



## Mapping Quranic Exegesis in West Java: Influential Figures and Linguistic Insights

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### Abstract

This article delves into an exploration of Tafsir Al-Quran works by influential scholars from the West of Java. Unlike traditional geographic delineations, this study does not restrict its focus to the administrative boundaries of West Java as a province but extends to broader regions in the western part of the island. The investigation employs a qualitative research methodology, primarily engaging in library research which involves the comprehensive collection and analysis of data from authoritative books on the subject. Moreover, the study is enriched by a manuscript study approach, where ancient and contemporary Tafsir texts authored by scholars from this region are examined in detail. Through this meticulous research, the study has uncovered numerous Tafsir works, each bearing the unique interpretative style of its author. The findings highlight the intellectual and theological contributions of these scholars, emphasizing the diversity and richness of Islamic scholarship in western Java. One of the distinctive features of these Tafsir works is their linguistic variety. The texts are found in Arabic, which is widely used in Islamic scholarly writings, as well as in Sundanese and Indonesian, which reflects the local linguistic and cultural integration into Islamic scholarship. The study not only sheds light on the specific Tafsir works and the scholars behind them but also paints a broader picture of the religious and cultural landscape in western Java. This approach provides valuable insights into how regional characteristics influence religious interpretation and contribute to the broader discourse in Islamic studies. The research is pivotal for scholars interested in regional Islamic studies, comparative religion, and the interplay between language, culture, and religious scholarship.

**Contribution:** This research reveals the diversity of Quranic exegesis by scholars in western Java and the influence of culture and language in regional Islamic studies.

**Keywords:** West Javanese Tafsir, Linguistic Diversity, Historical Analysis, Regional Islamic Thought.

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi sejumlah karya tafsir Al-Quran oleh para tokoh ulama di Jawa Barat. Tidak seperti pembatasan geografis tradisional, penelitian ini tidak hanya terfokus pada batas administratif Jawa Barat sebagai sebuah provinsi, melainkan meluas ke wilayah yang lebih besar di bagian barat pulau ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi penelitian kualitatif, terutama melalui riset perpustakaan yang melibatkan pengumpulan dan analisis data secara komprehensif dari buku-buku otoritatif mengenai subjek ini. Selain itu, studi ini diperkaya dengan pendekatan studi manuskrip, di mana teks-teks tafsir kuno dan kontemporer yang ditulis oleh para ulama dari wilayah ini, seperti Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani, Ahmad Sanusi dan Ahmad Syarwat diperiksa secara mendetail. Melalui riset teliti ini, penelitian telah mengungkap banyak karya tafsir, masing-masing membawa gaya interpretatif unik dari penulisnya. Temuan menekankan kontribusi intelektual dan teologis para ulama ini, menyoroti keragaman dan kekayaan keilmuan Islam di Jawa barat. Salah satu ciri khas dari karya-karya tafsir ini adalah keragaman linguistiknya. Teks-teks tersebut ditemukan dalam bahasa Arab, yang banyak digunakan dalam tulisan keilmuan Islam, serta dalam bahasa Sunda dan Indonesia, yang mencerminkan integrasi linguistik dan budaya lokal ke dalam keilmuan Islam. Studi ini tidak hanya mengungkapkan karya-karya tafsir spesifik dan para ulama di balikinya, tetapi juga menggambarkan gambaran





yang lebih luas tentang lanskap keagamaan dan budaya di Jawa Barat. Pendekatan ini memberikan wawasan berharga tentang bagaimana ciri-ciri regional mempengaruhi interpretasi keagamaan dan berkontribusi pada wacana yang lebih luas dalam studi Islam. Penelitian ini sangat penting bagi para sarjana yang tertarik pada studi Islam regional, perbandingan agama, dan interaksi antara bahasa, budaya, dan keilmuan keagamaan.

**Kontribusi:** Penelitian ini mengungkap keberagaman tafsir ulama di barat Pulau Jawa serta pengaruh budaya dan bahasa dalam studi Islam regional.

**Kata Kunci:** *Tafsir di Jawa Barat, Keragaman Bahasa, Analisis Historis, Pemikiran Islam Regional.*

## Introduction

The study of Quranic exegesis (tafsir) yields critical insights into how the Quran is interpreted and comprehended across different cultural and linguistic contexts.<sup>1</sup> Indonesia, as one of the world's largest Muslim-majority nations, offers a distinctive perspective on the interaction between Islamic scholarship and local cultural practices. West Java, in particular, with its unique cultural identity and linguistic diversity, serves as a compelling case study for examining Quranic exegesis.<sup>2</sup> The tradition of writing tafsir in Indonesia spans several centuries, beginning in the 17th century with Abd Al Rauf Singkili's *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*, which combined Malay and Arabic, and extending through the 20th century with notable works such as *Tafsir Rahmat* by H. Oemar and continuing with Buya Hamka's *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and Prof. Quraissy Shihab's *Tafsir Al-Misbah*. Over roughly three centuries, a rich tapestry of Quranic interpretations has been woven, demonstrating the dynamic evolution of tafsir. This historical trajectory underscores the enduring scholarly endeavor to engage with the Quranic text, which remains vibrant into the 21st century.<sup>3</sup>

West Java's rich tradition of Islamic scholarship is vividly reflected in its numerous tafsir works, showcasing the profound contributions of local scholars to both their communities and broader Islamic thought within Indonesia and beyond.<sup>4</sup> These exegetes have engaged in a lively dialogue with the Quran, producing interpretations in a variety of languages, including Sundanese, Indonesian, and Arabic. This linguistic diversity highlights the adaptability of religious scholarship to different cultural and linguistic landscapes, enriching the understanding of Islamic texts. Although the scope of this research was limited, it did not conclusively determine whether Quranic interpretations were

<sup>1</sup> M. Nurdin Zuhdi and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "The Contemporary Qur'anic Exegesis: Tracking Trends in The Interpretation of The Qur'an in Indonesia 2000-2010," *JAWT* 1, no. 1 (March 11, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.24042/jw.v1i1.2840>.

<sup>2</sup> H. Helmiati, "The Development of Quranic Exegesis In Indonesia: A General Typology," *Asia-Pacific Journal on Religion and Society* 2, no. 1 (May 23, 2021): 29–38, <https://doi.org/10.24014/apjrs.v2i1.6384>.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony H. Johns, "12. Quranic Exegesis in the Malay World: In Search of a Profile," in *12. Quranic Exegesis in the Malay World: In Search of a Profile* (Gorgias Press, 2013), 257–87, <https://doi.org/10.31826/9781463234898-017>.

<sup>4</sup> R. Michael Feener, "Notes Towards the History of Qur'anic Exegesis in Southeast Asia," *Studia Islamika* 5, no. 3 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v5i3.739>.





consistently produced in each century.<sup>5</sup> However, it is known that Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani authored his tafsir, entitled "Tafsir Marah Labid," in the 19th century, which was later published in Mecca at the beginning of 1880. Notably, most new tafsir texts emerged in the 20th century, particularly post-independence, featuring not only Indonesian but also regional languages such as Sundanese and Javanese.<sup>6</sup> This period marked a significant expansion in the accessibility and localization of Quranic exegesis, reflecting the evolving dynamics of Indonesian Islamic scholarship.

Despite the profound impact of these scholars and their works on the religious landscape, comprehensive scholarly attention to mapping these contributions has been scant, particularly from linguistic and biographical perspectives.<sup>7</sup> This oversight motivates the current study, which aims to document and analyze the contributions of key figures in Quranic exegesis from West Java. This research delves into the linguistic strategies and biographical contexts of these scholars, striving to offer a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing Quranic interpretation in the region.<sup>8</sup> This article narrows its focus to the development of tafsir specifically within West Java, a level of analysis that adds a distinct regional dimension to the broader national picture. The approach to tracing the development of tafsir in this area involves three geographical considerations, which form the research framework of this study: firstly, the birthplace of the tafsir authors; secondly, their places of domicile; and thirdly, a mapping of the province's locations from both pre- and post-independence periods. This geographical lens helps illuminate how regional dynamics have shaped religious scholarship and contributed to the diverse interpretations of the Quran in West Java.<sup>9</sup>

This exploration is crucial not only for appreciating regional intellectual traditions but also for understanding how these local perspectives contribute to the global discourse on Quranic interpretation. This study aims to enrich our understanding of Islamic thought by demonstrating how regional and linguistic diversity within Islam can foster a more comprehensive and varied global

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<sup>5</sup> Nadzrah Ahmad, "Quranic Exegetical Activities In The Malay Archipelago: A Historical Overview," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 27, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 101–21, <https://doi.org/10.31436/shajarah.v27i1.1392>.

<sup>6</sup> Ansor Bahary, "TAFSIR NUSANTARA: Studi Kritis Terhadap Marah Labid Nawawi al-Bantani," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 16, no. 2 (December 30, 2015): 176–90, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v16i2.3179>.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Nurdin Zuhdi and Sawaun Sawaun, "Dialog Al-Quran Dengan Budaya Lokal Nusantara: Resepsi Al-Quran Dalam Budaya Sekaten Di Keraton Yogyakarta," *MAGHZA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 1 (May 14, 2017): 125–46, <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v2i1.1548>.

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin G. Zimmer, "Al-'Arābīyah and Basa Sunda: Ideologies of Translation and Interpretation among the Muslim of West Java," *Studia Islamika* 7, no. 3 (2000), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v7i3.702>.

<sup>9</sup> Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx, *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu* (BRILL, 2009).





interpretation of the Quran.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, it is essential to examine how tafsir has been presented in different periods, particularly in West Java. This includes exploring the evolution of Quranic exegesis in Pesantrens located in West Java and contrasting these with the interpretations offered by progressive Islamic thinkers at the State Islamic Universities.<sup>11</sup> Notably, West Java is home to two prominent state Islamic universities, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta and UIN Sunan Gunung Jati Bandung, which have been centers for progressive Islamic thought, influencing contemporary Islamic discourse.<sup>12</sup> This study will delve into how these institutions have shaped the ways in which the Quran is understood and taught in the region.

This research employs a comprehensive analytical approach to explore the historical development of tafsir (Quranic exegesis) in West Java. The data for this study are derived from a variety of document sources, primarily through library research, which includes journal articles, books, and government publications that detail the geographical and historical context of West Java, as well as works of tafsir originating from the region.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, the study utilizes historical manuscript analysis to map the contributions and influence of Islamic scholars in shaping the discourse of tafsir studies in West Java. The focus on West Java, as opposed to the entire Indonesian archipelago or Java as a whole, allows for a more detailed and localized understanding of how Quranic interpretation has evolved in this specific region. By narrowing the geographic scope, this research aims to uncover unique regional characteristics and influences that may not be as prevalent in broader studies.<sup>14</sup> This approach not only highlights the regional diversity within Islamic scholarly traditions but also enhances our understanding of the dynamic interplay between local cultural practices and religious interpretations.<sup>15</sup> Through this detailed examination, the study seeks to

<sup>10</sup> Johanna Pink, "Tradition and Ideology in Contemporary Sunnite Qur'ānic Exegesis: Qur'ānic Commentaries from the Arab World, Turkey and Indonesia and Their Interpretation of Q 5:51," *Die Welt Des Islams* 50, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 3–59, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157006010X489801>.

<sup>11</sup> Wardani Wardani, "Problematisasi Kajian Tafsir Di Perguruan Tinggi Islam Dan Masyarakat Kalimantan Selatan," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 15, no. 1 (September 1, 2020): 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2020.15.1.1-27>.

<sup>12</sup> Jajang A. Rohmana, "Memahami al-Qur'an dengan Kearifan Lokal: Nuansa Budaya Sunda dalam Tafsir al-Qur'an berbahasa Sunda," *JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES* 3, no. 1 (June 25, 2014): 79–99, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v3i1.1164>.

<sup>13</sup> Miza Nina Adlini et al., "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2022): 974–80, <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v6i1.3394>.

<sup>14</sup> Tazul Islam and Amina Khatun, "Objective-Based Exegesis of The Quran: A Conceptual Framework," *QURANICA - International Journal of Quranic Research* 7, no. 1 (June 1, 2015): 37–54, <https://doi.org/10.22452/quranica.vol7no1.3>.

<sup>15</sup> Haziyyah Hussin and Sohirin M. Solihin, "The Dynamic Methodology In The Qur'ānic Exegesis Between Originality And Renewal," *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 10, no. 2 (April 26, 2012): 69–95, <https://doi.org/10.11136/jqh.1210.02.05>.





contribute significantly to the broader scholarship on Islamic exegesis and its regional variations across Indonesia.

### West Java as a Region

Before further examining the development of tafsir in West Java, the author is interested in first describing West Java in terms of territory. Given what is meant by West Java, the boundaries of the region have changed in terms of geography or name as a designation.<sup>16</sup> For example, when talking about West Java as a province, it is divided into two discussions, namely pre and post-independence. During the pre-independence period, West Java province was established as an autonomous province in 1926 by the Dutch East Indies government. This status was officially established on January 01, 1926 through staatsblad (state sheet) number 326 of 1926, then stipulated again number 27, 28 and 438 in 1928. The establishment was the implementation of the bestuurshervormingwet of 1922, Prior to that West Java was called soendalanden (tatar soenda) or pasoendan to mention the western part of Java.<sup>17</sup>

Describing West Java in terms of its territory involves understanding the region's historical and geographical context. West Java refers to the western part of Java island in Indonesia. Before it became a formal province, this area was known by various names, including "Soendalanden" or "Pasoendan," which denoted the western portion of Java.<sup>18</sup> The establishment of West Java as a province occurred during the colonial period of the Dutch East Indies. In 1926, the Dutch government officially recognized West Java as an autonomous province through legal decrees (staatsblad) issued as part of administrative reforms implemented in the early 20th century. This administrative restructuring aimed to centralize governance and delineate distinct territorial entities within the colonial structure.<sup>19</sup>

Prior to its establishment as a province, West Java's identity was shaped by its geographic location and historical significance within Java island. The region played a crucial role in the colonial

<sup>16</sup> Atsushi Ota, "Changes of Regime and Social Dynamics in West Java: Society, State and the Outer World of Banten, 1750-1830," in *Changes of Regime and Social Dynamics in West Java* (Brill, 2005), <https://brill.com/display/title/12697>.

<sup>17</sup> Fachry Ali, "Sunda-‘Java’ and The Past : A Socio-Historical Reflection," *Insaniyat : Journal of Islam and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (November 26, 2016): 33–40.

<sup>18</sup> E. M. Uhlenbeck, "Sundanese," in *A Critical Survey of Studies on the Languages of Java and Madura: Bibliographical Series 7*, ed. E. M. Uhlenbeck (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1964), 9–41, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-8790-9\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-8790-9_2).

<sup>19</sup> Ani Ismarini, "Kedudukan Elit Pribumi Dalam Pemerintahan Di Jawa Barat (1925-1942)," *Patanjala: Journal of Historical and Cultural Research* 6, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 179–92, <https://doi.org/10.30959/patanjala.v6i2.193>.





administration and later became integral to Indonesia's post-independence development.<sup>20</sup> The name "West Java" reflects the region's position within the larger context of Indonesia, highlighting its location on the western side of Java island. This geographical designation continues to define West Java's identity, influencing its cultural heritage, administrative structure, and role within the broader Indonesian nation. Understanding West Java's territorial evolution and historical background is essential for comprehending its cultural and academic development, including the study of tafsir (Quranic exegesis), which is influenced by local traditions, historical narratives, and regional dynamics specific to West Java.<sup>21</sup> The province's history underscores its importance as a distinct geographic and cultural entity within Indonesia. When Indonesia declared independence, West Java transitioned into a significant part of the newly established Republic of Indonesia. This period was marked by a dynamic series of administrative changes and shifts in governance within the region. Initially, the capital of West Java was based in Bandung, starting on August 19, 1945. However, this administrative center underwent several relocations over a short period. The capital of West Java moved from Bandung to Indihiang and subsequently to Tasikmalaya on July 21, 1947. This relocation was followed by moves to Lebak Siuh, then to Culamega, and later to Tawangbanteng. Finally, on August 17, 1948, the capital settled in Wanayasa Purwakarta. It was during this time in Wanayasa that West Java established its own government known as the Republic of West Java Government (PRJB) due to its rejection of the Renville Agreement.<sup>22</sup>

The government's center then shifted once more, this time to Subang Kuningan. In 1947, West Java became part of Pasundan State, which was one of the constituent states within the Indonesian Union. It wasn't until 1950 that West Java officially integrated into the Republic of Indonesia. These transitions and movements highlight the fluid and transformative nature of West Java's administrative landscape during the early years of Indonesian independence. The changes in capital and government structures reflect the region's complex political environment and its role in the broader context of Indonesia's post-colonial nation-building process. The shifts also underscore the

<sup>20</sup> Romi Saputra, "Policy Evaluation of Regional Expansion and Determination Regional Boundaries in Banten and West Java Province," *Sosiohumaniora* 23, no. 3 (2021): 400–408.

<sup>21</sup> Mark Woodward, "Islamicate Civilization And National Islams: Islam Nusantara, West Java And Sundanese Culture," *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 8, no. 1 (July 1, 2019): 148–87, <https://doi.org/10.31291/hn.v8i1.542>.

<sup>22</sup> Takashi Shiraishi, *Reading Southeast Asia* (Cornell University Press, 2018).





historical significance of West Java's journey towards integration into the unified Republic of Indonesia, marking an important chapter in the region's history and identity within the nation.<sup>23</sup>

After a brief exploration of the history of West Java as a geographical region and its designation as a province, it becomes evident that the timeline for examining the development of tafsir (Quranic exegesis) within this specific area is relatively limited. This limitation is primarily due to the defined period during which West Java emerged as a province under Dutch colonial rule, officially established in 1926. The development of tafsir in West Java began to gain traction during the early 20th century, specifically in the two decades leading up to Indonesia's independence. This timeframe coincides with the establishment of the Dutch government's administration in the region. As a result, the documentation and tracking of mufassir (Quranic interpreters) within West Java are confined to this particular historical phase.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, discussions about the development of tafsir in West Java should be understood within the broader context of the western part of Java island, rather than solely within the confines of the modern provincial boundaries. This distinction is important, especially considering the recent expansion of regional autonomy programs following Indonesia's reformation era, which resulted in the creation of separate provinces such as Banten and DKI Jakarta (Jakarta Special Capital Region). Therefore, when addressing the development of tafsir in West Java, it encompasses the evolution of Quranic interpretation within the western region of Java island, encompassing cultural, historical, and scholarly aspects that transcend administrative divisions. This approach highlights the interconnectedness of intellectual pursuits like tafsir with the broader geographic and cultural landscape of West Java, reflecting its rich heritage and scholarly traditions within the context of Indonesia's diverse religious and academic heritage.

### **Mufassir Figures in West Java.**

Talking about the history of the interpretation of the Quran then talk about figures who have a major contribution to the interpretation of the Quran, it is evidenced by the work of interpretation produced. After the author gives a focal point, what is meant by the history of West Java interpretation is the development of interpretation in the western part of Java, when examining the

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<sup>23</sup> Thommy Svensson, *Peasants and Politics in Early Twentieth-Century West Java* (University of Gothenburg, Department of History, South-East Asian History ..., 1980).

<sup>24</sup> Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia: Sejarah Dan Dinamika," *Nun: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir Di Nusantara* 1, no. 1 (December 29, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.32495/nun.v1i1.8>.





mufasir figures and their works that have a connection with West Java, there are three styles of figures.<sup>25</sup> First, a mufassir figure who was born in West Java but lived and domiciled outside Java such as Sheikh Nawawi Al Bantani, the second figure who was born and domiciled in West Java such as the authors of the interpretation book in Sundanese, the third mufassir figure who is domiciled in West Java but born outside West Java such as Quraisyh Syihab.<sup>26</sup>

From these three different mufassir backgrounds, the author is more interested in focusing on examining a number of mufassirs on the basis of birth in West Java, meaning that there are two mufassir backgrounds that will be discussed, namely mufasir figures who were born but domiciled outside West Java, and mifassir figures who were born and grew up in West Java. This means that the mufassir figures whose birth outside West Java are not in the discussion of this article. To facilitate the study in the following article is a table of mufassir figures sorted by the oldest year along with their works.

No.	Author	Born	Domicile	Work	Year
1.	Syaikh Nawawi Al Bantani	Banten	Makkah	<i>Marah Labid</i>	1880
2.	H. Hasan Mustapa			<i>Quranul Adhimi</i>	1921
3.	Hassan			<i>Pengadjaran dengan Bahasa Soenda atau Malja' al-Talibin fi Tafsir Kalam Rabb al-Alamin, Kasyf al- Auham wa al-Zunun fi Bayan Qaulih Ta'ala la yamassuh illa al-Mutahharun, Raudat al-Irfan fi Ma'rifat al-Qur'an, Hidayat al-Qulub fi Fadl Surat Tabarak al-Muluk min al-Qur'an, Tafrih Qulub al-Mu'minin fi Tafsir Kalimat Surat Yasin, Kanz al-Rahmat wa al-Lutf fi Tafsir Surat al-Kahf, Tanbih al- Hairan fi Tafsir Surat al-Dukhan, Kasyf al-Sa'adah fi Tafsir Surat Waqi'at dan Silah, al-Irfan, dll</i>	1930-an

<sup>25</sup> Sakdiah, Halimatus. "Mathba'ah Islamiah di Mingkabau: Sejarah Sebuah Penerbit Islam Melintasi Tiga Zaman (1924-1972)". *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>26</sup> Hosen, Nadirsyah. *Tafsir al-Qur'an di Medsos: Mengkaji Makna dan Rahasia Ayat Suci pada Era Media Sosial*. Yogyakarta: Bentang Pustaka, 2019.







4.	R. A. A. Wiranata-Koesoesoemah dan R. A. A. Soeriamihardja			<i>Tafsir Surah Al- Baqarah</i>	1949
5.	Kol. Isa Idris			<i>Tafsir Hibarna (Juz Amma)</i>	1951
6.	H. Mhd. Romli dan H.N.S. Midjaja			<i>Nurul-Bajan: Tafsir Qur'an Basa Sunda, 3 Jilid</i>	1960
7.	K.H. Mhd. Romli			<i>Al-Kitabul Mubin: Tafsir Basa Sunda, 2 Jilid</i>	1974
8.	Departemen Agama Pemprov Jabar			<i>Terjemah dan Tafsir al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda</i>	1978
9.	Departemen Agama Pemprov Jabar			<i>Tafsir al-Qur'an Basa Sunda, 6 Jilid</i>	1981
10.	Moh. E. Hasim			<i>Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun, 30 Jilid</i>	1984
11.	H. Oemar Bakry			<i>Tafsir Rahmat Basa Sunda, Terj. H. M. Sulaeman</i>	1986
12.	K. H. Ahmad Makki			<i>Terjemah Tafsir al- Qur'an Al-Azim li Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti wa Jalaluddin Al-Mahalli, 6 Jilid</i>	1989
13.	Muhammad Abdullah bin Al-Hasan Caringin Sukabumi			<i>Sa'adat Al-Darayn fi Tarjamat Tafsir al-Qur'an Al-Azim li Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti wa Jalaluddin Al- Mahalli</i>	2000
14.	Uus Suhendar <sup>6</sup>			<i>Tafsir Al-Razi, Tafsir Juz Amma Basa Sunda</i>	2011
15.	Dr. Ahmad sarwat Lc., MA.	Cairo, Mesir 19 september 1969	Jakarta	Tafsir Al Mahfudz. 252 Al Baqaroh.	2023





## Patterns of Interpretation of West Javanese Mufasssirs.

### A. Tafsir Marah Labid

Marah Labid li Kasyfi Ma'ana Qur'anil Majid is a book of tafsir written by Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and also known as al-Tafsir al-Munir. Sheikh Nawawi stated in the muqoddimah of his book that this tafsir book was written in response to the request of some of his colleagues that he write a book of tafsir while in Makkah.<sup>27</sup> From a number of tafsir located in the western part of Java, tafsir marah labid is the only tafsir in Arabic. The book, written in Arabic, was completed in the last period of his life in 1305 AH/1884 AD and was published for the first time in Makkah after first being submitted to Makkah scholars for research and commentary in 1887 AD by al-Halabi publishers, Cairo with a lay out accompanied in the margin by the interpretation of Kitab al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Aziz, by al-Wahidi (w. 468/1076). This interpretation is better known as Tafsir al- Wahidi. The arrangement of tafsir is very concise and simple.<sup>28</sup>

In his tafsir it is said that actually before writing this tafsir he hesitated to do so, he thought for a long time because he was worried that he was included in the group of people as stated by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. "Whoever speaks about the Qur'an with his mind, even if it is true, is still wrong. Whoever speaks about the Qur'an with his mind is preparing himself for a place in Hell."<sup>29</sup> Considering these concerns, Sheikh Nawawi did not have the ambition to make tafsir the target of transmitting new knowledge, but with his sincerity he would only follow the example of his predecessors in interpreting the Qur'an. From the beginning in his introduction he said that in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, he referred to several standard books of tafsir which he considered authoritative and competent. These include al-Futuh al-Ilahiyah by Sulaiman al-Jamal (d.1790), Mafatih al-Ghaib by Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d.1209), Siraj al- Munir by al-Syarbini (d.1570) and Irsyad al-'Aql al-Salim by Ibn Su'ud (d.1574), as well as references to Tanwir al-Miqbas by al-Firuzabadi (d.1415).<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Robby Zidni Ilman, "MENJAWAB KONTROVERSI TAFSIR MURAH LABIB KE-NUSANTARA; Analisis Kritis Kitab Magnumopus Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani," *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 7, no. 2 (December 30, 2019): 299–336, <https://doi.org/10.21274/kontem.2019.7.2.299-336>.

<sup>28</sup> Abd Hadi, *Metodologi Tafsir Al Quran dari masa klasik sampai masa kontemporer* (Salatiga: Griya Media, 2021), <http://books.uinsby.ac.id/id/eprint/164>.

<sup>29</sup> Syihabuddin Sayyid Mahmud Al-Alusi, *Ruh Al-Ma'ani Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Adzim Wa al-Sab'i al-Mastani*, vol. 16 (Beirut: Darr al-Fikr, n.d.).

<sup>30</sup> Rithon Igisani, "Kajian Tafsir Mufasssirs Di Indonesia," *Potret Pemikiran* 22, no. 1 (July 1, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.30984/pp.v22i1.757>.





The interpretation of the studies of the book of interpretation of the previous scholars was summarised or reviewed by Shaykh Nawawi so well in the model of ijmal interpretation. Even though the interpretation that becomes a reference is a long and voluminous interpretation, instead of the interpretation being imperfect, the interpretation of the fruit of his hand becomes an interpretation that combines the interpretation of history, and ro'yi which makes the reader helpful in understanding the verses of the Qur'an in a short time, without the need to read the book of tahlili interpretation directly which is notebannya volume - volume and needs a long time in understanding it.<sup>31</sup>

For example, when using narration as his interpretation, Shaykh Nawawi in interpreting does not list the perowi at length. Similarly, when inserting ro'yi interpretations that are quoted from previous interpretations into his tafsirnya, by only taking the essence of the meaning of an interpretation. Even when interpreting the Quran with bir ro'yi, many of his interpretations show caution. The following is Shaykh Nawawi's interpretation in the context of bir ro'yi interpretation.<sup>32</sup>

## B. Tafsir Sunda

As already mentioned, the language used in the tafsir of western Javanese figures mostly uses Sundanese. So that the use of Sundanese language becomes its own characteristic and interesting to review. In the interpretation of the Sundanese language as well as being a regional language tradition of the archipelago that upholds the manners reflected in the expression of language variety, in Sundanese there is respectful language (subtle language) and loma language (less respectful / rude language).<sup>33</sup>

The script used in writing Sundanese is pegon Arabic script. Therefore, the discussion of Sundanese tafsir in West Java, the author is more interested in discussing the use of language used rather than discussing the style of thought of the author who is influential on the book of tafsir. For example, the interpretation of the word of Allah in Q.S Thaha 92 - 93:

قَالَ يَهُرُونَ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوا أَلَّا تَتَّبِعَنِ أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِي

<sup>31</sup> Islah Gusmian, "TAFSIR AL-QURAN DAN KRITIK SOSIAL: Syubah Asa Dalam Dinamika Tafsir al-Quran Di Indonesia," *MAGHAZA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (November 14, 2016): 67–80, <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v1i2.741>.

<sup>32</sup> Ali Muqoddas, "Syeikh Nawawi Al-Bantani Al-Jawi Ilmuan Spesialis Ahli Syarah Kitab Kuning," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.34001/tarbawi.v11i1.186>.

<sup>33</sup> Karel Andrian Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek Tentang Islam Di Indonesia Abad Ke 19* (Bulan Bintang, 1980).





Meaning: He (Moses) said, "O Aaron! What prevented you when you saw them going astray, (so that) you did not follow me? Have you (deliberately) disobeyed my command?"

In a number of interpretations in Sundanese, some use the use of respectful Sundanese and some use loma Sundanese. The following is the interpretation of hormat language. The book of tafsir entitled *Rawdhat al-Irfan Volume 2* by Ahmad Sanusi, in his tafsir which reads; "*Ngadawuh Nabi Musa, Hei Nabi Harun naon anu ngahalangan anjeun, waktu ningali anjeun ka Bani Israil sasar kupur kabeh. Kana hanteu nurut keun anjeun ka kaula. Naha make nyulayaan anjeun kana parentah kaula*".<sup>34</sup>

The book of tafsir entitled *Alkitabul Mubin Volume 2* by K.H. Mhd. Romli, in his tafsir which reads; *Musa nyarita (ka Harun dina nalika dongkapna ti gunung Thur): "He Haru! Naon nu janten pamengan ka anjeun nalika anjeun ningali ka maranehna parantos sarasab (malusyrik)". "Be ngantep henteu tumut kana conto kang rai (dina ambek karena Alloh sareng merangan jalmi- jalmi nu kupu ka Mantenna?, atanapi memang kang raka ngahaja doraka kana parentahana kang rai?"*<sup>35</sup>

The book of interpretation entitled *Tafsir Al-Qu'ran Basa Sunda Volume 4* by Anwar Musaddad et al, in its interpretation which reads; "*Musa nyarita: "He Harun, naon nu ngahalangan ka anjeun, waktu anjeun mireungeuh maranehna geus sarasab? (Nepi ka) anjeun henteu nurut ka kaula? Naha anjeun ngahaja wangkelang kana parentah kaula?"* The book of interpretation entitled *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun Volume 16* by Moh. E. Hasim, in his interpretation which reads; "*Musa nyerita: "Yeuh Harun, naon nu jadi halangan pikeun hidep basa hidep ngejeueung kasasar lampah? Ku naon teu nurut ka kami? Naha hidep geus ngalawan kana parentah kami?"*".<sup>36</sup>

This verse means that after the Prophet Moses travelled from Mount Tursia, the Prophet Moses rebuked his brother, the Prophet Aaron. Prophet Moses was angry to see the Bani Isra'il left behind and entrusted to Prophet Aaron for 40 days, they (Bani Isra'il) committed idolatry by worshiping a calf. The conversation between Prophet Moses and Prophet Harun is told in Sundanese interpretation using a variety of respectful language (subtle language) although with different diction such as (anjeun, kang rai, hidep).<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Rosihon Anwar, Dadang Darmawan, and Cucu Setiawan, "Kajian Kitab Tafsir Dalam Jaringan Pesantren Di Jawa Barat," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 1, no. 1 (2016): 56–69.

<sup>35</sup> Anwar, Darmawan, and Setiawan, "Kajian Kitab Tafsir Dalam Jaringan Pesantren Di Jawa Barat", 94-104.

<sup>36</sup> Siti Mursida, "Interpretasi Moh. E Hasim Dalam Tafsir Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun Terhadap Fenomena Taklid," *Dar El-Ilmi: Jurnal Studi Keagamaan, Pendidikan Dan Humaniora* 8, no. 1 (April 12, 2021): 36–53, <https://doi.org/10.52166/darelilmi.v8i1.2397>.

<sup>37</sup> R.M. Feener, "Notes Toward The History of Qur'anic Exegesis in Southeast Asia," *Studia Islamika; Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 5, no. 3 (1998), 48.





Using loma language as in the interpretation of Q.S Al A'raf Verse 12

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ ۚ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ

Meaning: (Allah) said, "What prevented you (that) you did not prostrate (to Adam) when I told you to?" (Iblis) replied, "I am better than him. You created me from fire, whereas you created him from earth".

The book of tafsir entitled *Rawdhat al-Irfan* Volume 1 by Ahmad Sanusi, in his interpretation of this verse there is mola language (less honourable / tend to be rude) which means ; *Maka mariksa Allah naon anu nyegah ka maneh iblis kana heunteudaek sujud maneh ka Nabi Adam, waktu marentah Aing ka maneh. Ngajawab iblis, ari abdi eta leuwih hade tibata Nabi Adam karana geus ngadamel Gusti ka abdi tina seuneu jeung ngadamel Gusti ka Nabi Adam tinda taneuh*".<sup>38</sup>

The use of the loma language variety (tends to be rude) is found in the second person pronoun *maneh* (you) which shows the lowliness of the devil before Allah swt. However, there is respectful language (subtle language) namely (*abdi*, *Gusti*) the greeting *Gusti* shows for Allah in the verse above, as a form of respectful language in addressing Allah swt by His creatures. From the two sample examples of Sundanese language interpretation, it can be seen that the dominance of respectful language in the interpretation of Sundanese language rather than loman language.<sup>39</sup>

The use of loman or rough language is used in certain words according to the context of interpretation, if the *khitob* is intended for the devil or something that is considered bad then the language used is loma language, so apart from that the language used is respectful. This pattern of writing tafsir in Sundanese is also used in translating Arabic into a number of regional languages such as Javanese and Madurese in teaching *turost* books which are then called *pegon script*.<sup>40</sup>

### C. Tafsir Al Mahfudz

As a newcomer, *Tafsir Al Mahfudz* is a new book of interpretation that needs to be taken into account the style, method and pattern of interpretation. The book of interpretation written by Dr

<sup>38</sup> Dedi Kuswandi and Abu Maskur, "Metodologi Tafsir Ulama Nusantara Di Tanah Pasundan (Telaah Atas Kitab Tafsir *Rawdhat Al-'Irfân Dan Malja' At-Thâlibîn* Karya KH. Ahmad Sanusi)," *Al-Fahmu: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (September 30, 2022): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.58363/alfahmu.v1i1.6>.

<sup>39</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab kuning, pesantren, dan tarekat : tradisi-tradisi Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), <https://cir.nii.ac.jp/crid/1130282272367756800>.

<sup>40</sup> Irwan Evarial, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Tradisi Sunda: Studi Pemikiran Moh. E. Hasyim Dalam Tafsir Ayat Suci Dalam Renungan," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 2, no. 1 (June 30, 2017): 85–108, <https://doi.org/10.22515/islimus.v2i1.788>.





Ahmad Syarwat. This book has its own characteristics in the world of interpretation in Indonesian after its predecessors, namely Tafsir Al Azhar by Buya Hamkka and Tafsir Al Misbah.<sup>41</sup> Dr Ahmad Syarwat is a Muslim scholar who was born in Cairo Egypt on 19 September 1969 while his parents were studying at Al Azhar. He studied at the Imam Muhammad Suud Islamic University LIPIA Jakarta in the Faculty of Sharia comparing madhhabs, then took his master's degree at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah in Quranic and Hadith Sciences, and took his doctoral degree at the Institute of Quranic Sciences (IIQ) Jakarta.

Tafsir Al Mahfudz based on the author's narrative in muqoddimahnya can not be separated from references from authoritative books, and academically recognised. According to him, without it, irresponsible people can just play with the Quran. from a number of existing interpretation books, Dr Ahmad Syarwat refers to a number of classic interpretation books from the salaf, khalaf and contemporary including Mafatihul Gaib by Fakhrrur Rozi, and Al Jam' Li Ahkam Al Quran by Al Qurthubi. The author also refers to books that are characterised by history such as Tafsir Ibn Kastir, as well as Fathul Qodir by Assyaukani. In addition, some interpretations of Jami' Al Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al Quran by Imam Athabari, as well as referring to An Naukat Wal Uyun by Al Mawardi. In addition to referring to the book of interpretation so that the approach is contemporary, Dr Syarwat also refers to contemporary books, namely Tafsir Al Munir by Wahbah Azzuhaili, and Ibn Ashur's book entitled At Tahrir Wat Tanwir which is phenomenal.

Because it is written in Indonesian, the author also refers to the interpretation of Al Azhar by Prof Dr Hamka, and Al Misbah by Prof Quraisy Syihab as well as the work of Indonesian mufassirs under the coordination of the Ministry of Religion of Indonesia, namely the Quran and its Interpretation. From a number of books that become references, we can understand that Tafsir Al Mahfudz is a tahlili interpretation while still also analysing a combination of ro'yi and history as a comparison to get an understanding of the correct interpretation.

Tafsir Al Mahfudz has a unique way of presentation in its writing, different from the others. First, in its interpretation, the integration of the Mushaf page into the book of interpretation, according to the author of this book with the integration of the Mushaf on one page eliminates the separate sensation of reading the Quran in the book of interpretation. This stems from a fact when discussing the book of interpretation as if it has nothing to do with the Quran, and vice versa when reading Al

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<sup>41</sup> Ahmad Sarwat, Lc., M.A, Tafsir Al Mahfudz, Vol 1 (Rumah Fikih Publishing). 7.





Quan generally does not care about the meaning behind each lafadz read. The Mushaf used in this tafsir is Mushaf Shaykh Dr Ustman Thaha which is produced by the printing of Mushaf Madinah Al Munawwarah.

The second discussion of verses discussed independently separated by pages. In contrast to the policy of other tafsir books that group a number of verses in one title, as in the contemporary tafsir book Tafsir Al Munir by Wahbah Azzuhaili, or Al Azhar by Buya Hamka, this way of presentation has the advantage of knowing the theme of a tafsir for the reader. In contrast to the presentation of the book of interpretation of classical scholars who discuss tafsir with verses separately, whose advantages are more detailed in each discussion. The third in Tafsir Al Mahfudz is also presented rasm and word-for-word translation and continued with the full translation. The translation in Tafsir Al Mahfudz refers to the 2019 KEMENAG translation, Tafsir Al Misbah, and Tafsir Al Azhar by Buya Hamka. While the last order of presentation in this interpretation is the interpretation of the verse.

### **Influential Figures and Linguistic Insights of West Java Mufasir**

The development of Quranic exegesis (tafsir) in West Java is shaped by influential figures who have contributed distinct linguistic insights, reflecting regional traditions and scholarly perspectives.<sup>42</sup> This discussion focuses on key works and authors within this context, highlighting their contributions and linguistic approaches. Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's tafsir, "Marah Labid li Kasyfi Ma'ana Qur'anil Majid" (commonly known as "al-Tafsir al-Munir"), holds a significant place in the history of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia, particularly in the western part of Java.<sup>43</sup> Completed in 1884, this Arabic-language tafsir exemplifies a concise and straightforward approach to interpreting the Quran. Sheikh Nawawi drew upon established scholarly sources such as al-Futuh al-Ilahiyah and Mafatih al-Ghaib, synthesizing their insights to offer a comprehensive understanding of the Quran without the verbosity often associated with earlier tafsir works.<sup>44</sup>

One notable aspect of Sheikh Nawawi's tafsir is his careful integration of traditional methodologies with contemporary readability. Despite initial reservations rooted in prophetic

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<sup>42</sup> Lailatul Wardah and Syarifuddin Ala Dzil Fikri, "Al-Taqdim Wa al-Ta'khir: Linguistic Rules in Qur'anic Interpretation," *Al-Karim: International Journal of Quranic and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (September 30, 2023): 177–92, <https://doi.org/10.33367/al-karim.v1i2.4188>.

<sup>43</sup> Ilman, "MENJAWAB KONTROVERSI TAFSIR MURAH LABIB KE-NUSANTARA; Analisis Kritis Kitab Magnumopus Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani."

<sup>44</sup> Bahary, "TAFSIR NUSANTARA."





warnings against speculative interpretations, Sheikh Nawawi approached his work with sincerity and adherence to orthodox principles. His tafsir serves as a bridge between classical interpretations and modern readership, presenting nuanced insights that resonate with diverse audiences.<sup>45</sup>

By emphasizing clarity and summarization, Sheikh Nawawi made Quranic commentary more accessible to a wider audience in Indonesia. His tafsir influenced subsequent generations of scholars, shaping the evolution of tafsir scholarship in the region. Sheikh Nawawi's navigation of prophetic warnings against speculative interpretations demonstrates his commitment to maintaining the integrity and authenticity of Quranic exegesis. Overall, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's tafsir represents a pivotal contribution to Indonesian tafsir scholarship. His work not only enriched the understanding of the Quran but also paved the way for a more engaging and practical approach to studying and interpreting Islamic scripture in Indonesia.

In contrast to classical Arabic tafsir traditions, the tafsir tradition in West Java stands out for its use of the Sundanese language, reflecting the region's rich linguistic customs and cultural heritage. Sundanese tafsir incorporates distinct linguistic nuances that range from respectful (subtle) to less formal (rude) expressions, aligning with societal norms and regional linguistic conventions. The utilization of Sundanese language is exemplified in interpretations of Quranic verses like Surah Taha (20:92-93), which showcase linguistic diversity and sensitivity. Works such as "Rawdhat al-Irfan," "Alkitabul Mubin," and "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Basa Sunda" demonstrate this linguistic approach by employing respectful and culturally appropriate language choices. This nuanced use of language enhances comprehension and cultural relevance, making Quranic interpretations accessible and relatable to the local community.<sup>46</sup>

One notable feature of Sundanese tafsir is the integration of pegon Arabic script, a local scriptural tradition that blends Arabic textual sources with indigenous writing systems. This fusion of Arabic and local script highlights West Java's unique heritage and scholarly engagement with Quranic interpretation.<sup>47</sup> By incorporating pegon Arabic script, Sundanese tafsir preserves and promotes regional linguistic traditions, contributing to the rich tapestry of Islamic scholarship in the

<sup>45</sup> Ekawati Ew Hamzah, "Mazhab Tafsir Indonesia (tipologi tafsir)," *TAFASIR: Journal of Quranic Studies* 1, no. 2 (December 28, 2023): 36–49, <https://doi.org/10.62376/tafasir.v1i2.15>.

<sup>46</sup> Muhammad Fajri, "Dynamics of The Study of The Quran in Indonesia: Language and Paradigm," *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 1 (August 29, 2021): 46–58, <https://doi.org/10.30983/it.v5i1.4130>.

<sup>47</sup> Jajang A. Rohmana, "Ideologisasi Tafsir Lokal Berbahasa Sunda: Kepentingan Islam-Modernis dalam Tafsir Nurul-Bajan dan Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun," *JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES* 2, no. 1 (June 20, 2013): 125–54, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v2i1.1311>.







area. Diving deeper into the details of Sundanese tafsir in West Java, the use of the Sundanese language represents a deliberate effort to make Quranic interpretations more relatable and culturally resonant with the local community. Sundanese, being the predominant language in the region, offers a nuanced spectrum of linguistic expressions that cater to different social contexts and interpersonal relationships.<sup>48</sup>

Sundanese tafsir, with its linguistic sensitivity and cultural relevance, embodies a holistic approach to Quranic interpretation. By utilizing the Sundanese language and pegon script, scholars of West Java enrich the landscape of Islamic scholarship, bridging classical Arabic tafsir with local customs and traditions. This fusion of language and script not only preserves regional heritage but also fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Quran within the diverse communities of West Java. In conclusion, Sundanese tafsir stands as a testament to the dynamic interplay between language, culture, and religion in West Java. It exemplifies how Quranic interpretations can be adapted to resonate with local identities and societal norms, contributing to a vibrant tradition of Islamic scholarship that is rooted in regional heritage and scholarly engagement.

Dr. Ahmad Sarwat's "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" represents a significant contribution to contemporary Indonesian tafsir, embodying a meticulous blend of traditional scholarship and modern interpretative approaches. This tafsir is characterized by its comprehensive integration of Quranic verses and word-for-word translations, aimed at facilitating a deeper understanding of the Quranic text. One notable feature of "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" is its innovative approach to integrating Quranic verses directly into the commentary. Unlike traditional tafsir works that may separate the Quranic text from the commentary, Dr. Sarwat's tafsir presents verses independently within the commentary, fostering coherence and alignment between exegesis and the original Quranic text. This integration allows readers to engage directly with the verses being interpreted, promoting a more immersive and holistic reading experience.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" employs word-for-word translations alongside the commentary, enhancing linguistic precision and facilitating a nuanced understanding of Quranic meanings. By providing detailed translations that adhere closely to the Arabic text, this tafsir enables readers to grasp the subtleties and nuances of Quranic language, even if they are not proficient in

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<sup>48</sup> Irma Riyani, "Preferred Word Choice: Variation Of Translations In Sundanese Qur'anic Translation And Tafsir," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al- Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 7, no. 2 (December 31, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.15575/al-bayan.v7i2.25210>.

<sup>49</sup> Ahmad Sarwat, "Tafsir Ulama Nusantara Tafsir Kemenag," *Jakarta Selatan: Rumah Fiqih Publishing*, n.d.





Arabic. The choice of Mushaf Shaykh Dr. Uthman Thaha as the Quranic text source in "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" is deliberate and contributes to the seamless integration of Quranic verses into the commentary. This Mushaf, produced with a focus on clarity and readability, aligns with Dr. Sarwat's goal of presenting Quranic verses in a format that enhances comprehension and accessibility for contemporary readers.<sup>50</sup>

Dr. Sarwat's tafsir exemplifies a contemporary interpretation deeply rooted in traditional scholarship. By drawing on classical and contemporary sources, including works by renowned scholars like Fakhrur Razi, Al-Qurtubi, and Ibn Kathir, "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" maintains academic rigor while offering fresh insights into Quranic interpretation relevant to modern audiences. Overall, "Tafsir Al Mahfudz" enriches the landscape of Indonesian tafsir by providing a balanced synthesis of historical insights and modern linguistic perspectives. Dr. Sarwat's meticulous methodology and commitment to textual integrity contribute to a tafsir that is both scholarly rigorous and accessible, serving as a valuable resource for students, scholars, and general readers interested in Quranic exegesis and Islamic studies.<sup>51</sup>

In summary, West Java's tafsir tradition represents a rich tapestry of linguistic diversity and scholarly contributions that underscore the region's cultural and intellectual heritage. The evolution of tafsir in this region is characterized by a continuum of linguistic insights and interpretative styles, ranging from classical Arabic works to vernacular Sundanese interpretations and contemporary Indonesian tafsir like "Tafsir Al Mahfudz." Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's Arabic-language tafsir, "Marah Labid li Kasyfi Ma'ana Qur'anil Majid," stands as a pivotal work that bridges traditional exegesis with accessible interpretations. His concise and straightforward approach, drawing from established scholarly sources, serves as a model for integrating classical interpretations into modern readership.

The Sundanese tafsir tradition, exemplified by works such as "Rawdhat al-Irfan" and "Alkitabul Mubin," reflects regional linguistic customs and cultural nuances. Through the use of Sundanese language, these interpretations enhance comprehension and relevance, aligning with local societal norms and expressions. Contemporary Indonesian tafsir, typified by Dr. Ahmad Sarwat's "Tafsir Al Mahfudz," represents a synthesis of traditional and modern approaches. By integrating Quranic

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<sup>50</sup> Ahmad Sarwat, "Kajian Tafsir Ayat Ahkam: Ayat-Ayat AlQuran Yang Mengandung Hukum Syariat" (Jakarta: DU Center, 2009).

<sup>51</sup> Ahmad Sarwat, "Ilmu Al-Quran Dan Tafsir I" (Jakarta: Rumah Fiqih Publishing, 2021).





verses directly into the commentary and providing meticulous word-for-word translations, this tafsir enriches the landscape of Indonesian exegesis with linguistic precision and methodical presentation.

Together, these influential figures and their diverse linguistic approaches illuminate the multifaceted nature of Quranic exegesis in West Java. The tafsir tradition in this region not only preserves the scholarly heritage of Islamic interpretation but also adapts to local contexts, ensuring the continued relevance and accessibility of Quranic teachings for diverse audiences. West Java's tafsir tradition serves as a testament to the dynamic interplay between language, culture, and religious scholarship, offering valuable insights into the enduring legacy of Quranic interpretation in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

In summary, the tafsir tradition in West Java embodies a rich tapestry of linguistic diversity and scholarly contributions, highlighting the region's profound cultural and intellectual heritage. Influential figures like Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and Dr. Ahmad Sarwat have played pivotal roles in shaping Quranic exegesis in this region, fostering its evolution by adapting interpretations to local contexts and ensuring the enduring relevance and accessibility of Quranic teachings for diverse audiences. The dynamic interplay between language, culture, and religious scholarship within West Java's tafsir tradition illuminates the enduring legacy of Quranic interpretation in Indonesia. This tradition reflects a vibrant scholarly heritage deeply rooted in regional culture and scholarly engagement, demonstrating a continual effort to preserve and enrich Islamic scholarship while remaining responsive to the needs and contexts of local communities. Through their meticulous works and nuanced approaches, these influential figures have contributed to a dynamic discourse that resonates with the multifaceted identities and traditions of West Java. As Quranic exegesis continues to evolve, the tafsir tradition in West Java serves as a testament to the resilience and adaptability of Islamic scholarship, ensuring the ongoing relevance and accessibility of Quranic teachings in Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape.

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