

**TAFSIR AS-SALAM IN THE SIGHT OF  
EPISTEMOLOGY:  
UNVEILING THE INTEGRATION OF ULUM  
AL-QUR'AN AND SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REALITY**

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**Abstract**

*This article examines the epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salām* by *Asmaji Mukhtar*, with particular attention to the integration of 'ulūm al-Qur'an and contemporary socio-religious realities. The study responds to a gap in modern Qur'anic exegesis scholarship, which has largely emphasized methodological and thematic aspects while paying insufficient attention to the epistemological foundations underpinning interpretive practices. Employing a qualitative approach based on library research, this study utilizes content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and contextual hermeneutics. The data are analyzed through thematic as well as symbolic-conceptual analysis of *Tafsir As-Salam* alongside classical and contemporary exegetical literature. The findings demonstrate that *Tafsir As-Salam* articulates an integrative epistemology of Qur'anic interpretation that dialogically and responsibly synthesizes naqli sources, 'aqli reasoning, and empirical social realities. This *tafsir* not only preserves the authority of classical 'ulūm al-Qur'an but also actualizes them in addressing contemporary issues such as pluralism, tolerance, peacebuilding, and the relationship between religion and science. Through its*

*symbolic interpretive approach and ethical–transformative orientation, *Tafsir As-Salam* emerges as a model of moderate and contextually responsive Qur’anic exegesis. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Nusantara tafsir epistemology by proposing a normative–contextual paradigm that bridges classical tradition and the challenges of modernity.*

**Keywords:** *Contemporary Tafsir; Epistemology of Qur’anic Exegesis; Socio-Religious Context; Tafsir As-Salam; Ulum al-Qur’an*

## **Introduction**

The development of Quranic interpretation demonstrates a constantly evolving epistemological dynamic in line with changes in the social, cultural, and intellectual context of the Muslim community. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions, interpretation has been conducted directly, with the authority of revelation as the primary reference. However, as Islam spread to various regions and various socio-political influences entered, the practice of interpretation has undergone differentiation in methods and approaches. In the modern era, interpretation no longer functions solely as an explanation of the text, but also as a means of responding to increasingly complex societal issues, such as plurality, social justice, and peace (Saeed, 2006; Rahman, 1992).

Despite the rapid development of contemporary interpretation studies, particularly through contextual, hermeneutic, and social approaches, most research remains focused on the methodological and thematic aspects of interpretation (Rahmatullah, 2021). These studies tend to emphasize how verses are interpreted, but lack an in-depth understanding of why a method is considered epistemologically valid. Without a clear epistemological foundation, interpretation methods risk losing scientific legitimacy and becoming mired in subjectivity or mere pragmatism (Arkoun, 1994). In other words, there is a tendency to separate the epistemological discourse and the practice of Quranic interpretation.

It is in this context that Asmaji Mukhtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* becomes interesting to study. This interpretation offers an interpretive model that seeks to simultaneously integrate Quranic scholars with contemporary socio-religious realities. Unlike interpretations that are solely textually oriented or, conversely, overly contextual, *Tafsir As-Salam* positions the classical *tafsir* tradition as the epistemological basis, while also allowing for social context as part of the process of interpretation. This approach makes the interpretation not only normative but also relevant to the needs of modern society, particularly in humanitarian issues such as pluralism, tolerance, and peace.

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of a contextual approach to Quranic interpretation (Saeed, 2013; Abu Zayd, 2010), including in the Indonesian context, which is characterized by social and religious diversity (Saputra, 2025). However, these studies generally have not specifically addressed the epistemological construction of interpretation that systematically integrates Qur'anic scholars and social reality. More specifically, *Tafsir As-Salam*, a contemporary Indonesian exegetical work compiled in an academic setting, has not been extensively studied from the perspective of its interpretive epistemology. This is the research gap that is the primary focus of this study.

Based on this gap, this study aims to examine the epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salam* in depth by placing it within classical and contemporary exegetical discourses. The focus of the research is directed at understanding how this interpretation constructs the legitimacy of knowledge through a synthesis of *naqli* (theological) sources, *aqli* (theological), and empirical socio-religious realities. Thus, this study not only describes the interpretation method but also analyzes the epistemological foundations that support it.

This study specifically answers three main questions: (1) How does the epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salam* integrate Qur'anic scholars and the socio-religious context? (2) What is the methodological

uniqueness of this interpretation compared to other classical and contemporary interpretations? and (3) What are the implications of this interpretation's epistemology for social issues such as pluralism and peace? These three questions are key to assessing the position of *Tafsir As-Salam* within the contemporary map of exegetical thought.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to enriching the study of the epistemology of interpretation, particularly in the context of Nusantara interpretation. Theoretically, this study offers an integrative epistemological model of interpretation that bridges classical tradition and the demands of modernity. Practically, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for the development of interpretation that is contextual, moderate, and scientifically and socially responsible.

## **Method**

This research employs a qualitative approach with a library research design, focusing on an in-depth analysis of *tafsir* texts as intellectual products and religious discourse. A qualitative approach was chosen because the primary objective of the research is not to test quantitative hypotheses or generate statistical generalizations, but rather to understand the epistemological constructions, knowledge structures, and methodological logic underlying *Tafsir As-Salam*. In the humanities and Islamic studies, a qualitative approach is considered effective for examining normative texts rich in meaning, values, and social context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Given, 2022).

Epistemologically, this research is exploratory and interpretive. The exploratory nature is evident in the effort to explore aspects of the epistemology of *tafsir* that have not been systematically studied in the context of contemporary Indonesian *tafsir*. The interpretive nature is reflected in the research's focus on the meaning of *tafsir* texts, the interpreters' epistemological assumptions, and the socio-religious orientations underlying them. An interpretive approach allows researchers to read *tafsir* texts not only as scholarly

documents but also as constructions of meaning that exist within specific social contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted through a combination of three main approaches. First, content analysis was used to identify, code, and classify epistemological themes emerging in *Tafsir As-Salam*, such as the use of Qur'anic scholars, the role of reason and intuition, and the relationship between the text and social reality. Content analysis was chosen because it can systematically reveal conceptual patterns and structures of meaning within religious texts (Krippendorff, 2018). Second, discourse analysis was used to read *Tafsir As-Salam* as a practice of scholarly and religious discourse. This approach aims to uncover how *tafsir* constructs epistemological authority, positions the classical *tafsir* tradition, and responds to social issues such as pluralism and peace. Critical discourse analysis helps link the interpretive text to the social context, ideology, and power relations surrounding it (Fairclough, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Third, this study uses a critical hermeneutics approach to understand the dialogue between the Qur'anic text, the interpretive tradition, and the horizons of contemporary readers. Hermeneutics in this study is not used to relativize the text's meaning, but to explore the dynamics of understanding that remain bound to the Qur'anic *ulum* as a normative framework. This approach is relevant to studying contextual interpretations that seek to maintain a balance between the authority of the text and the demands of social reality (Thiselton, 2019).

The data analysis techniques used were thematic analysis and symbolic-conceptual analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted by identifying units of meaning in the exegetic text and then grouping them into key epistemological themes, such as *naqli-aqli-empirical* integration, interpretive validity, and benefit orientation. This technique was chosen because it is flexible and effective for organizing complex qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Meanwhile, symbolic-conceptual analysis was used to examine key concepts, epistemological terms, and recurring symbols of

meaning in the exegetical text, and how these concepts shape the interpreter's knowledge framework. This approach helps understand the implicit meanings and ideological orientations contained in the interpretation of religious texts (Saldana, 2021).

The research procedure was carried out through several systematic stages. First, primary data was collected from Asmaji Mukhtar's *Tafsir As-Salam*, published between 2021 and 2023, and secondary data from books, reputable journal articles, dissertations, and proceedings relevant to contemporary exegesis and Islamic epistemology. Second, intensive and selective reading of the exegetical texts was conducted to identify sections containing epistemological constructs and socio-religious responses. Third, data was coded based on epistemological themes. Fourth, data was analyzed and interpreted through a synthesis of the results of content analysis, discourse analysis, and critical hermeneutics. Fifth, conclusions were drawn by locating the research findings within the epistemological discourses of classical and contemporary exegetical interpretation. With these approaches, techniques, and procedures, this research is expected to produce a comprehensive, systematic, and academically responsible epistemological analysis of *Tafsir As-Salam*.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Background and Context of the Birth of *Tafsir As-Salam***

The book *Tafsir As-Salam* was born out of the need to provide a work of interpretation appropriate to the context of Indonesian society, particularly in the modern academic and Islamic boarding school environment in Wonosobo. This work was written by Asmaji Muchtar, an academic and translator active at UNSIQ (University of the Science of the Qur'an), who has a strong background in exegesis and Arabic. As a higher education institution focused on the science of the Qur'an, UNSIQ supports the development of this book as part of its efforts to ground the science of interpretation in a practical and accessible way for the wider

community, including the students and students of the As-Salam Qur'anic Islamic Boarding School, established in 2019.

Asmaji Muchtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* has a systematic structure that is quite unique compared to other classical and contemporary exegesis books. The book consists of approximately 1,000 pages divided into several main sections: Scientific Introduction and Philosophical Introduction. The first section discusses the introduction to the science of *tafsir*, including definitions, the historical development of *tafsir*, and the methodology used in this work. The author emphasizes the importance of integrating religious knowledge and modern science as the epistemological foundation of *tafsir* (Muchtar, 2021).

Unlike classical *tafsir*, which are often very detailed and lengthy, *Tafsir As-Salam* adopts the *ijmali* approach, namely a concise yet meaningful interpretation. Each verse is explained symbolically and thematically, not just textually or in terms of *fiqh* law (Mukhotob, 2021). Emphasizing Symbolism and the Socio-Scientific Context, each verse is explained not only linguistically and historically but also linked to symbolism relevant to modern science, technology, sociology, and even metaphysics. For example, the story of Prophet Solomon and Queen Bilqis is analyzed as a symbol of leadership, discipline, and ethics in a modern social context (Mukhotob, 2021). The conclusion and final section of each verse discussion usually concludes with an applied reflection that links the verse's message to contemporary challenges, particularly in educational, social, and humanitarian contexts.

### **Epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salam***

Asmaji Muchtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* represents an integrative and contextual model of epistemological interpretation within the contemporary Indonesian exegesis. Epistemologically, this interpretation does not rely on a single source of knowledge, but rather combines the dimensions of the *naqli* (the divine), the *aqli* (the rational), and the empirical socio-religious reality. This approach

demonstrates the interpreter's serious effort to bridge the authority of the classical exegetical tradition with the demands of modern society's problems.

One of the main characteristics of the epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salam* is the use of scientific intuition (*al-hads al-‘ilmī*), developed through a critical synthesis of 22 classical exegetical works. The interpretation process is not carried out spontaneously or subjectively, but rather begins with a comparison of the opinions of the majority of commentators (*jumhūr al-mufassirīn*), particularly on non-creedal verses. This strategy reflects methodological prudence to ensure that interpretation remains within the established Islamic scholarly tradition (al-Qattan, 2000; al-Dzahabi, 2005). The intuition used here is not speculative, but rather intuition cultivated through mastery of *tafsir* literature and Qur'anic jurisprudence.

In terms of sources of knowledge, *Tafsir As-Salam* combines *naqli*-based Qur'anic jurisprudence such as the Qur'an, hadith, *ijma'*, and the consensus of the Companions with rational and controlled *ra'y*. The use of reason in this interpretation is inseparable from the principles of *maqāṣid al-syārī‘ah* and Arabic language rules, thus avoiding the interpretation of the reprehensible opinion (*bi al-ra'y al-madhmūm*) (Zarkasyi, 2018). Furthermore, empirical socio-religious reality is used as an interpretative horizon to read the meaning of verses contextually, especially in social issues, diversity, and interfaith relations (Saputra, 2025).

The validity of knowledge in the *Tafsir As-Salam* can be examined through three modern epistemological frameworks: coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. First, coherence is evident in the interpretation's internal consistency with the principles of Qur'anic scholars and the classical exegetical opinions used as references. Second, correspondence is evident in the interpretation's suitability to the social realities faced by Muslims, so that the interpretation is inseparable from the real-life context (Rahman, 1982). Third, pragmatism is reflected in the interpretation's

orientation toward social welfare and impact, where the interpretation's truth is measured by its ability to provide ethical and religious solutions for society.

Thus, the epistemology of the *Tafsir As-Salam* demonstrates an integrative interpretation pattern that connects text, reason, and context in a dialogue. This model makes interpretation not merely a product of understanding past texts but also an instrument of socio-religious transformation amidst the challenges of modernity. In the context of Nusantara exegesis, *Tafsir As-Salam* contributes significantly to enriching the discourse on moderate, contextual, and social peace-oriented epistemology.

### **Comparison with Epistemological Positivism in Exegesis**

Epistemological positivism is a school of philosophy of science that emphasizes that valid knowledge is only that which is empirically verifiable, objective, and value-free. In the context of the study of Qur'anic exegesis, the positivistic approach tends to view the text as an object with a fixed meaning and can be understood literally through descriptive-analytical methods, without considering the interpreter's subjectivity or the surrounding social context. This paradigm bears similarities to modern scientific approaches that limit interpretation to observable and verifiable facts (Comte, 1975; Kerlinger, 2006).

In positivistic exegesis, the validity of an interpretation is measured by the text's correspondence to its linguistic structure and historical data, which are considered objective. Consequently, this type of interpretation tends to reject the use of intuition, religious experience, or socio-cultural considerations as legitimate sources of knowledge. While this approach has the advantage of maintaining methodological discipline and preventing excessive speculation, it often falls into the trap of reductionism, ignoring the complexity of the Quran's message as a transhistorical and transcontextual guide to life (Nasr, 2010).

In contrast to positivism, KH. Asmaji Muchtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* develops a more flexible and integrative epistemology of interpretation. This interpretation does not position the text as an isolated source of knowledge, but rather as an entity constantly interacting with reason, scientific intuition, and socio-religious realities. This approach allows Quranic interpretation to respond more adaptively to societal dynamics, without losing its normative foundation. Within this framework, intuition is not understood as a wild subjectivity, but as the result of a long-standing dialectic between the text, the classical exegetical tradition, and the social experiences of the community (Muchtar, 2021).

The limitations of epistemological positivism become increasingly apparent when confronted with contemporary socio-religious issues, such as pluralism, identity conflict, and cultural change. A rigid positivistic approach tends to struggle to explain the contextual and applicable ethical and normative dimensions of the Quran. In contrast, *Tafsir As-Salam* adopts a pragmatic orientation, where the truth of an interpretation is measured not only by methodological accuracy but also by the extent to which it can bring about social welfare, peace, and solutions for the community (Rahman, 1982).

Thus, epistemologically, *Tafsir As-Salam* can be considered superior to positivist approaches to Quranic interpretation because it integrates the objectivity of the text with controlled subjectivity and social context. This integration makes the interpretation not merely a descriptive academic product but a living and transformative religious discourse. In the context of Nusantara interpretation, this approach emphasizes the importance of an interpretation paradigm that is not only methodologically sound but also relevant and beneficial from a socio-religious perspective.

## **The Interpretation of As-Salam from the Perspective of Critical Hermeneutics and Post-Positivism**

While positivism positions the meaning of a text as an objective entity that can be neutrally accessed, critical hermeneutics—as developed by Gadamer and Habermas—affirms that understanding always occurs within situated consciousness, a consciousness bound by history, language, and social interests (Gadamer, 2004; Habermas, 1984). Within this framework, positivism's claim to pure objectivity is considered an epistemological illusion.

The Interpretation of As-Salam has strong affinities with critical hermeneutics, particularly in its explicit recognition of the role of social context and the experiences of the people as part of the meaning-making process. Interpretation is not understood as a reproduction of past meanings, but rather as a dialogue between the revealed text and contemporary reality. This aligns with Gadamer's concept of the fusion of horizons, where meaning arises from the encounter between the text's horizon and the reader's horizon (Gadamer, 2004).

The interpretation of As-Salam can also be positioned within the post-positivism paradigm. Unlike classical positivism, which demands empirical certainty, post-positivism acknowledges the limitations of human knowledge, the possibility of interpreter bias, and the importance of a multi-perspective approach (Creswell, 2014). In the interpretation of As-Salam, this epistemological awareness is evident in a critical attitude toward a single interpretive opinion and a preference for synthesizing the views of various classical commentators before contextualizing.

This approach also addresses Fazlur Rahman's criticism of literalistic interpretations that fail to capture the moral purpose of the Quran. Rahman emphasized that the meaning of the Quran must move from its historical context to universal ethical principles, then be reapplied to the contemporary context (double movement theory)

(Rahman, 1982). This pattern is implicitly implemented in the interpretation of As-Salam, particularly in verses dealing with social and societal issues.

### **Comparison of As-Salam Interpretation with Hermeneutics**

Modern hermeneutics is an epistemological approach that positions understanding as a dialogical process between the text, the author, and the reader. In the Western hermeneutical tradition, particularly from Schleiermacher, Dilthey, to Gadamer, the meaning of a text is not viewed as a static entity, but rather as the result of historical, sociological, and psychological interactions between the interpreter and the world of the text (Gadamer, 2004). Therefore, hermeneutics emphasizes intersubjective subjectivity, namely, understanding that arises from the encounter of various horizons of meaning (*Horizontverschmelzung*).

In the context of Qur'anic studies, the hermeneutic approach offers an important contribution, particularly in opening up space for contextualizing meaning and avoiding ahistorical textual readings. The historical-sociological method allows the interpreter to trace the socio-historical background of the revelation of verses, while the psychological approach seeks to understand the religious intentions and experiences underlying the text (Palmer, 1969). However, this approach also faces serious criticism, particularly when hermeneutics is applied so radically that it negates the authority of the text and places meaning entirely in the reader's construction.

This is where the fundamental difference between pure hermeneutics and *Tafsir As-Salam* becomes significant. *Tafsir As-Salam* does indeed overlap with hermeneutics, particularly in its recognition of the social context and the reader's reality as the horizon of meaning. However, this interpretation does not make subjectivity the primary determinant of meaning. Instead, the interpreter's subjectivity is strictly controlled by the framework of Qur'anic scholars and the authority of classical exegesis.

Contextualization in *Tafsir As-Salam* is methodological, not relativistic. Hermeneutics, especially in its postmodern variants, is often skeptical of claims to final meaning and the authority of the text. This attitude has the potential to give rise to interpretive relativism, where all interpretations are considered equally valid as long as they can be discursively justified (Thiselton, 2009). *Tafsir As-Salam* avoids this trap by positioning the Quran as a sacred text with normative limits for interpretation. The intuition used in this interpretation is not a free one, but rather a scientific one born of intensive dialogue with classical interpretations and Islamic scientific principles.

The epistemological excellence of *Tafsir As-Salam* lies in its ability to integrate hermeneutic sensitivity with normative responsibility. This approach aligns with Fazlur Rahman's critique of subjectivist hermeneutics, which ignores the moral purpose of the Quran. Rahman emphasized that interpretation must move from historical meaning to universal ethical principles that can be applied contextually, without diminishing the authority of the text (Rahman, 1982). This pattern is substantively reflected in *Tafsir As-Salam*.

Thus, compared to pure hermeneutics, *Tafsir As-Salam* offers a more epistemologically responsible model of interpretation. It does not reject context and subjectivity, but subordinates them to the discipline of Qur'anic scholars and the tradition of interpretation. This approach makes *Tafsir As-Salam* a bridge between modern hermeneutic awareness and Islamic normative commitments, while strengthening its position as a moderate and authoritative contextual interpretation in the Indonesian landscape of interpretation.

### **Comparison of the *Tafsir As-Salam* with Classical Islamic Epistemology**

Classical Islamic epistemology is built on a theocentric framework that positions revelation (*al-wahy*) as the ultimate source of knowledge, while reason (*al-‘aql*) and sensory experience (*al-hiss*) serve as supporting instruments in understanding reality and sacred texts. Within this framework, knowledge is never understood

autonomously or secularly, but is always bound to divine will and guidance. This paradigm asserts that the ultimate truth originates from God, while human reason and experience are limited and require the guidance of revelation to avoid epistemological error (Nasr, 2018).

One of the central figures in classical Islamic epistemology is al-Ghazali. He formulated a hierarchy of sources of knowledge that includes the five senses (*al-hiss*), reason (*al-‘aql*), and divine light (*al-nūr al-ilāhī*). According to al-Ghazali, the five senses function to perceive empirical reality, reason processes and deduces rational knowledge, while divine light serves as the ultimate source of knowledge that enables humans to attain metaphysical and spiritual truth (Al-Ghazali, 2001). This epistemological framework simultaneously critiques extreme rationalism that absolutizes reason and ignores the transcendent dimension. In the context of exegesis, al-Ghazali's approach fosters methodological caution, where reason is used sparingly and always controlled by the authority of revelation and the consensus of scholars.

However, the strength of al-Ghazali's epistemology also carries limitations. The heavy reliance on normative structures and authoritative traditions often renders classical exegesis less responsive to rapid and complex social change. Exegesis functions more as a reproduction of established meanings than as a space for dialogue between texts and new realities. This condition is understandable given the relatively stable pre-modern social context that has not yet confronted the complexities of modernity such as pluralism, globalization, and technological development (Hallaq, 2019).

In contrast to al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah offered a more pragmatic epistemological approach, emphasizing the harmony between revelation and practical reason (*al-‘aql al-‘amalī*). He rejected the sharp dichotomy between text and reason, and emphasized that sound reason would not contradict authentic texts. One of Ibn Taymiyyah's important contributions was his emphasis on the principles of benefit and the prevention of harm as the basis for legal

and social decision-making (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1995). This approach opened up space for contextualization within classical Islamic epistemology, while still operating within the normative boundaries of text and tradition.

In this context, the *Tafsir As-Salām* demonstrates a clear epistemological continuity with the classical Islamic tradition. This interpretation maintains the Qur'an and Hadith as its primary foundation (*naqli*), employs reason as an analytical instrument (*aqli*), and recognizes the importance of empirical reality as a field for the actualization of meaning. This synthesis of *naqli*, *aqli*, and empirical reality reflects the spirit of classical Islamic epistemology and emphasizes that interpretation cannot be separated from the theocentric framework that underpins it (Mukhtar, 2021).

However, the *Tafsir As-Salām* also transcends the limitations of classical epistemology through a higher level of contextualization. While classical Islamic epistemology generally operates within a pre-modern social and cultural framework, the *Tafsir As-Salām* consciously responds to the dynamics of modern society, such as social plurality, changing values, scientific developments, and the challenges of religious life in the global era. The integration of modern social reality as an epistemological horizon makes this interpretation more adaptive and relevant without losing its normative legitimacy. In this regard, the *As-Salām* Interpretation aligns with Fazlur Rahman's (2020) idea of the importance of a double movement in interpreting the Qur'an: understanding the text in its historical context while simultaneously actualizing its values in the contemporary context.

The fundamental difference between the *As-Salām* Interpretation and classical Islamic epistemology lies in their epistemological orientations. Classical epistemology tends to be normative-preservative, aiming to maintain the purity of teachings and the continuity of tradition. In contrast, the *As-Salām* Interpretation develops a normative-contextual orientation, where fidelity to revelation goes hand in hand with openness to social

realities and the development of civilization. This approach demonstrates that interpretive renewal does not have to be achieved through the deconstruction of tradition, but rather through creative reinterpretation that remains rooted in the foundations of Islamic epistemology.

Thus, compared to classical Islamic epistemology, *Tafsir As-Salām* represents an epistemological evolution within the Islamic exegetical tradition. It maintains the theocentric framework and hierarchy of classical sources of knowledge, while expanding the interpretive horizon to align with the demands of the times. This approach emphasizes that Qur'anic interpretation is dynamic and historical, and always open to responsible contextualization to address contemporary socio-religious challenges.

### **Symbolic Interpretation Approach**

One of the main characteristics of *Tafsir As-Salam* is the use of symbolic interpretation. This approach interprets the verses of the Quran not only literally but also as symbols containing multiple and multidimensional meanings. This interpretation offers a unique interpretive approach through the exploration of symbolic meaning within the Quranic verses. The symbolic interpretation employed by Mukhtar positions the Quran as a book of guidance loaded with phenomenal messages for the development of human civilization. This approach goes beyond simply reading the literal meaning of the text, but rather elaborates on linguistic symbols that have broad implications in the social, technological, cultural, and humanitarian spheres. Thus, *Tafsir As-Salām* presents itself as an epistemological and methodological contribution to the contemporary treasury of Qur'anic interpretation.

In Mukhtar's (2021) view, symbolic verses are Qur'anic verses that possess phenomenal content and, when explored, yield significant benefits for the development of civilization. Substantively, all Qur'anic verses possess symbolic value to some degree, but *Tafsir As-Salām* selectively selects verses that explicitly or implicitly relate to

the dynamics of scientific and technological progress. This distinguishes this work from previous commentaries, which focused more on legal, religious, or moral aspects.

In his methodology, Mukhtar does not interpret muhkamāt verses in detail. For verses that are muhkamāt, he tends to follow the opinions of previous commentators, a form of respect for the classical exegetical tradition. However, when faced with verses that are mutasyābihāt and symbolic, conveying messages about the development of civilization, he engages in in-depth elaboration with a creative interpretative approach.

Mukhtar's symbolic interpretive approach starts from the assumption that the Qur'an is a book that not only regulates aspects of worship and faith but also inspires human intellectual progress throughout history. This is where *Tafsir As-Salām* positions itself as a futuristic interpretation that sees the relationship between Qur'anic verses and the development of science.

### **Examples of Symbolic Interpretation in *Tafsir As-Salām***

#### **Symbolization of Textile Technology in Q.S. al-A'rāf: 40**

The following verse is an example of how Mukhtar interprets the symbols of the Koran as inspiration for the development of technology and civilization:

Indeed, (for) those who deny Our signs and are proud of them, the doors of heaven will not be opened for them and they will not enter paradise until the camel passes through the eye of a needle. Thus We reward those who commit disobedience. (Q.S. al-A'rāf: 40)

In general, this verse talks about the impossibility of people who deny the verses of Allah and are arrogant to enter heaven. The analogy of a camel going through the eye of a needle describes an impossible situation. However, Mukhtar reads this verse not only from the theological dimension, but also from the symbolic dimension of civilization.

According to him, the mention of needles is a phenomenal symbol that hints at the advancement of textile technology long before humans knew it. Needles are small instruments that played a significant role in transforming human lifestyles. The invention of needles transformed animal skins, previously used for body coverings, into knitted and sewn fabric. This led to the development of the textile industry, which later became one of the largest economic sectors in the world.

Mukhtar (2021) emphasizes that the mention of needles in the Quran is not merely a figure of speech to demonstrate impossibility, but also a divine signal for the birth of a creative industry that would later become a vital pillar of human civilization. The symbolism of this verse underscores the Quran's miraculous way of combining theological and civilizational aspects.

#### Symbolization of Metallurgical Technology in Surah al-Kahf: 96

Verse 96 of Surah al-Kahf is the second example often highlighted in the *Tafsir As-Salām*: Give me pieces of iron." Until (the piece of iron) was (attached) evenly to the two (tops) of the mountain, he (Dzul Qarnain) said, "Blow out (the fire)." When (the iron) had become (red like) fire, he said, "Give me (boiling) copper so that I can pour it on (the hot iron)." (Quran al-Kahf: 96)

Mukhtar interprets the story of Dhul Qarnain, who built a giant fortress from iron and copper as raw materials, as a symbol of the advancement of metallurgical technology that emerged long before modern human civilization. This interpretation demonstrates that the Quran not only recounts history but also provides preliminary knowledge about construction techniques and metal technology.

According to Mukhtar (2021), Dhul Qarnain in this story plays the role of architect, technician, and supervisor in the construction of a sturdy structure. The process of melting the copper, burning the iron until it is red, and then pouring the molten copper onto the hot iron is a vivid depiction of advanced metallurgical engineering. From a symbolic perspective, this verse teaches that the basic principles of

building materials engineering have been hinted at in the Quran for thousands of years.

This interpretation opens up the possibility that the Quran can be read as a historical and inspirational reference for the development of construction technology, metallurgical engineering, and civil engineering. Modern scientific and technological discoveries can be approached from a spiritual perspective, that science is an instrument for building human well-being.

Through the two examples of interpretation above, *Tafsir As-Salām* provides a unique epistemological contribution to contemporary exegetical discourse. The symbolic approach used by Mukhtar shows that: (1) The Qur'an is multidimensional, not only as a holy book discussing faith and worship, but also as a source of inspiration for the advancement of civilization. (2) Symbolic interpretation opens up a space for interconnection between the sacred text and the development of science, thus bridging the Islamic scientific tradition with modern science. (3) *Tafsir As-Salām* expands the horizon of interpretation by reading the verses of the Qur'an in the context of technological and socio-cultural developments. (4) This approach emphasizes that interpretation is not only an activity of reproducing meaning, but also an innovation in exploring the messages of the Qur'an for the relevance of the times. Thus, *Tafsir As-Salām* can be categorized as a transformative interpretation because it opens new insights in understanding the messages of the Qur'an in an integrative and progressive manner.

*Tafsir As-Salām* by Asmaji Mukhtar presents a symbolic interpretation model oriented towards the dynamics of human civilization. This interpretation not only provides a new understanding of the verses of the Quran but also demonstrates the profound influence of the Islamic sacred text in inspiring the development of science and technology. By interpreting symbolic verses such as Surah al-A'rāf 40 and Surah al-Kahf 96, Mukhtar illustrates that the Quran is a universal source of inspiration that transcends the boundaries of time and space. This interpretive model enriches the body of exegetical scholarship and paves the way for new studies on the relationship between religion and science.

## **A Critical Analysis of Asmaji Mukhtar's Symbolic Interpretation Approach**

While the symbolic interpretation approach in *Tafsir As-Salam* offers significant epistemological contributions to the development of contemporary Qur'anic interpretation, this approach is not free from a number of methodological problems that require academic critique. One of the main issues that frequently arises in symbolic interpretation is the risk of over-interpretation (*ifrāṭ al-ta'wīl*), namely the interpreter's tendency to impose certain symbolic meanings that lack a strong foundation in linguistic structure, historical context, or established exegetical traditions.

In the study of Qur'anic hermeneutics, over-interpretation often occurs when symbolic interpretation is driven more by the reader's perspective (reader-oriented interpretation) than by the text's internal clues. This aligns with the criticisms expressed by Arkoun (2019) and Abu Zayd (2020) that excessively free symbolic interpretation has the potential to render the Quran an "open text without epistemic boundaries," reducing its meaning to the interpreter's subjective reflections.

In the context of *Tafsir As-Salām*, symbolic readings of verses related to textile and metallurgical technology, while inspiring, can be viewed as a form of retrofitting hermeneutics, namely, reading modern realities into classical texts without rigorous methodological verification mechanisms.

The second aspect that requires criticism is the subjectivity of symbolic interpretation. Symbolic interpretation essentially demands the interpreter's imaginative and reflective abilities in connecting the text to social reality. However, without clear epistemological criteria such as the boundaries of symbolic meaning, linguistic validation, and historical confirmation, this type of interpretation risks losing its scientific control. Fazlur Rahman (2020) emphasized that the contextual relevance of the Quran must be established through a double movement theory, namely, a movement from the historical context of the text to universal moral principles, and then back to the

contemporary context. If this first movement is ignored, symbolic interpretations tend to fall into methodologically weak symbolic speculation.

In the case of the interpretation of Q.S. al-A'raf: 40, for example, the symbolization of the "needle" as a sign of modern textile technology does indeed open up insights into civilization, but philologically, the verse is more strongly interpreted as a rhetorical parable (*tamthīl balāghī*) about impossibility. Therefore, Mukhtar's symbolic reading requires additional methodological justification, such as *balaghah* analysis, historical semantics, and comparison with classical interpretations, to avoid appearing as an ahistorical symbolic projection (Rahman, 2020; Abdel Haleem, 2021).

In the case of the interpretation of Q.S. Al-Kahf: 96 Mukhtar represents a symbolic-contextual approach that reads the story of Dzul Qarnain as a representation of the early advancement of metallurgical technology and construction engineering. Mukhtar does not limit this verse to a historical or moral narrative, but rather interprets it as a symbol of civilization that suggests humanity's mastery of material technology. This approach broadens the interpretive horizon by positioning the Qur'an as a source of inspiration for the development of civilization, not merely a normative-theological text (Mukhtar, 2021).

From an epistemological perspective, Mukhtar's interpretation is powerful in its integration of the revealed text and scientific developments. His descriptions of the processes of burning iron, melting copper, and metal plating techniques demonstrate a sensitive reading of the verse's technical aspects. By positioning Dhul Qarnain as a technologically proficient leader, Mukhtar asserts that the Quran affirms rationality, technical skills, and resource management as part of the mandate of the human caliphate. This approach aligns with contemporary interpretations that emphasize the ethical and transformative dimensions of revelation in social life (Rahman, 2020).

However, from a methodological critical perspective, this symbolic interpretation holds the potential for overinterpretation, namely the tendency to retrospectively project modern technological concepts onto the Quranic text. In the classical exegetical tradition, this verse is better understood as an affirmation of the wisdom of Dhul Qarnain's leadership and a symbol of protecting society from corruption (*fasād*), rather than as an explicit indication of the advancement of metallurgical technology (Ibn Kathir, 2000; al-Qurtubi, 2006). When technological symbolism is not accompanied by adequate philological analysis and rhetoric, the verse's meaning risks shifting from its primary message.

The second criticism concerns the epistemological validation of symbolic interpretation. The Qur'an is primarily a book of guidance, not a scientific technical manual. Therefore, the claim that this verse hints at advanced metallurgical technology should be positioned as a secondary, inspirational meaning, rather than as a scientific legitimization of specific technological developments. Contemporary thinkers caution that symbolic and scientific interpretations need to be restrained to avoid scientific simplification or exaggerated claims about the sacred text (Abdel Haleem, 2021; Guessoum, 2019).

Nevertheless, the primary value of Mukhtar's interpretation lies in its heuristic function. This interpretation encourages Muslim readers to view science and technology as ethical instruments in building social welfare. The story of Dhul Qarnain is understood not merely as a narrative of the past, but as a model of leadership that integrates spiritual strength, technical rationality, and social responsibility. Within this framework, *Tafsir As-Salām* can be categorized as a progressive symbolic-transformative interpretation, although it still requires methodological control to avoid subjectivity and over-interpretation.

Furthermore, the symbolic approach also faces the challenge of scientific verification (epistemic validation). In the epistemological tradition of classical exegesis, the meaning of the Qur'an is tested through the coherence between *naql* (text), *aql* (reason), and the consensus of scholars. Modern symbolic interpretation, including *Tafsir As-Salām*, often moves beyond *ijma'* and classical authority to address the challenges of the times. While this step is progressive, it still requires epistemic checks to avoid falling into interpretive relativism. Al-Shātibī (2021) emphasized that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* must be the main support in methodological innovation of interpretation, including in symbolic interpretation.

However, these criticisms do not necessarily negate the methodological value of Mukhtar's symbolic interpretation. In fact, the strength of *Tafsir As-Salām* lies in its courage to open new horizons of Qur'anic interpretation that are dialogical with the development of science and technology. As long as this symbolic approach is accompanied by epistemological awareness, methodological transparency, and control over subjectivity, it can function as a creative and critical instrument in actualizing the Qur'an's message for modern civilization.

The symbolic interpretive approach in *Tafsir As-Salām* can be understood as a transitional method: standing between the normative classical exegetical tradition and contextual contemporary exegesis. The space for critical analysis of the risks of over-interpretation and subjectivity actually strengthens the work's academic legitimacy, while emphasizing that innovation in exegesis must always be balanced with rigorous methodological discipline.

### **Integration of Science and Spirituality in Exegesis**

Asmaji Mukhtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* is a unique contemporary exegetical work because it promotes the idea of integrative understanding between modern science and Islamic spirituality. This interpretation arose from intellectual unease with the dominance of

the Western scientific paradigm, which tends to separate the empirical dimension from the transcendent. In the modern context, this separation raises serious epistemological problems, such as the reduction of the meaning of science, the secularization of knowledge, and the marginalization of Muslim scientists in global scientific discourse. Therefore, *Tafsir As-Salām* exists as a scholarly project to restore the synergistic relationship between science and revelation, between the sunnatullah (the law of God) and the kalamullah (the word of God).

One of the primary motivations for writing *Tafsir As-Salām* stems from a critique of the hegemony of Western science, which has historically positioned religion as a separate entity and irrelevant to the development of modern science. Kyai Muchotob Hamzah, Rector of UNSIQ, emphasized that the process of secularization of science has created a distance between Muslim scientists and the Islamic intellectual tradition. According to him, the separation between science and spirituality not only results in epistemological clashes but also contributes to the exclusion of Muslim scientists from the mainstream of scientific development.

From a classical Islamic perspective, knowledge has never been separated into the empirical and the transcendent. Ibn Sina, Al-Biruni, and Al-Jazari are examples of scientists who united science, metaphysics, and theology within a unified epistemology of monotheism. However, in the modern era, this epistemic unity has been torn apart by the current of Western positivism, which has marginalized the spiritual dimension. Therefore, Mukhtar strives to present an interpretation that can bridge the relationship between revelation and science, so that science does not lose its ethical, spiritual, and humanitarian dimensions.

In *Tafsir As-Salam*, science is viewed as part of the sunnatullah (the laws of nature established by God as a manifestation of His will). Therefore, studying science means tracing the traces of divinity in empirical reality. Mukhtar emphasizes that sunnatullah cannot be separated from kalamullah (the word of God), as both are sources of truth derived from God Almighty.

This interpretation elaborates on Quranic verses relating to natural phenomena, the process of creation, technology, and social reality with an integrative approach, combining scientific and spiritual perspectives. For example, the verse about iron (Q.S. al-Hadīd: 25) is examined not only as a physical object, but as an important symbol of human technological progress. The verse about wind (Quran 2:164) is understood as both a meteorological phenomenon and a sign of God's power. This approach opens up space for readers to understand the Qur'an as a text that inspires the development of technology, natural science, and even social sciences.

Thus, *Tafsir As-Salam* is a work that incorporates science not to force the Qur'an to follow scientific theories alone, but to demonstrate that revelation and science can harmoniously explain each other without epistemological reduction.

Another advantage of *Tafsir As-Salām* is its relevance to various contemporary issues. This interpretation not only explains the meaning of the verses in linguistic and thematic dimensions, but also links them to socio-political realities, technological ethics, ecology, and education. This approach makes the interpretation an applicable work, not simply a textual study.

On the issue of technological ethics, for example, Mukhtar links the *kauniyah* verses to humanity's moral responsibility towards the development of modern technology. Technology is not only a manifestation of human intelligence, but also a divine mandate that must be directed towards the common good. On socio-political issues, this interpretation emphasizes the importance of justice, tolerance, and protection of the oppressed as Qur'anic values that must be present in contemporary society.

This approach demonstrates that the Qur'an is not a static text, but rather a book of guidance that is responsive to changing times. Amidst the complexities of the modern world, *Tafsir As-Salām* offers a relevant paradigm for integrating transcendental values in addressing contemporary issues.

Despite adopting an *ijmālī* (brief) approach, *Tafsir As-Salām* still presents a comprehensive and meaningful analysis. This comprehensiveness is achieved through several methodological approaches, including: (1) Integrating multidisciplinary disciplines, such as linguistics, history, anthropology, philosophy, and science, in the interpretation process. (2) Linking the verses of the Qur'an with the hadith, the views of classical and contemporary scholars, and the thoughts of various schools of thought (3) Using a communicative narrative approach, so that the interpretation is easy to understand for lay readers, but still provides depth for academics. (4) Reviewing the socio-historical context of the verses, so that the resulting meaning is not trapped in narrow literalism.

This methodological approach shows that *Tafsir As-Salām* is within a dynamic and dialogical tradition of interpretation. It does not close itself off from classical treasures, but also does not hesitate to adopt relevant contemporary approaches.

### **Integration of Quranic Ulum and the Socio-Religious Context**

The integration of Quranic Ulum with the socio-religious context is a strategic step in addressing the challenges of the times and ensuring that the Quran's messages remain relevant amidst the dynamics of modern society. Quranic Ulum, as a body of knowledge that discusses in-depth aspects of the Quran—from the *asbab al-nuzul*, *makkiyah-madaniyah*, to *tafsir*—plays a crucial role in connecting revelation with the realities of human life (Azra, 2005). Quranic Ulum not only addresses textual aspects but also examines the historical, social, and cultural context in which the Quranic verses were revealed. Thus, Quranic Ulum serves as an important foundation for understanding the broader and deeper meaning of divine messages, while also opening up space for dialogue between the sacred text and social dynamics (Azra, 2005).

Rapid social change demands an interpretation of the Quran that is adaptive and responsive to contemporary issues such as social justice, pluralism, human rights, and human solidarity. The integration of Quranic scholars with socio-religious sciences allows for a more contextual and solution-oriented interpretation, so that the Quran serves not only as a spiritual guide but also as a source of inspiration for building a just and inclusive society. A thematic-contextual approach to Quranic interpretation can bridge the eternal values of revelation with modern social realities and provide practical solutions to socio-religious challenges, such as social justice, education, and human solidarity (Hermanto, 2005).

Analysis of Quranic verses with social theories to discover applicable meanings relevant to the challenges of the times (Murtaza, 2024). Reinterpretation and Contextualization: Rereading Quranic verses from a contemporary perspective to maintain their relevance to issues such as pluralism, human rights, and the environment (Hermanto, 2025). The integration of Qur'anic knowledge and socio-religious contexts has been implemented in various Islamic educational institutions through the concept of wahdatul ulum, which is the unification of religious and general knowledge within a unified and transdisciplinary scientific framework (Walida, 2024). Within the community, contextual interpretation has been proven to enhance social harmony, strengthen ethical values, and foster an inclusive and tolerant society (Hermanto, 2025).

The integration of Qur'anic knowledge and socio-religious contexts is essential to making the Qur'an a guideline for life that is relevant in every era. This integration enriches the treasury of Islamic knowledge and makes a real contribution to building a just, tolerant, and civilized society. Moving forward, synergy between academics, religious scholars, and social practitioners is essential to ensure the comprehensive and sustainable implementation of the Qur'an's messages. The main findings show that *Tafsir As-Salām* does not interpret Qur'anic verses solely textually, but always within a

contextual framework that takes social dynamics into account. For example, in explaining Surah Al-Hujurāt [49]:13, Asmaji Mukhtar not only cites the asbab al-nuzul and the lexical meaning of the word ta'arafu, but also constructs an argument that the verse provides a theological foundation for upholding social and ethnic diversity in modern society.

Furthermore, this interpretation consistently utilizes Qur'anic devices such as nasikh-mansukh, mukham-mutasyabih, and munasabāt al-ayat, but does not fall into a formalistic approach. Instead, these devices serve as epistemic tools to reconstruct the social meaning of the revealed text. Thus, *Tafsir As-Salām* establishes a contextual-transformative model of interpretation, one that addresses the realities of the times while remaining grounded in classical Islamic scientific methods.

Asmaji Mukhtar's *Tafsir As-Salam* explicitly integrates the Qur'anic knowledge with the contemporary socio-religious context. This study finds that Asmaji's method does not separate the textual and contextual aspects of interpretation, but rather unites them as a complementary epistemic framework. This answers the first problem formulation, namely that the epistemology of this interpretation is integrative—it uses classical approaches such as asbab al-nuzūl, munāsabāt al-āyāt, and linguistic analysis, but always links meaning to the social situation and the reality of human diversity.

The interpretation of QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 is the clearest example. This verse is understood not only as a call for Muslim brotherhood, but as a theological basis for plurality and social responsibility to build peace amidst diversity. This finding aligns with the contextualist theory of contemporary exegesis, as developed by Abdullah Saeed (2013), which states that sacred texts can only gain full meaning if interpreted in light of their social and historical context.

This finding was obtained through a critical content analysis of thematic sections in the *Tafsir As-Salām*, particularly those discussing social verses. This study interprets that the *Tafsir As-Salām*

not only conveys literal meaning but also provides a narrative of values that can guide the social behavior of Muslims in an inclusive and peaceful manner.

The findings in this study were obtained through a discourse analysis and contextual hermeneutic approach. The researcher read the *Tafsir As-Salām* as an open text and then compared its interpretive construction with the structure of classical Qur'anic scholars and other contemporary commentaries. This method allows the researcher to identify how meaning is shaped not only by the text and the interpreters, but also by their interaction with social reality.

For example, in the interpretation of QS. In Al-Mumtahanah [60]:8–9, Mukhtar emphasizes that the Qur'an distinguishes between peaceful and hostile non-Muslims. This interpretation demonstrates that the concept of tolerance in Islam is neither absolute nor naive, but is built on the ethics of civilization and justice. This finding is supported by a previous study by Rane (2008), which stated that progressive interpretation must refer to Islamic moral principles and not solely to textual legalism.

This interpretation of the findings indicates that *Tafsir As-Salām* does not simply present a textual interpretation, but rather forms an ethical discourse rooted in universal Islamic values. This interpretation dismantles the long-held assumption that interpretation must be contextually sterile and instead emphasizes that sacred texts are responsive to human reality. *Tafsir As-Salām* constructs a narrative of interpretation as an Islamic public ethic—that is, an interpretation that speaks not only to Muslims but also to humanity in general.

This model parallels the approach developed by Farid Esack (1997) in his book, *Qur'an, Liberation, and Pluralism*, in which the sacred text is interpreted through the lens of social justice and liberation. However, *Tafsir As-Salam* differs in that it combines local and socio-political readings of Indonesia with the epistemology of Qur'anic scholars, resulting in an approach that is not only pluralistic but also deeply rooted in the Islamic scholarly heritage.

The findings of this study confirm that contemporary Qur'anic interpretations that integrate Qur'anic scholars and social reality are not entirely new, but rather extensions of epistemic structures established by previous generations. Commentaries such as al-Misbah and *Tafsir at-Tanwir* by the Ministry of Religious Affairs Team also attempt to combine these two approaches, but do not always produce an explicitly integrative theory. Unlike both, *Tafsir As-Salam* presents a systematic methodological justification—for example, by combining the *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* and *tafsīr maudhū‘ī* within a single narrative framework.

In this context, the epistemology of *Tafsir As-Salam* can be seen as a revitalization of the thematic approach with a stronger social practical content. As noted by Arkoun (2006), transformative *tafsir* is one that is willing to dismantle traditional paradigms and form new narratives relevant to societal developments. Thus, *Tafsir As-Salām* contributes to the continuation of the structure of *tafsir* knowledge, but with substantial methodological and epistemological innovations.

This research proposes a new framework called Contributive Epistemology of *Tafsir*, namely *tafsir* that is not merely interpretive but also transformative—not only exploring meaning but also making a real contribution to resolving social problems. This model is a development of Abu Zayd's hermeneutic approach and Saeed's contextualist approach, and is enriched by an axiological approach in social interpretation.

In the Indonesian context, this approach represents an update to the normative model of interpretation that focuses solely on *fiqh* rules or linguistic structure. Research by Nurcahyati (2025) shows that interpretations that fail to consider social context risk reinforcing exclusivism. In contrast, *Tafsir As-Salām* presents an inclusive, dialogical, and practical model.

From this, it can be concluded that *Tafsir As-Salām* is not simply a work of interpretation in the conventional sense, but rather an epistemological project that opens new space for the construction

of more participatory and solution-oriented Islamic knowledge. The interpretation in this work demonstrates that the Qur'an, as the primary source of Islam, remains relevant and alive as long as it is interpreted in an active dialogue between the text and reality.

## **Conclusion**

This study of Asmaji Mukhtar's *Tafsir As-Salām* demonstrates that this interpretation offers an integrative epistemological construction, creatively and systematically combining Qur'anic scholars with the contemporary socio-scientific context. Within the context of the dynamics of modern exegesis studies, *Tafsir As-Salām* asserts its importance as an interpretive model that is not solely oriented toward the textuality of the text but also opens up a dialogue between revelation, science, and social reality. This approach affirms that the Qur'an is a multidimensional text capable of inspiring the development of science, technology, and universal human values.

Epistemologically, *Tafsir As-Salām* presents an interpretive framework based on three main foundations. First, the integration of Qur'anic scholars with socio-religious realities, carried out through *ijmālī*, symbolic, and contextual approaches. Mukhtar not only maintains the turats tradition, as evident in his respect for classical *muḥkamāt* exegesis, but also creatively elaborates on *mutasyābihāt* and symbolic verses to explore the relevance of the Qur'an's message to contemporary developments. Second, symbolic interpretation is a methodological characteristic that enriches the exegetical horizon.

The symbolism of textile technology (Quran al-A'rāf: 40) and metallurgical technology (Quran al-Kahf: 96) demonstrates how the Qur'an is read as an inspiring source of civilization and technological progress. Third, the integration of science and spirituality strengthens *Tafsir As-Salām*'s position as an epistemological response to the secularization of modern science. Mukhtar emphasizes that the sunnatullah (the divine word) and the kalamullah (the words of God) are inseparable, thus understanding science as a vehicle for recognizing traces of divinity in empirical reality. From a

methodological perspective, this tafsir displays a rich approach encompassing linguistic, historical, philosophical, and multidisciplinary analysis, while utilizing modern scientific data in interpreting verses. This approach enables *Tafsir As-Salām* to address contemporary issues, such as the ethics of technology, social justice, pluralism, and peace, making it relevant in building a humanistic and transformative religious awareness. Overall, this study confirms that *Tafsir As-Salām* presents an innovative, dialogical, and transformative model of interpretation, capable of bridging classical traditions with the demands of the modern era. The novelty of this interpretation lies in the development of an integrative epistemology that positions the Qur'an as a text that not only guides spirituality but also inspires the advancement of science, technology, and civilization. This contribution broadens the horizon of contemporary exegesis studies and opens up opportunities for further research related to the development of integrative hermeneutics in Islamic studies.

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