisri Mustofa in Tafsir al-Ibriz can be seen in some of his interpretations that are closely related to the Javanese community, such as *Rojo koyo, sathu galak, and celathu*. Some of these words are used by Bisri Mustofa in describing a verse in a language close to the Javanese community so that the people can understand the explanation. From this situation, Bisri Mustofa succeeded in vernacularizing the Qur'an, which is rich in values of wisdom and local cultures.

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