

Analytical Study on the Development of Meaning in Tafsir Jalalain of Surah Al-Mu'minun by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf on YouTube from the Perspective of J.E. Gracia

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Abstract

This study discusses the development of interpretative meaning in the Qur'anic exegesis carried out by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf, with a specific focus on Surah Al-Mu'minun verse 6. The central focus of this research lies in how Gus Yahya, in addition to his role as a national political figure, actively contributes to Qur'anic interpretation through his teachings delivered to students at the Raudlatut Thalibin Islamic Boarding School in Rembang. These tafsir sessions are broadcast live via the Gus Mus Channel on YouTube, serving as an important medium for disseminating Islamic thought and Qur'anic interpretations to the broader public. This study aims to examine the form of meaning development applied by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf in interpreting QS. Al-Mu'minun:6 and to analyze the implications of that meaning development for Qur'anic interpretation in the contemporary era. The method used is descriptive-analytical with a library research approach. The primary source of this research is the recorded tafsir sessions of Tafsir Jalalain by Gus Yahya on the Gus Mus Channel, while secondary sources include relevant books, journals, and scholarly references. The findings reveal that there are three main functions in the development of meaning in Gus Yahya's interpretation of QS. Al-Mu'minun verse 6, *first*, the historical function, which highlights that the phrase *mā malakat aymānuhum* previously referred to the practice of owning female slaves; *Second*, the meaning development function, which reflects efforts to recontextualize the phrase to align with contemporary legal and social values, such as lawful relationships through marriage; and *Third*, the implicative function, which emphasizes the verse's social and ethical significance in shaping individual moral awareness and preserving sexual integrity in modern society. The main contribution of this study lies in how Gus Yahya's contextual interpretation serves as a bridge between classical meanings and universal human values in the modern era. As such, this research offers a significant contribution to grounding the

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Qur'an as a text that remains relevant and transformative amid the challenges of contemporary times.

Keywords: Yahya Cholil Staquf, Tafsir Jalalain, Al-Mu'minin, YouTube, J.E. Gracia

Abstrak

Tulisan ini membahas pengembangan makna tafsir al-Qur'an yang dilakukan oleh Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf, khususnya terhadap QS. al-Mu'minin ayat 6. Fokus kajian ini terletak pada bagaimana Gus Yahya, selain kiprahnya sebagai tokoh politik nasional, juga berperan aktif dalam menyampaikan kajian tafsir al-Qur'an di hadapan para santri di Pesantren Raudlatul Thalibin, Rembang. Kajian-kajian tersebut disiarkan secara langsung melalui kanal YouTube Gus Mus Channel, yang menjadi media penting dalam menyebarluaskan pemikiran keislaman dan penafsiran Qur'ani kepada khalayak luas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bentuk pengembangan makna tafsir yang dilakukan oleh Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf dalam kajian QS. al-Mu'minin ayat 6, serta menganalisis implikasi dari pengembangan makna tersebut terhadap produk penafsiran al-Qur'an di era kontemporer. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif-analitis dengan pendekatan kepustakaan (*library research*). Sumber primer dalam kajian ini adalah rekaman kajian tafsir Jalalain oleh Gus Yahya di kanal Gus Mus Channel, sedangkan sumber sekunder berupa literatur dari buku, jurnal, dan referensi ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat tiga fungsi utama dalam pengembangan makna tafsir Q.S. Al-Mukminun ayat 6 yang dilakukan oleh Gus Yahya: *Pertama*, fungsi historis, yang menyoroti bahwa frasa *mā malakat aymanuhum* pada masa lalu merujuk pada praktik kepemilikan budak perempuan; *Kedua*, fungsi pengembangan makna, yaitu upaya merekontekstualisasi frasa tersebut agar selaras dengan nilai-nilai hukum dan sosial kontemporer, seperti hubungan sah melalui pernikahan; dan *Ketiga*, fungsi implikatif, yakni penekanan pada makna sosial dan etis ayat tersebut dalam membentuk kesadaran moral individu serta menjaga integritas seksual dalam kehidupan masyarakat modern. Sumbangsih utama dari pembahasan ini adalah bagaimana tafsir kontekstual Gus Yahya menjadi jembatan antara pemaknaan klasik dan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan universal di era modern. Sehingga kajian ini memberikan kontribusi signifikan dalam membumikan al-Qur'an sebagai teks yang tetap relevan dan transformatif di tengah tantangan zaman.

Kata kunci: Yahya Cholil Tsaquf, Tafsir Jalalain, Al-Mu'minin. YouTube, J.E Gracia.

Introduction

The historical development of the Qur'an reflects a long-standing integration process from the stages of revelation, writing, and compilation, to the present day, where it is now available in visual and audiovisual formats and widely distributed across various networks with easy access.¹ The use of social media for da'wah (Islamic preaching) offers significant potential for distributing religious messages to a broader audience. Social media possesses characteristics that allow da'wah to reach an extensive range of people, especially with the continuously growing number of social media users. Moreover, the interactivity provided by social media enables direct engagement between preachers or

¹ Fadhli Lukman, "Tafsir Media Sosial Di Indonesia," *Nun: Jurnal Alquran Dan Tafsir Di Nusantara* Vol. 2, no. 2 (2016): 117–39. 118

da'wah organizations and their audiences, facilitating easier dialogue and question-and-answer interactions.

On the other hand, Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world,² possesses a vast array of Qur'anic literature ranging from translations and commentaries (*tafsir*) to various forms of Qur'anic content across platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter, and other media outlets. The content-sharing capabilities of social media play a vital role in spreading da'wah messages, as users can easily share religious content within their social networks. Moreover, the viral nature of social media can further amplify da'wah efforts, with messages having the potential to spread quickly and widely. In this way, discussions about the world of communication continue to evolve in line with technological advancements.³ This is especially relevant to younger generations, who are more inclined toward digital content and are thus heavily influenced both positively and negatively by what they consume.⁴ One such trend is the growing popularity of Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*) sessions across various media platforms.

Among the many Qur'anic commentators active on social media are figures such as Gus Baha, Gus Mus, KH. Abdul Ghofur, Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf, and others each with their own distinctive style in presenting tafsir studies. Starting from an observation of Qur'anic interpretation on social media, the author became particularly interested in Gus Yahya, a well-known political figure who is also a highly respected Islamic scholar across various fields, including politics, religious studies in Pesantren, and organizational leadership. Behind his scholarly personal, Gus Yahya is one of the leaders at the Raudlatut Thalibin Islamic Boarding School, where he teaches *Tafsir Jalalain*, often broadcast live via the "Gus Mus" YouTube channel. He is a prominent scholar and intellectual affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), currently serving as the General Chairman of the NU Executive Board (PBNU) for the 2022–2027 term. He is the son of KH. Cholil Bisri and Nyai Muhsinah, and was raised in the environment of the Raudlatut Thalibin Pesantren in Rembang. His dedication to peace advocacy has earned him global recognition.

One of the tafsir sessions discussed by Gus Yahya focuses on Tafsir Jalalain, specifically on Surah Al-Mu'minun. In his explanation, Gus Yahya has a

² Nurul Hidayatul Ummah, "Pemanfaatan Sosial Media Dalam Meningkatkan Efektivitas Dakwah Di Era Digital," *Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 11, no. 1 (2023): 151–69, <https://doi.org/10.15408/jmd.v11i1.32914>. 152

³ Sakaruddin Mandjarreki, "Agresi Media Dan Kematian Ruang Sosial (Tafsir Sosiologis Atas Hegemoni Media Sosial)," *Jurnal Jurnalisa* 4, no. 2 (2018): 226–40, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jurnalisa.v4i2.6896>. 227

⁴ Aan Mohamad Burhanudin, Yayah Nurhidayah, and Ulfa Chaerunisa, "Dakwah Melalui Media Sosial (Studi Tentang Pemanfaatan Media Instagram @ Cherbonfeminist Sebagai Media Dakwah Mengenai Kesetaraan Gender)," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 10, no. 2 (2019): 236–46, <https://www.syekhnujrati.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/orasi/article/view/5658>. 238

distinctive style he consistently relates Qur'anic verses to contemporary social contexts. For instance, regarding the phrase *mā malakat aymanuhum*, which is literally interpreted as "those whom their right hands possess", Gus Yahya explains that slavery has been abolished in modern times and is considered incompatible with human rights. Based on this background, the research questions in this study are as follows: 1. How is the Qur'anic tafsir presented by Gus Yahya on the "Gus Mus Channel"? 2. How is the development of meaning articulated in the interpretation? 3. What are the implications of this meaning development for Qur'anic interpretation in the contemporary era? The purpose of this discussion is to examine the form of meaning development in the interpretation of QS. Al-Mu'minun verse 6 by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf through contextual and historical approaches, and to analyze it using J.E. Gracia's theory of interpretive functions. Furthermore, this article aims to explore the implications of his interpretation for the development of contemporary Qur'anic exegesis, particularly in addressing issues of humanity and social morality.

The literature on the study of meaning development in tafsir texts presented in this paper is not the first of its kind. Among previous works is a thesis by Aulia Eka Fajar Wati titled "*Tafsir Media Sosial: Kajian Pengembangan Makna Gus Baha Atas Tafsir Jalalain terhadap QS. Surat Yasin[36] di YouTube*",⁵ and a study by Fitra Rizkillah and Subhi Nur Isnaini in their article "*Penafsiran KH. M. Zan Syukury Dalam Kitab Qutul Qalbi QS. Al-Ikhlās 1-4: Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutika Fungsi Interpretasi Jorge J.E Gracia*"⁶. The findings from both studies show that the interpretations of Gus Baha' on Q.S. Yasin: 36 and KH. Syukury on Q.S. Al-Ikhlās: 1-4 were analyzed using the three interpretive functions of J.E. Gracia's hermeneutics: historical function, meaning development, and implication. These three functions yield interpretive meanings that provide contemporary audiences with insights aligned with current social conditions.

Further research includes Sherly Dwi Agutin's article, "*Nilai Kebenaran (Truth Value) Dalam Tafsir Salman: Telaah Interpretasi QS. Al-'Alaq Perspektif Jorge J.E Gracia*"⁷, and Fitra Rizkikah's thesis, "*Penafsiran al-Qur'an Frasa Insha Allah Dalam Tafsir al-Qur'an Aktual Karya DR. KH. A. Musta'in Syafi'i QS. Al-Kahfi Ayat 23-24: Ditinjau dari Kacamata Teori Fungsi Interpretasi Jorge J.E Gracia*"⁸. Both studies show similar results that the interpretation of Qur'anic verses using Gracia's

⁵ Erika Aulia Fajar Wati, "Tafsir Media Sosial: Kajian Pengembangan Makna Gus Baha Atas Tafsir Jalalain Terhadap QS. Yasin: 36 Di YouTube" UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2022.

⁶ Fitra Rizkillah and Subhi Nur Isnaini, "Penafsiran KH. M. Zan Syukury Dalam Kitab Qutul Qalbi QS. Al-Ikhlās 1-4: Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutika Fungsi Interpretasi Jorge J.E Gracia," *El-Afkar* 12, no. 1 (2023).

⁷ Sherly Dwi Agustin, "Nilai Kebenaran (Truth Value) Dalam Tafsir Salman: Telaah Interpretasi Q.S. Al-'Alaq [96]:15-16 Perspektif Jorge J.E. Gracia," *An-Nida'* 45, no. 1 (2021): 22, <https://doi.org/10.24014/an-nida.v45i1.16530>.

⁸ Fitra Rizkillah, "Penafsiran Al-Qur'an Frasa Insha Allah Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an Aktual Karya DR. KH. A. Musta'in Syafi'i QS. Al-Kahfi Ayat 23-24: Ditinjau Dari Kacamata Teori Fungsi Interpretasi Jorge J.E Gracia" UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2020.

Hermeneutic Theory offers a more valid and implicative understanding, while also creating space for contemporary audiences to explore and comprehend a text more deeply.

Based on the literature review above, the author identifies a similar research niche within the study of the Qur'an on YouTube. The distinction lies in the material object of study Surah Al-Mu'minun as interpreted by a political figure, Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf.

This study is a qualitative research based on library research, focusing on the collection and analysis of relevant written and digital sources. The approach used is descriptive-analytical, which involves describing and analyzing the thoughts of Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf in developing interpretative meanings, particularly regarding Surah Al-Mu'minun verse 6. Data collection techniques include examining documentation of Gus Yahya's tafsir sessions on the "Gus Mus Channel" on YouTube as the primary source, especially those that discuss the Tafsir Jalalain. In addition, secondary sources such as classical and contemporary tafsir books, academic journals, articles, and other supporting literature discussing similar themes are also gathered. The collected data is then analyzed through four main stages: *first*, Data clarification, the process of sorting data to ensure its relevance to the focus of the study. *Second*, Data identification highlighting key parts of Gus Yahya's interpretation that indicate the development of meaning, especially regarding the term *mā malakat aymānuhum*. *Third*, Data elaboration, delving deeper into the meanings by considering social, historical, and scholarly contexts, and making comparisons with other exegetes' interpretations. *Fourth*, Conclusion drawing, the final stage of organizing the findings from the overall analysis and presenting the implications of Gus Yahya's interpretation within the current socio-cultural context. In analyzing the data, this study applies J.E. Gracia's theory of textual interpretation. This theory divides textual understanding into three functions: the historical function (the original meaning of the text in its time), the meaning-development function, and the implicative function (the social and moral impacts of the interpretation in the present time). Through this framework, Gus Yahya's interpretation is not merely seen as a reproduction of classical meanings but also as a process of actualizing the values of the Qur'an in relation to contemporary issues such as human rights, gender relations, and social morality.

Profile of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf

Yahya Cholil Staquf is a prominent Islamic scholar born on February 16, 1966, in Rembang, Central Java. He is the son of KH. Cholil Bisri and Nyai Muhsinah. His parents aspired for him to become a learned religious scholar within Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), as such scholars were still relatively rare in NU circles at the time. He grew up in the Pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environment of Raudlatut Thalibin in Rembang, where his father and uncle served as his first religious teachers. In addition to studying in his hometown, Yahya also pursued

Islamic education at the Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School in Krapyak, Yogyakarta, under the guidance of KH. Ali Maksum. After completing his studies at the Pesantren, he continued his higher education in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, majoring in Sociology at Universitas Gadjah Mada.⁹ Following his university studies, Gus Yahya furthered his religious learning in Mecca under the tutelage of Sayyid Muhammad bin Alawi Al-Maliki.

Gus Yahya's career began when he first became one of the caretakers at the Pesantren Raudlatul Thalibin. His leadership skills are deeply influenced by the thoughts of previous scholars such as KH. Cholil Bisri, KH. Mustofa Bisri (Gus Mus), KH. Ali Maksum, and KH. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). Between 1999 and 2000, while Gus Dur served as President of Indonesia, Gus Yahya acted as his spokesperson and was involved in the development project of Bait ar Rahman li ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyyah Rahmatan lil 'Alamin in California. In 2015, Gus Yahya contributed to formulating policies at the Religious Executive Council USA-Indonesia, established under a bilateral agreement between Presidents Jokowi and Barack Obama. In 2016, he participated in preparing important documents such as ISOMIL NU, the Global Unity Forum, and the Anzor Youth Movement in 2017.¹⁰

In 2018, Gus Yahya was appointed as a member of the Presidential Advisory Council (*Dewan Pertimbangan Presiden*) by President Joko Widodo.¹¹ Due to his efforts in advocating for world peace through visits to several countries in Europe and the Middle East, Gus Yahya gained global recognition as a messenger and promoter of peace.

In 2023, Gus Yahya was named one of the 500 most influential Muslim figures worldwide by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (RISSC), ranking 19th for his participation in advancing the mission of world peace. Additionally, the religious institution "Rumah Rahmat Ilahi untuk Mengungkap dan Memelihara Islam Sebagai Berkah untuk Semua Ciptaan" aims to realize the mission of spreading the message of peace. The ideas presented by Gus Yahya rarely miss the mark, thanks to his ability to observe and understand changes in the global order.¹²

⁹ Siswoyo Aris Munanda, "Peran Dan Kontribusi K.H. Yahya Cholil Staquf Dalam Pembangunan Islam Moderat Di Indonesia Dan Di Dunia Internasional," *Jurnal Agama Dan Kebudayaan* 9, no. 1 (2023): 168–85. 170

¹⁰ Arif Budiarto, "Nahdlatul Ulama, Peradaban Dan Perdamaian: Peran Gus Yahya Dan Gus Yaqut Dalam Pribumisasi Islam Moderat," *Ansoruna: Journal of Islam and Youth Movement* 1, no. 1 (2022): 41–45, <https://litbang.ansorponorogo.com/index.php/ansoruna/article/view/6.44>

¹¹ Munanda, "Peran Dan Kontribusi K.H. Yahya Cholil Staquf Dalam Pembangunan Islam Moderat Di Indonesia Dan Di Dunia Internasional."h 171

¹² Sebelumnya Ia mengakui bahwa beberapa keluarganya masih terikat dengan paham islamisme, oleh karena itu cara pandanginya terhadap organisasi NU, kemudian sejak kecil Ia telah mengenal Gus Dur menjadi pencerahan baginya dan generasi muda NU. Menurutnya, pemikiran Gus Dur berbeda dengan paham Gerakan islamisme yang sebelumnya Gus Yahya pernah menjadi bagiannya pada tahun 1980 silam

Nahdlatul Ulama, as the largest Islamic organization in the world, faces many challenges that require precise solutions, including problems faced by Muslims themselves and the global community. Qadari stated that Gus Yahya's presence in the PBNU leadership election brought new energy to NU to seek solutions through its extensive networks and modernization of the Islamic organization, especially in Indonesia. This is closely linked to Gus Dur's influence on perspectives regarding NU, Islam, and the global order, which greatly developed Gus Yahya's intellectual capabilities.

Currently, Gus Yahya is actively serving as the Chairman of PBNU for the 2022–2027 term. Besides strengthening NU's name, he has also had the opportunity to pioneer his work, mainly focusing on Islam at the global level, as NU has intensified and solidified his ideas about the reconstructualization of Islamic teachings for a new global order. Moreover, besides being an exemplary politician, Gus Yahya is also active in delivering religious studies on the YouTube platform "Gus Mus," covering topics such as the *Minhaj al-Abidin* book, *Qanun Asasi*, and *Tafsir Jalalain*.

Qur'anic Tafsir Studies on the "Gus Mus" YouTube Channel

The origins of the dawah media on the "Gus Mus Channel" YouTube were managed by his students who happened to have received training in filmmaking and editing from a trainer from the USA and Hollywood film expert, Dominic Jackson. This training took place over 9 days starting on January 26, 2016.¹³ Thanks to the efforts of Gus Mus and his team, the channel was officially launched on May 21, 2016, and has been viewed over 13 million times. The types of content produced on the Gus Mus YouTube channel include text, visual, and audiovisual formats. Some of the books studied by Gus Mus include Arbain Nawawi, Siyarus Surur Salafis As-Salihin, Akhlaqul Muslimin, and Tafsir Al-Ibriz. Several teachers from his Pesantren also broadcast live streaming sessions on the "Gus Mus Channel" YouTube account.¹⁴ The content on the "Gus Mus" YouTube channel varies in duration, ranging from 57 minutes to 1 hour.

Primarily, this research focuses on the tafsir content presented on the Gus Mus YouTube channel. This tafsir content is intended to be an oasis amidst the barren desert of life. Among the tafsir series featured are Tafsir Al-Ibriz and Tafsir Jalalain. For example, in these studies, Gus Yahya elaborates on the meaning of "*aflaha*" (successful or fortunate) as spiritual and moral success

Abdul Malik Mubarak, "Profil Gus Yahya, PUltra Pendiri PKB Yang Tegas Melamar Jadi Ketum PBNU," *Sindonews.com*, 2021, nasional.sindonews.com/read/636117/15/profil-gus-yahya-putra-pendiri-pkb-yang-tegas-melamar-jadi-ketum-pbnu-1640164353.

¹³ Arnis Rachmadhani, "Otoritas Keagamaan Di Era Media Baru: Dakwah Gus Mus Di Media Sosial," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama Dan Masyarakat* 5, no. 2 (2021): 150–69, <https://doi.org/10.14421/panangkaran.v5i2.2636>. 163

¹⁴ Rachmadhani. "Otoritas Keagamaan Di Era Media Baru: Dakwah Gus Mus Di Media Sosial," 164

achieved through strong faith. He emphasizes that true success for a believer is not merely worldly achievement, but the attainment of a quality of faith reflected in daily behavior and ethics. Gus Yahya also connects this tafsir with the social and cultural context of modern society, highlighting the challenges faced by Muslims in maintaining the integrity of faith amid globalization and shifting social values. He encourages the community to make faith the foundation for facing life's dynamics and invites them to reflect on the meaning of success from a spiritual perspective.

Interpretation of Surah Al-Mu'minun by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf

The tafsir video content by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf on January 14, 2021, on the "Gus Mus" channel, lasted approximately 57 minutes and was viewed about 1,300 times. In the tafsir study delivered by Gus Yahya, he began by reciting verses from Surah Al-Mu'minun: 1-16, which are:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (٢) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (٤) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (٦) فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (٧) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ (٩) أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (١٠) الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (١١) وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ (١٢) ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ (١٣) ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۗ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ (١٤) ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ (١٥) ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ (١٦)

Then Gus Yahya explained that Surah Al-Mu'minun is categorized as a Makkiyah surah. According to one narration, its verses number 118, while others say 119. This difference is due to the facilitation (*fasilah*) of verses. Similarly, Surah Al-Fatihah is said to have seven verses; some say it also has seven verses but does not include the *Basmalah* phrase, while others argue that *Basmalah* is not part of the Qur'anic recitation.¹⁵

Gus Yahya's tafsir of Jalalain often uses explanations in the Javanese Pesantren language with the characteristic Pegon script style, interpreting the verses literally one by one, and sometimes he also uses Indonesian explanations. The literal meanings conveyed by Gus Yahya will be summarized by the author in the form of a table, axample:

¹⁵ GusMus Channel, "Tafsir Jalalain Surat Al-Mu'minun (Ayat: 001)- KH. Yahya C. Staquf," Youtube, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/live/AO-OBIR_fHg?si=OdMaaAw72mpsGS0S. Menit ke 7.09

No	Words	Literal Meaning	No.	Words	Literal Meaning
1.	قَدْ أَفْلَحَ	Temen-temen bejo	11	الْفِرْدَوْسَ	Ing suwargo firdaus
2.	الْمُؤْمِنُونَ	Wong-wong mukmin	12	فِيهَا	Ing dalem
3.	الَّذِينَ	Kang utawi alladzi	13	خَالِدُونَ	Kang kekel
4.	هُمْ	Iku ya alladzi	14	وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا	Lan temen2 yektine wis nitahake sopo Allah ing kita
5.	صَلَاتِهِمْ	Ing piro-piro sholate	15	الْإِنْسَانَ	Ing nabi Adam
6.	خَاشِعُونَ	Iku kang khusyuk	16	مِنْ سُلَلَةٍ	Saking saripati
7.	عَنِ اللِّغْوِ	Saking lelahan	17	مِنْ طِينٍ	Saking ndut
8.	مُعْرَضُونَ	Podo mengo	18	ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ	Mongko nuli ndadeaken sopo Allah ing ingсан
9.	لِلزَّكَاةِ	Maring zakat	19	نُطْفَةٍ	sperms
10.	فَاعِلُونَ	Iku kang podo ngelakoni	20	فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ	Ing dalem panggonan nyaman

Table 1 Harfiyyah Q.S. Al-Mukminun Example

In the table explanation above, Gus Yahya first provides a literal meaning, following the general characteristics of sorogan-style study in traditional Pesantrens. He then gives further explanation as follows:

Explanation of verse 1 “temen-temen bejo piro-piro wong mukmin”

“aflaha maknane jaya/berjaya, yaiku menang, mulyo, luhur, temen-temen bejo wong mukmin temen bejane bejo iku dadi wong mukmin, nek perkoro fadilah e wong mukmin, perkoro keuntungan-keuntungan e dadi wong mukmin wis ora keitung, pirang-pirang, dunyo iki. Wong mukmin iki nduweni khususiyah-khususiyah sing ning dunyo, sing ora nduweni iki wong sing ora iman. Pirang-pirang sing ora pati gede khususiyah e wong mukmin iku iso nimpo faidah e madu minongo tombo. Madu sebagai tombo khususe wong mukmin digae tombo mandi, lek ora iman ora mandi.¹⁶ urung liya-liyane sing pirang-pirang keuntungane. Tapi lebih dari itu, ujian e wong mukmin iku kabegan merga didadekne wong mukmin, ditakdirne Gusti Allah dadi wong mukmin wis bejo tenan sing

¹⁶ Channel. Menit ke 17.34

ora iso diukur karo opo-opo, iso awake dewe iki dadi wong mukmin, padahal kowe nalika baligh pisanan kuia rang-arang sing wis ngerti hakikat e islam, tauhid, ngerti haliyah e Nabi Muhammad saw, sirah e kanjeng Nabi tapi kok iman? Dene kok kowe percoyo kok sing disembah kui Allah. Tapi ya sah-sah wae iman e anggere asyhadu an la ilaha illallah wa asyhadu anna muhammadan Rasulullah 'yakin atine senajan ora ngerti maknane, kui wis sah. Pirang -pirang wis baligh urung ketemu gurune, wong tuane yo ora sing soleh ngunu tapi ya iman. Contohe guru-gurumu koyo yai musthofa Bisri, yai Syarofuddin angger manut mesti slamet. Imam e iki merga ditakdirne dadi wong sing iman).'¹⁷

Next, Gus Yahya explains a section from the previous surah al-Anbiya, stating that all are destined to believe in Allah because they are chosen. **هُوَ أَجْتَبَاكُمْ**

وَمَا جَعَلْ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

"Gusti Allah milih kowe diantara poro menungso arep didadekno mukmin dadi wong pilihane pengeran). Kemudian orang-orang mukmin yang seperti apa yang dikehendaki beruntung?¹⁸

Explanation of verse 2

"sholat sing apik iki kudu noto ati, podo tunduk, andap asor ing ngarsane Gusti Allah/ merendahkan diri di hadapan Allah. Mulane kabeh tingkahe lahir batin e kudu merendahkan diri, ndingkuk sirahe senajan tolah toleh ora kerep-kerep ora batal, tapi senajano ora batal ning ora khusyuk, tingkah lain khusyuk kui ndingkuk, ngerti panggon sujud, tangan e sendakep ora malangkerik, ojo kakean obah, atine usahakno tansah dalam

¹⁷ Aflaha artinya jaya atau berjaya, yakni menang, mulia, luhur. Sungguh sangat beruntung orang yang beriman keberuntungan sejati itu adalah menjadi seorang mukmin. Adapun tentang keutamaan-keutamaan orang mukmin, tentang berbagai keuntungan menjadi seorang mukmin, itu sudah tak terhitung banyaknya di dunia ini. Orang mukmin memiliki keistimewaan-keistimewaan tersendiri di dunia, yang tidak dimiliki oleh orang yang tidak beriman. Banyak keistimewaan yang mungkin terlihat kecil, tetapi bisa membawa manfaat besar. Contohnya, madu sebagai obat khususnya bagi orang mukmin, bisa menjadi penyembuh ketika digunakan untuk mandi. Namun, jika tidak beriman, maka mandi dengan madu pun tidak akan membawa manfaat. Dan masih banyak keuntungan-keuntungan lainnya. Namun lebih dari itu, ujian yang dihadapi oleh orang mukmin pun merupakan keberuntungan, sebab mereka dijadikan oleh Allah sebagai orang mukmin. Takdir menjadi orang mukmin itu adalah keberuntungan luar biasa yang tidak bisa diukur oleh apapun. Kita bisa menjadi mukmin, padahal saat pertama kali baligh mungkin belum mengenal hakikat Islam, tauhid, atau memahami kehidupan Nabi Muhammad saw., riwayat hidup beliau, tapi kok bisa beriman? Mengapa kita bisa percaya bahwa yang disembah adalah Allah? Tapi itu sah-sah saja, karena keimanan itu cukup jika seseorang mengucapkan *asyhadu an la ilaha illallah wa asyhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulallah* dengan keyakinan dalam hati, meskipun belum paham maknanya itu sudah sah. Banyak orang yang ketika baligh belum juga bertemu gurunya, bahkan orang tuanya pun mungkin bukan orang saleh, tapi tetap diberi iman. Contohnya para guru kalian seperti Kiai Mustofa Bisri, Kiai Syarofuddin kalau kalian taat kepada beliau-beliau itu, pasti akan selamat. Itu karena mereka ditakdirkan menjadi orang-orang yang beriman

¹⁸ Allah memilih kamu di antara manusia untuk dijadikan sebagai seorang mukmin, menjadi hamba pilihan-Nya. Kemudian orang-orang mukmin yang seperti apa yang dikehendaki beruntung

*keadaan marang ngarsane Allah, merga ati angel e sak wun-wun, tapi lek nyuwun marang Gusti Allah ora angel, nyuwun di paring khusus)*¹⁹

Explanation of verse 3

*"mengapa wong-wong mukmin kudu ngedohi lelahan? Merga wong-wong mukmin percaya marang akhirat, lek wis percoyo karo akhirat kui eman-eman buang waktune, ora ngumpulne sangu kanggo akhirat eman-eman."*²⁰

Explanations of 4,5, dan 6

Gus Yahya's explanation of this verse places emphasis on verse 6.

"dadi wong wadon sing kuasani oleh tangannya tegese as saroriy/ budak wadon sing dikumpuli, istilah saroriy jama' songko surriyyah atau amat sing dikumpuli/ budak wadon sing sifate umum, ananging enek wadon sing khusus dikumpuli jenenge surriyyah). فَأَهْلُهُمْ "mongko temen setuhuhu bojone kan saroriyyah" غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ "iku ora den paido ingdalem nekani bojone lan ma malakat ay manukum" (penjelasan: dadi biyen iki budak iku normal tak kandani, biyen ancen enek mangsane zaman perbudakan, kahanae urip yang terssitem memang berlaku pada peradaban manusia di seluruh dunia baik di Eropa, Arab , maupun Jawa. Banjur islam memberikan batasan siapa yang ingin dijadikan budak, jadi budak itu orang yang ditolerir akibat peperangan, kemudian pihak yang kalah dijadikan budak, zaman itu islam juga mendorong untuk memerdekakan budak-bdak tapi dengan tetap mentolerir sistemnya).²¹ Lanjutan dari penjelasan tersebut, bahwasannya memiliki budak adalah sesuatu yang normal, di dalam fikih juga dijelaskan kata Gus Yahya" aurat e budak wadon karo wadon biasa beda. Lek wadon biasa/Merdeka aurot e seleuruh badan, dan budak wadon baina surroh wa rukbah, tapi jaman siaki we sora enek budak wadon. Sampai pada zaman turki usmaniy perbudakan masih ada, maka ada istilah harir/asrama untuk budak-budak Wanita raja. Tapi sekarang kita hidup sistem perbudakan telah di tolak oleh seluruh perbudakan umat manusia, ada hanya dibeberapa tempat saja, seperti di naourotian, ketika saya tahun 1996 ke Makkah ada beberapa Raja Arab juga memiliki budak, maka dari itu perbudakan sudah tidak ada karena melawan rasa kemanusiaan dari seluruh umat manusia"²²

¹⁹ Salat yang baik itu harus dimulai dengan menata hati, tunduk, dan merendahkan diri di hadapan Allah. Karena itu, seluruh sikap lahir dan batin harus menunjukkan kerendahan diri. Menundukkan kepala meskipun menoleh ke kanan dan kiri tidak langsung membatalkan salat tetap saja bisa mengurangi kekhusyukan. Sikap yang tidak khusyuk itu misalnya tidak menunduk, tidak memperhatikan tempat sujud, tangan tidak dilipat rapi, atau bergerak terlalu banyak. Usahakan hati selalu dalam keadaan hadir di hadapan Allah, karena hati itu sangat sulit diatur. Namun jika kita memohon kepada Allah, itu tidaklah sulit. Mintalah kepada-Nya agar diberi kekhusyukan Channel, "Tafsir Jalalain Surat Al-Mu'minun (Ayat: 001)- KH. Yahya C. Staquf." Menit ke 18.46

²⁰ Mengapa orang-orang mukmin harus menjauhi hal-hal yang sia-sia? Karena orang-orang mukmin percaya kepada akhirat. Jika sudah percaya kepada akhirat, maka sangat disayangkan jika membuang-buang waktu dan tidak mengumpulkan bekal untuk kehidupan akhirat. Itu benar-benar sebuah kerugian Channel. Menit ke 21.19

²¹ Channel. Menit ke 28.09

²² Menjadi wanita yang dimiliki oleh tangan kanan mereka maksudnya adalah *as-sarariy* budak perempuan yang digauli. Istilah *sarariy* adalah bentuk jamak dari *surriyyah*, yaitu

Explanation of verse 7

فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ

"Dadi nggunakno farji di kecakne mareng sakliyane bojo utawa budak wadon, contone digunakaken nganggo tangan/istimna' karo tangan e bojone utowo sakliyane bojone);: gawenen sak karepku, liyane nglewati wates misal e nganggo tangan e dewe termasuk nglewati wates. Tapi lek nganggo tangane bojone utowo budak wadon podo ae karo nggunakne kanggo bojo/budak bojo, hampir gaenek batasan."²³

Explanation of verse 8

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ

Gus Yahya stated that amanat (trust) refers to something entrusted or delegated to a person between us and others, between us and them, and between us and Allah. The promise to Allah includes performing prayer and being obedient to Him. This is because, before humans were born into this world, Allah had already established a covenant with them a promise to be born in obedience

budak perempuan yang digauli; budak perempuan yang sifatnya umum. Namun ada juga perempuan budak yang khusus untuk digauli, yang disebut surriyyah. فَالَّذِينَ هُمْ (Maka sesungguhnya istri dan para sarariyyah mereka) غَيْرُ مُلُومِينَ (tidaklah mereka tercela karena mendatangi istri maupun budak perempuan yang mereka miliki). Penjelarasannya: Dahulu, budak adalah sesuatu yang normal saya sampaikan bahwa pada masa lalu memang ada zaman perbudakan. Kondisi hidup dan sistem yang berlaku memang seperti itu di seluruh peradaban manusia, baik di Eropa, Arab, maupun di Jawa. Kemudian Islam memberikan batasan-batasan terkait siapa yang boleh dijadikan budak. Budak adalah orang yang diperbolehkan untuk dijadikan milik akibat peperangan, di mana pihak yang kalah diperbudak. Pada masa itu, Islam juga mendorong pembebasan budak-budak, namun tetap mentoleransi sistem perbudakan yang sudah menjadi bagian dari tatanan sosial masyarakat saat itu. Lanjutan dari penjelasan tersebut, bahwa memiliki budak adalah sesuatu yang wajar saat itu. Dalam fikih pun dijelaskan menurut Gus Yahya bahwa aurat budak perempuan berbeda dengan aurat perempuan merdeka. Jika perempuan merdeka, auratnya adalah seluruh tubuh; sedangkan budak perempuan, auratnya antara pusar dan lutut (*baina as-surrah wa ar-rukbah*). Namun, di zaman sekarang ini sudah tidak ada lagi budak perempuan. Sampai masa Kekhalifahan Turki Utsmani pun perbudakan masih ada. Maka dikenal istilah *harim* atau asrama khusus bagi budak-budak perempuan milik raja. Tapi sekarang, kita hidup di zaman di mana sistem perbudakan telah ditolak oleh seluruh umat manusia. Hanya di beberapa tempat saja perbudakan mungkin masih ada. Misalnya, di daerah Naourotian (mungkin maksudnya wilayah tertentu yang masih mempraktikkan perbudakan), ketika saya tahun 1996 ke Makkah, masih ada beberapa raja Arab yang memiliki budak. Maka dari itu, perbudakan saat ini dianggap telah tiada, karena bertentangan dengan rasa kemanusiaan seluruh umat manusia, Channel. Menit ke 30.52

²³ Menggunakan alat kelamin (*farji*) hanya diperbolehkan kepada selain istri atau budak perempuan, contohnya adalah digunakan dengan tangan — seperti *istimna'* (masturbasi) dengan tangan istri atau selain istri. Kalimat: "Lakukan sesukamu, asal tidak melewati batas." Yang dimaksud melewati batas, misalnya menggunakan tangan sendiri itu termasuk melampaui batas. Namun jika menggunakan tangan istri atau budak perempuan, hukumnya sama saja seperti menggunakan (berhubungan) langsung dengan istri atau budak perempuan. Hampir tidak ada batasan dalam hal ini. Channel. Menit ke 34.32

(*mītsāq*).

Explanation of verse 9-16

At times, Gus Yahya provides interpretations or explanations of verses based solely on their literal (*harfiyyah*) meanings, as shown in the table above. For example, in his explanations reinforcing verses 10 to 14, he emphasizes the importance of maintaining prayer times or *shalawat* in verse 9, and in verse 10, the rewards for those who are considered successful namely, the paradise of Firdaus, where they will dwell eternally. Then, verses 11 to 14 address the creation of humans from the essence of clay, which is then transformed into a *'alaqah* (a clot of thick blood), and then into *izām* (bones).²⁴ In some *qirā'āt* (recitations), the word is in plural form, while in others it is singular. Afterward, the soul is breathed into the womb of a mother. Thus, the creation of human beings is made in the best form so that it may bring blessings. After humans are created, a clear statement follows that they will eventually return to their original state, and from that state, they will be resurrected.

This concludes Gus Yahya's explanation of the interpretation of verses in Tafsir Jalalain, specifically Surah Al-Mu'minun: 1–16. Judging from public interest among netizens, the content seems to be moderately received by the wider audience, as Gus Yahya is more well-known as a political figure than as a commentator on Qur'anic exegesis. This is evident from the YouTube view count, which stands at only 1.2 thousand views, with 56 likes and 2 comments. In contrast, his Instagram account, @yahyacholilstaquf, has 54.8 thousand followers. Although Gus Yahya's Tafsir Jalalain sessions rarely receive comments, he has made significant contributions to Qur'anic interpretation among political circles an area where such engagement has been rare.

Interpretation Analysis

The interpretation of *Tafsir Jalalain* by Gus Yahya on the "Gus Mus" YouTube channel, when viewed from the explanations and interpretations presented above, makes a significant contribution to the Qur'anic principle of *ṣāliḥun li kullī zamān wa makān* (relevant for all times and places). According to the author, the emphasis of meaning in Gus Yahya's explanation is found in verse 6, when examined through the lens of J.E. Gracia's functional theory of meaning, which includes the following three functions:²⁵

²⁴ Channel. Menit ke 43.43

²⁵ Fungsi interpretasi umum perspektif Gracia meliputi tiga hal: 1) *historical function*/ fungsi historis: sebuah fungsi yang menciptakan kembali di mata audiens masa kini mengenai pemahaman yang dimiliki oleh seorang pembuat karya atau pengarang teks dan audiens histori. 2) *meaning function*/fungsi makna: memberikan pemahaman kepada audiens masa kini dimana pemahaman yang ditangkap oleh audiens termasuk sama seperti apa yang dimaksudkan oleh pengarang teks, 3) *implicative function*/fungsi implikatif: berusaha meyakinkan atau memunculkan sesuatu dibenak audiens masa kini terhadap suatu pemahaman sehingga mereka mampu memahami implikasi dari teks yang ditafsirkan

Historical Function of QS. Al-Mu'minun: 6

The development of meaning conveyed by Gus Yahya in verse 6 emphasizes that slavery is no longer practiced in any religious civilization, with the ultimate goal of upholding human dignity. In applying the historical function, the author will explain how this text emerged, specifically addressing the position of *milk al-yamīn* (those whom one's right hand possesses) at the time this verse was revealed.

“dadi wong wadon sing kuasani oleh tangannya tegese as saroriy/ budak wadon sing dikumpul, istilah saroriy jama’ songko surriyyah atau amat sing dikumpul/ budak wadon sing sifate umum, ananging enek wadon sing khusus dikumpul jenenge surriyyah). فَأَيُّكُمْ “mongko temen setuhuhu bojone kan saroriyyah” عَنِزٌ مَّلُومِينَ “iku ora den paido ingdalem nekani bojone lan ma malakat ay manukum” (penjelasan: dadi biyen iki budak iku normal tak kandani, biyen ancen enek mangsane zaman perbudakan, kahanae urip yang terssitem memang berlaku pada peradaban manusia di seluruh dunia baik di Eropa, Arab, maupun Jawa. Banjur islam memberikan batasan siapa yang ingin dijadikan budak, jadi budak itu orang yang ditolerir akibat peperangan, kemudian pihak yang kalah dijadikan budak, zaman itu islam juga mendorong untuk memerdekakan budak-bdak tapi dengan tetap mentolerir sistemnya).²⁶ Lanjutan dari penjelasan tersebut, bahwasannya memiliki budak adalah sesuatu yang normal, di dalam fikih juga dijelaskan kata Gus Yahya”aurat e budak wadon karo wadon biasa beda. Lek wadon biasa/Merdeka aurot e seleuruh badan, dan budak wadon baina surroh wa rukbah, tapi jaman siaki we sora enek budak wadon. Sampai pada zaman turki usmaniy perbudakan masih ada, maka ada istilah harir/asrama untuk budak-budak Wanita raja. Tapi sekarang kita hidup sistem perbudakan telah di tolak oleh seluruh perbudakan umat manusia, ada hanya dibeberapa tempat saja, seperti di naourotian, ketika saya tahun 1996 ke Makkah ada beberapa Raja Arab juga memiliki budak, maka dari itu perbudakan sudah tidak ada karena melawan rasa kemanusiaan dari seluruh umat manusia”²⁷

The explanation given by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf in the quoted passage is part of a broader discourse on Qur'anic interpretation concerning slavery, particularly regarding the status of female slaves (*al-sarariyy*) as expressed in the phrase *mā malakat aymānuhum* found in Surah Al-Mu'minun and several other verses. In this context, Gus Yahya addresses a classical issue in Islam that has become highly sensitive in contemporary times namely, slavery and its relation to sexuality and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The practice of slavery was not exclusive to Islamic history but was a global phenomenon that existed across various civilizations, including Arab, European, and Nusantara societies. It

dengan ilmu pengetahuan yang sedang berkembang. Siti Lailatul Qomariyah, “Penciptaan Perempuan Perspektif Hermeneutika George J.E. Gracia,” *Al-Dhikra* 2, no. 1 (2020): 97, <http://journal.usnuluddin.ptiq.ac.id/index.php/aldhikra/article/view/7>.

²⁶ Channel, “Tafsir Jalalain Surat Al-Mu'minun (Ayat: 001)- KH. Yahya C. Staquf.” Menit ke 28.09

²⁷ Channel. Menit ke 30.52

should be emphasized that Islam did not introduce the system of slavery but instead regulated, restricted, and ultimately encouraged its gradual abolition.²⁸

In the terminology of fiqh, the term *al-sarariyy* (السراري) or surriyah refers to female slaves who, according to the legal norms of that time, could be sexually engaged by their masters. In classical Islamic jurisprudence, there was indeed a distinction between the *awrah* (parts of the body that must be covered) of female slaves and that of free women. As stated by Gus Yahya, the *awrah* of a female slave extended only from the navel to the knees, whereas for a free woman, her entire body was considered *awrah* except for the face and palms. This reflects the social class structure in pre-modern patriarchal societies.

However, Gus Yahya clearly asserts that the context of the times has changed, and the system of slavery no longer holds ethical or legal relevance in modern society. He notes that the practice of slavery even persisted during the Ottoman Caliphate but has since been abandoned by Muslims globally due to its contradiction with humanistic values. His remark about a visit to Mecca in 1996, where he still encountered traces of slavery among some aristocratic families, illustrates that remnants of this system have not entirely vanished, even though collective human awareness has largely rejected it.

In various Arab communities, both Bedouin and urban (*ḥadāri*), several factors contributed to divisions and weakened social unity. One of the main factors was the class system within the tribal structure, which reinforced tribal fanaticism. Each clan in the Arabian Peninsula had a tradition of grouping its members based on lineage and social status. One of the distinct social groups was the *maḥwālī* (singular: *maḥwālā*), which referred to emancipated slaves. Although they were legally free, they were not fully recognized as core members of the clan. The status of a *maḥwālā* positioned them as dependents or protégés who relied on the protection of the clan that had freed them. Similarly, foreigners who chose to join a clan often through marriage, political alliances, or economic agreements would acquire the status of *walā'* (loyalty and protection). However, they remained distinct from native clan members in terms of lineage. These outsiders were not entitled to full rights as core members, as their position was more that of protected outsiders. This stratification gave rise to a rigid social hierarchy within the tribe. As a result, individuals without blood ties or strong dependency links to their clan such as freed slaves or outsiders were often in vulnerable positions: easily marginalized, not fully respected, and with limited socio-political rights.²⁹

Besides the existence of class differences, Arab communities were further divided into several hierarchical levels. The highest level was the clan elder (sheikh of the tribe). He held a central position in each clan. No decision within

²⁸ Agus Hermanto, "Integrasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Paradigma Teori Gender Kontemporer)," *Studia Quranika* 1, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquran.v1i2.844.h.98>

²⁹ Yahya Luthi Abdul Wahab, *Al-Arab Fi Al-Ushur Al-Qadimah*, n.d. 384-387

the clan was allowed to deviate from, let alone contradict, the will of the sheikh. The clan elder was assisted by a tribal council consisting of men with extensive knowledge and experience. The Arab society knew that in Yemen there was inequality within the community, seen from the uneven distribution of prosperity. Among them were the ruling class and officials who formed the elite group and controlled various state affairs. Then there were groups of farmers, workers, and artisans producing various products. There was also a wealthy merchant class with abundant riches. These differences persisted for a long time, passed down from generation to generation, and no one succeeded in changing the established order that had become tradition in the region.³⁰

Then, in the midst of the Jahiliyyah society, bad practices and habits such as drinking alcohol, gambling, and degrading women developed. The status of Arab women was divided into two groups: slaves and free women. Both groups occupied a low stratum within the community.³¹ When an Arab man had a child by a slave woman, that child was not given lineage to him. Women at that time held the lowest and most despised position, so they were prevented from marrying or being married to another man after being divorced by their husband. Meanwhile, on the other hand, free women, especially those from the nobility, enjoyed greater freedom. Sometimes they were involved in deliberations

³⁰ Struktur sosial berbasis kelas bukan hanya ditemukan di Yaman, melainkan tersebar luas di sebagian besar wilayah Jazirah Arab. Meskipun demikian, wilayah seperti Mekkah dan Yaman menunjukkan kompleksitas yang lebih tinggi dalam struktur sosialnya karena peran strategis mereka dalam jalur perdagangan internasional. Di Mekkah, peran Quraisy sebagai pengelola perdagangan dan pemilik Ka'bah menjadikan mereka kelompok elite yang berkuasa secara ekonomi dan sosial. Sementara itu, di Yaman, struktur sosial diperkuat oleh warisan kerajaan-kerajaan besar seperti Saba' dan Himyar, yang secara historis telah membentuk sistem hierarkis dengan pembagian kelas yang tegas. Di masyarakat Yaman, misalnya, terlihat ketimpangan sosial yang mencolok. Kekuasaan berada di tangan kalangan elite: para penguasa, pejabat kerajaan, dan bangsawan. Mereka mengendalikan sumber daya dan posisi strategis dalam pemerintahan. Di bawahnya terdapat kelompok masyarakat yang menjalankan roda ekonomi, seperti para petani, pekerja, dan perajin, yang meski produktif, tetap berada dalam posisi sosial yang lebih rendah. Selain itu, terdapat pula kelompok saudagar kaya yang memiliki pengaruh besar karena kekayaan dan jaringan dagangnya, namun belum tentu memperoleh status sosial tertinggi bila tidak berasal dari keturunan elit. Perbedaan kelas ini tidak hanya bersifat ekonomis, tetapi juga diwariskan secara turun-temurun, menciptakan tatanan sosial yang nyaris tak tergoyahkan. Meskipun upaya perubahan pernah muncul baik melalui gerakan keagamaan, ekspresi kesenjangan melalui pemberontakan lokal, maupun gelombang ketidakpuasan sosial namun sistem tersebut tetap bertahan kuat. Tidak ada transformasi sosial besar yang berhasil mengubah fondasi tatanan hingga datangnya Islam. Lihat: Muhammad Suhail Thaqusy, *Al-Tarikh Al-Islam Al-Wajiz, Diterjemahkan Oleh Dedi Ahimsa Riyadi Dan Kasereun AS. Rahman "Sejarah Islam Dari Pra Arab Pra-Islam Hingga Runtuhnya Khilafah Utsmani" Cet. 5*, Beirut: Dar al-Nafais, 2020, 22

³¹ M. Thoriqul Islam and Elvan Tedio Fawaz, "Islamization Of Knowledge In Qur'anic Perspective," *Studia Quranika* 2, no. 1 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquaran.v2i1.1132>.
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discussing various clan issues and also participated in affairs together with men.

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Slavery developed rapidly in pre-Islamic Arab society. When Islam came, it gradually introduced rules to abolish slavery. Islam forbade slavery among Muslims and prohibited any Muslim from enslaving others. If the verse about *malakat* (those whom your right hands possess) is interpreted literally, this understanding gives rise to a negative view that slavery was allowed to fulfill a man's desire to satisfy his biological needs.

The Function of Meaning Development in QS. Al-Mu'minun: 6

The function of meaning development in QS. Al-Mu'minun: 6 refers to when a person or audience understands, interprets, and expands the meaning of a text, questioning whether the meaning intended by the audience aligns with the author's understanding. Thus, the function of meaning development has a broader scope compared to historical meaning. The term *malakat* or female slaves can be clearly understood as reflecting the social status and humanity that prevailed in pre-Islamic society based on slave ownership, exercised at the owner's discretion.³³ The existence of slavery at that time was unavoidable, especially for those without power within the social strata.

Among the causes of slavery are: first, defeat in war. Wars frequently occurred whether between groups, tribes, factions, or disputes between two parties with different opinions or interests. The losing side would become the slaves of the victors.³⁴ Second, lineage and poverty. In the past, being a slave was not a choice; anyone born from a slave would become part of that status, often driven by the need to survive under economic pressure. Third, kidnapping and criminal offenses.

In the *Tafsir Jalalain*, *mā malakat aymānukum* in the context of Surah Al-Mu'minun is interpreted as *as-sarariyy*, a view that aligns with Ibn Kathir's explanation in his tafsir. The term *as-sarariyy* refers to a female slave who is specifically designated to be taken as a sexual partner. The word is related to *al-surur*, which means happiness. The connection with *as-sarariyy* is that such a female slave serves as a means of fulfilling sexual desires, which becomes a source of happiness for her master.³⁵ Ahmad Musthafa al-Maraghi in *Tafsir al-Maraghi* explains the term *mā malakat aymānukum* as the permissibility of sexual relations with female slaves who are lawfully owned according to Islamic law,

³² Thaqqusy, *Al-Tarikh Al-Islam Al-Wajiz*, Diterjemahkan Oleh Dedi Ahimsa Riyadi Dan Kasereun AS. Rahman "Sejarah Islam Dari Pra Arab Pra-Islam Hingga Runtuhnya Khilafah Utsmani" Cet. 5. 22

³³ Zaitunah Subhan, *Al-Qur'an Dan Perempuan: Menuju Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Penafsiran*, Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2015. 286

³⁴ Ahmad Suyuthi Anshari Nasution, "Perbudakan Dalam Hukum Islam," n.d. 96

³⁵ Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azim*, Jil. 5 (Dar Ibn Jauzy: li an-Nasr wa at-Tawzi', 1431). 450

but this does not imply unrestricted freedom. Al-Maraghi clarifies that this phrase applies within the framework of Shariah, which regulates slavery, particularly during times of war or legitimate agreements, while upholding ethics and humanity.

According to Quraish Shihab, the term should be read contextually and ethically. He emphasizes that the use of the term cannot be separated from the socio-historical conditions at the time the verse was revealed. However, the spirit of Islam is aimed at the gradual abolition of the slavery system and upholding human dignity. Meanwhile, according to Hamka in *Tafsir al-Azhar*, the term *mā malakat aymānukum* is explained within a very critical socio-historical context but with a strong touch of Islamic morality. Buya Hamka acknowledges that at the time of the Qur'an's revelation, slavery was still a common social system, and the phrase *mā malakat aymānukum* indeed refers to female slaves lawfully owned, whether through war or agreements.³⁶

Literally, the phrase *mā malakat aymānukum* comes from the verb *malaka* (ملك) which means "to own, control, or have power over." In the form of the relative pronoun *mā* (ما) meaning "what" or "whoever," and *aymān* (أيمان), the plural form of *yamīn* (يمين) meaning "right hand," it literally means: "what is owned by their right hand."³⁷ Meanwhile, the term for female slaves in the Qur'an is at least referred to by the term *'amatun*.³⁸ In *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, Ibn Faris explains that the word *malaka* contains the basic meaning of *al-qabd wa al-isti'lā'* (full control and mastery over something). However, in the historical context of pre-Islamic Arab society and early Islam, this term was used as a figurative expression (*kināyah*) to refer to slaves or servants who were lawfully owned, including female slaves who could be taken as concubines.³⁹ This aligns with the *Tafsir Jalalain* and Ibn Kathir, who interpret this phrase as *as-sarāri* (concubine slaves), with whom sexual relations were permitted according to the sharia at that time.

Nevertheless, contemporary exegesis and the semantic development offered by modern interpreters such as Quraish Shihab and Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf attempt to broaden the scope of meaning. They emphasize that the social context of slavery has normatively shifted, and thus the interpretation should no longer be understood merely textually, but rather connected to principles of ethics, law, and humanity. In *Tafsir al-Misbah*, Quraish Shihab explains that the phrase *mā malakat aymānukum* can be understood as a form of legally permitted sexual relationship. However, in the modern context, this is no longer relevant to the practice of slavery and should instead be linked exclusively to lawful

³⁶ Prof.Dr. Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Jilid 6*, Singapura: Pustaka Nasional PTE LTD Singapura, 1982. 4757

³⁷ Ibn Manzhur, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Kairo: Daar al-Ma'arif, n.d. 4268

³⁸ Terdapat pada QS. Al-Baqarah ayat 221, dan QS. An-Nur ayat 32
Ma'had Tahfidh Yanbu'ul Qur'an Kudus, *Al-Qur'an Karim Bi Rast Usmaniy*, Kudus: CV. Mubarakatan Thoyyibah, 2021.

³⁹ Ibn Faris, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah, Jil II*, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1979. 145

relationships through marriage.⁴⁰ Similarly, Ahmad Musthafa al-Maraghi's interpretation states that Islam aims to gradually abolish the system of slavery and places greater emphasis on the virtue of marriage in preserving human dignity and honor.⁴¹ Thus, it can be concluded that the phrase *mā malakat aymānuhum* no longer connotes female slaves.

Implicative Function

In discussing the phrase in QS. Al-Mu'minun:6, Gus Yahya presents an exegetical approach that is not only historical but also contextual. He avoids a rigid textual-legalistic approach and instead offers an Interpretation that considers social justice values and contemporary relevance. In *Tafsir al-Jalalain*, the phrase is interpreted as *as-sarāri* (female slaves who are lawfully permitted to be sexually engaged by their masters without marriage). Ibn Kathir, in *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, also offers a similar explanation, clarifying that such a context was lawful in the past when slavery was still recognized as a social system.⁴² However, contemporary exegeses such as those of Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida in *Tafsir al-Manar* provide criticism toward the use of such verses to legitimize sexual domination over female slaves. They emphasize that the system of slavery contradicts the broader principles of Islam regarding justice and the respect for human dignity.⁴³ Quraish Shihab, in his *Tafsir al-Misbah*, even asserts that this verse cannot be used to justify any form of sexual exploitation in the modern era, since the system of slavery itself has disappeared and is morally rejected.⁴⁴

The implicative function of a contextual understanding of *mā malakat aymānukum* in QS. Al-Mu'minun:6 is the preservation of individual sexual morality in accordance with social norms and religious law. The word "moral" itself comes from the Latin *mores* (plural of *mos*), meaning habits, behavior, or ethics. Dian Ibung defines morality as the foundational belief system that underlies an individual's social behavior in line with prevailing social norms.⁴⁵ Within this framework, Gus Yahya positions the verse as a call to uphold personal dignity, avoid sexual deviance, and fulfill biological needs only through lawful marital relationships. This interpretation has significant social implications, as it encourages society to frame sexuality within moral and spiritual responsibility, rather than in power-based relationships as was previously seen in the practice of slavery.

⁴⁰ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah; Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Volume 8*, Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002. 143

⁴¹ Ahmad Musthofa Maraghi, *Tafsir Maraghi*, Mesir: Musthafa al-Babiy al-Halaby, 1946. 71-73

⁴² Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azim*, Jil. 5. 450

⁴³ Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, *Tafsir Al-Manar*, Jilid 6, Mesir: Al-Hay'ah al-Mishriyyah li al-Kitab, 1990. 186-187

⁴⁴ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah; Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Volume 8*. 216

⁴⁵ Dian Ibung, *Mengembangkan Nilai Moral Pada Anak*, Elex Media Komputindo, n.d. 45

Gus Yahya Cholil's Contribution to the Development of Qur'anic Interpretation through Semantic Expansion

As a renowned Islamic scholar with influence in political spheres, Gus Yahya's interpretation of Surah Al-Mu'minun especially verse 6 offers significant contributions to the evolution of Qur'anic exegesis. Among his key contributions are: *First*, his interpretive studies, disseminated through social media platforms such as YouTube, have broadened the discourse of Qur'anic exegesis into the digital realm. By presenting classical interpretive traditions in accessible online formats, these teachings bridge the gap between the scholarly tradition and the general public, transforming tafsir from a discourse limited to Pesantren and academics into one of wider public engagement. *Second*, Gus Yahya's semantic development of the *Tafsir al-Jalalain* particularly regarding QS. Al-Mu'minun:6 and its key phrase enlightens a broader audience to the notion that understanding the Qur'anic text must go beyond textual literalism. He emphasizes that interpretation must take into account the contextual realities of the time, shifts in social relations, and universal human values. In this framework, *mā malakat aymānukum* is no longer to be seen as a justification for sexual slavery, but rather as a historical expression of a bygone social system, one that is now incompatible with contemporary ideals of equality and human dignity.

This critical reading is highly relevant in contemporary discourses surrounding human rights and gender issues. Without abandoning the classical framework of tafsir, Gus Yahya demonstrates that the values of justice, humanity, and respect for women can be unearthed from the Qur'anic text provided that interpretation is conducted inclusively and contextually. He rejects literalist approaches that risk legitimizing gender-based violence and instead promotes tafsir as a tool of emancipation. The implications of this approach are profound: through this contextual meaning-making, many individuals have shifted in how they understand sensitive verses, especially those concerning male-female relations. Audiences who previously saw the verse as a justification for male dominance are now more open to interpretations that emphasize equality, respect, and protection of women's rights. With his background as both a religious leader and a political figure, Gus Yahya's interpretations also influence cultural and social policy directions, promoting an Islamic intellectual renewal that aligns with universal values while remaining rooted in traditional sources. As emphasized by scholar Brett Wilson, the modernization of the Qur'anic mushaf since the Ottoman era has rendered the Qur'an a popular book across social classes; likewise, Gus Yahya's contextual exegesis paves the way for the Qur'an to remain relevant amidst shifting values and modern challenges.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Brett Wilson, *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism: Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey*, London: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Conclusion

The study of tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) through social media platforms is currently enjoyed by a wide audience. Various platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and others provide access to numerous tafsir studies conducted by prominent Islamic scholars. One such example is the *Tafsir al-Jalalain* study delivered by Gus Yahya Cholil Staquf on the "GusMus Channel" YouTube account, aired on January 14, 2024, and viewed by approximately 1.3 thousand viewers. Gus Yahya, a politician and the General Chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU), has a distinctive style in explaining Qur'anic interpretation, with particular emphasis on verse 6. His semantic development of the interpretation of Surah Al-Mu'minun verse 6 can be understood through three main functions: *First*, the historical function, which highlights that the phrase *mā malakat aymānuhum* in its original context referred to the ownership of female slaves as part of the socio-legal structure of the time.

Second, the semantic-development function, in which Gus Yahya attempts to recontextualize the phrase in accordance with contemporary legal and social values especially by framing permitted sexual relations within the bounds of lawful marriage. *Third*, the implicative function, which emphasizes the ethical and social significance of this verse in shaping individual moral consciousness and preserving sexual integrity and morality in modern society. As such, his interpretation moves beyond mere textuality and becomes socially and culturally relevant.

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