

## TRADITION AND MODERNITY: ORTHODOX INTERPRETATION OF QS. AL-FATIḤAH IN THE STUDY QURAN

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### Abstract

Implying the identical meaning, the term orthodox Islam or traditional Islam is understood as the correct doctrine in accordance with official teachings. Both are symbols of the maintenance of old religious ways that originate from an authoritative entity that must be obeyed. Assuming to impose the same way, *The Study Quran* by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and his team also maintain the tradition of interpreting the Quran with unique characteristics of orthodoxy. The present work aims to explicate the orthodoxy of the tradition-based interpretation contained in the work of these traditionalist scholars by focusing on QS. al-Fāṭiḥah/1's commentary in its seven verses. The modern orthodoxy approaches remain relevant to the first *sūrah* since its everyday performance articulates the traditionalism of religious practice. We conclude that the authorship of *The Study Quran* is an effort to preserve traditional methods of modern Quranic interpretation as reflected through the scriptural and community elements of Islamic orthodoxy. *The Study Quran's* orthodoxy is characterized by the interpretation based on discursive

tradition which allows the development of existing discourse and thought. It contributes to the idea that modernity does not necessarily mean quitting old conducts inherited by the treasure of traditional *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*. Moreover, modern interpretation orthodoxy does not withdraw from the dynamics of thoughts in diversified religious groups of Islam.

**Keywords:** *tradition, modernity, orthodoxy, QS. al-Fātiḥah/1, The Study Quran*

### Abstrak

Menyiratkan makna yang sama, istilah Islam ortodoks atau Islam tradisional dipahami sebagai doktrin yang benar sesuai dengan ajaran resmi. Keduanya adalah simbol dirawatnya cara-cara lama keagamaan yang berasal dari entitas otoritatif yang harus ditaati. Diasumsikan menerapkan hal serupa, *The Study Quran* karya Seyyed Hossein Nasr dan tim juga memelihara tradisi dalam menafsirkan al-Qur’an dengan ciri khas ortodoksi unik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau ortodoksi tafsir berbasis tradisi yang terdapat dalam karya para sarjana tradisional tersebut dengan fokus pada tafsir QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 dalam tujuh ayatnya. Pendekatan ortodoksi modern relevan dengan surat pertama ini karena pengamalan keseharian ayat-ayatnya melambangkan tradisionalisme praktik keagamaan. Penulis menyimpulkan penulisan *The Study Quran* adalah sebuah upaya preservasi metode tradisional penafsiran al-Qur’an modern yang terefleksikan melalui elemen kitab suci dan komunitas dari ortodoksi Islam. Ortodoksi *The Study Quran* dicirikan dengan tafsir berbasis tradisi diskursif yang terbuka dengan perkembangan wacana dan pemikiran yang ada. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada gagasan bahwa modernitas tidak serta merta menjadikan kesarjanaan tafsir al-Qur’an meninggalkan cara-cara lama yang diwariskan khazanah *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān* tradisional. Lebih dari itu, ortodoksi tafsir modern tidak menutup diri dengan dinamika pemikiran pada berbagai kelompok keagamaan dalam Islam.

**Kata Kunci:** *modernitas, tradisi, ortodoksi, QS. al-Fātiḥah/1, The Study Quran*

### Introduction

There would be two different words that symbolize relatively the same meaning, namely “*orthodox*” and “*traditional*.” In the Islamic context, both can be used to mean something that is considered correct according to official teaching. Orthodoxy is conservative, in the sense that it aims to maintain a long-standing and

traditional position.<sup>1</sup> In this vein, it could be understood that if it is called orthodox Islam then what is being aimed at is old, traditional Islam. However, a preference for tradition is not always a way of opposing change but can also facilitate change and what is considered tradition is often something that remains new as well. Traditional Muslim scholars (*'ulamā*) view Islamic tradition as their fundamental reference, identity, and source of authority.<sup>2</sup> While traditional Islam does not necessarily reject innovation, it can even innovate itself while remaining within its orthodox vision. Change should not be resisted to maintain the status quo. This meaning probably provides a different nuance regarding how we perceive orthodox Islam or traditional Islam.

In the modern era, group advocating tradition is called neo-traditionalist. Among the figures are Muḥammad Sa'īd Ramaḍān al-Būḥārī, Aḥmad Jum'ah, 'Umar bin Hafīz, Abdal Hakim Murad, Hamza Yusuf, and 'Alī al-Jifrī. All agree that the tradition is an Islamic tradition identified with the uninterrupted transmission of knowledge, connected to the “chain of purification of the soul.” They promote what they envision as traditional Islamic theology and practice.<sup>3</sup> In this way, the connection of the chain of knowledge is the key to preserving the doctrine of Islamic traditionalism. Traditional knowledge in Islam is no solitary, it consists of various branches of knowledge. Sunnite traditionalist group, for example, advocate this Islamic traditionalism by accepting one of the Sunnite schools of law, believing in medieval schools of theology, and participating in sufi brotherhood. By means of this, modern Muslims equip themselves with the requisite legal, theological and spiritual tools.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, even though modernity is an inevitable fact, traditionalist scholars still maintain the authenticity of their traditional knowledge in all Islamic discipline.

The practice of Islamic traditionalism is prevalent in efforts to interpret the Quran, such as that carried out by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. He is an Iranian philosopher who maintains a traditionalist interpretation of Islamic doctrine.<sup>5</sup> This was proven by the publication of his collective work with other scholars in 2015, entitled *The Study Qur'an: A New Translation and Commentary* (hereinafter written as *The Study*

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<sup>1</sup> J. G. A Pocock, “Within The Margins: The Definitions of Orthodoxy,” in *The Margin of Orthodoxy: Heterodox Writing and Cultural Response, 1660-1750*, ed. Roger D. Lund (Cambridge-New York-Melbourne-Madrid-Cape Town-Singapore-Sao Paulo: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 33–53.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 3-10.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Sedgwick, “The Modernity of Neo-Traditionalist Islam,” in *Muslim Subjectivities in Global Modernity: Islamic Tradition and the Construction of Modern Muslim Identities*, ed. Dietrich Jung and Kirstine Sinclair (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2020), 121–146, [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004425576\\_008](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004425576_008).

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Brown, “Scripture in the Modern Muslim World: The Quran and Hadith,” in *Islam in the Modern World*, ed. Jeffrey T. Kenney and Ebrahim Moosa (London-New York: Routledge, 2014), 31–32.

<sup>5</sup> Jacob Williams, “Islamic Traditionalists: ‘Against the Modern World’?,” *The Muslim World* 113, no. 3 (2023): 333–54.

*Quran*).<sup>6</sup> In his interpretation of the Quran in this work, Nasr explicitly shows his traditionalist tendencies. For example, he indicated this thought in the interpretation of the QS. al-Fātiḥah/1: 2 by saying, "*According to traditional Islamic etiquette, whenever someone is asked how one is feeling, the correct response should be alḥamdulillāh, no matter one's condition.*"<sup>7</sup> In this expression, it cannot be denied that when the traditional interpretation of a verse is shown, one of the methods applied by *The Study Quran* is to start the sentence with word "*traditional*" itself. However, it is important to conduct further exploration regarding the construction of traditionalist interpretive reasoning in *The Study Quran* as a representation of the orthodoxy of modern exegetical work.

Several studies have attempted to examine the traditionalist aspect of *The Study Quran*. For instance, Anna Rolli Muchlisin and Luluk Khumaerah probe traditionalist scholarship and hermeneutics of *The Study Quran*.<sup>8</sup> Almost similarly, Muhammad Hubbab Nauval has also delved *The Study Quran* regarding the neo-traditionalism of this work which has an implication to the interpretation of ethico-legal verses.<sup>9</sup> Besides, some works explore *The Study Quran* from the viewpoint of esoteric aspect of it, such as those written by Zikri Riza and Zainuddin and Muhammad Ismail.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, Mohammad Salahuddin Al-Ayuubi's research examines the representation of religious literacy in *The Study Quran*.<sup>11</sup> Whereas, Sri Redjeki and Muhammad Fiqih Cholidi studied Nasr's thoughts in his exegetical effort regarding the aesthetic concept of *tawḥīd* in Islamic architecture and cosmology in the Quran respectively.<sup>12</sup> The bunch of these existing research has not alluded to the

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<sup>6</sup> See Seyyed Hossein Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York: HarperOne, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Nasr et al, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Anna Rolli Muchlisin, "Kesarjanaan Tradisional Alquran Di Era Kontemporer: Telaah Terhadap The Study Quran A New Translation and Commentary Karya Seyyed Hossein Nasr Dan Tim," *Episteme* 12, no. 2 (2017): 287–310, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2017.12.2.287-310>; See also Luluk Khumaerah, "Hermeneutika Tradisional Sayyed Hossein Nasr Dalam The Study Quran A New Translation and Commentary" (UIN Salatiga, 2019), <http://e-repository.perpus.iainsalatiga.ac.id/id/eprint/6500>.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Hubbab Nauval, "Neo-Tradisionalisme Sayyed Hossein Nasr Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Ethico-Legal (Studi Atas Buku The Study Quran A New Translation and Commentary)" (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/45317/>.

<sup>10</sup> Zikri Riza and Zainuddin, "Esoteric Interpretation of the Quran in 'The Study Quran': A New Translation and Commentary (2015) by Seyyed Hossein Nasr et Al.," *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 21, no. 2 (2023): 243–270, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20230134>; See also Muhammad Ismail, "Penafsiran Tradisional Sufistik Terhadap Al-Qur'an: Studi Kritis Penafsiran Seyyed Hossein Nasr Terhadap Aya-Ayat Khawf" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2021), <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/65839>.

<sup>11</sup> Mohammad Salahuddin Al-Ayuubi, "Representation of Religious Literacy in Tafsir 'The Study Quran'" (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2024), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/65279/>.

<sup>12</sup> Sri Redjeki, "Konsep Estetika Tauhid Pada Arsitektur Islam (Studi Pemikiran Seyyed Hossein Nasr Dalam Tafsir The Study Quran: A New Translation And Commentary)" (Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, 2022), <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/633/>; See also Muhammad Fiqih Cholidi, "Kosmologi Dalam Al-Qur'an: Formulasi Konsep Etika Saintis (Analisis The Study Quran)" (Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, 2024), <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/1495/>.

analysis of modern interpretive orthodoxy in *The Study Quran*. The traditionalist aspect of interpretation of the first three works has not yet comprehensively related to the orthodoxy paradigm of quranic interpretation. Hence, the present work occupies this academic gap regarding how *The Study Quran* is identified as a tradition-based modern orthodox interpretation.

This present work belongs to library research in which we look for literature as indispensable sources which are then analyzed and induced according to the data found. As a primary source, we refer to *The Study Quran* written by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and his team. The secondary sources for this research are references related to orthodoxy and traditionalism in Islam and quranic studies that support the primary sources. In limiting the study, we will only examine the interpretation of QS. al-Fāṭihah/1 owing to, based on our observations, the commentary of this first chapter is quite comprehensive enough to allow for an analysis of the orthodoxy in it. The conceptual framework of this research describes the orthodoxy of quranic interpretation and how it is rationalized in *The Study Quran*. The next explanation is the writing contextualization of the work as well as the profile of the authors. Being the principal concern, we afterwards reconstruct the peculiarities of its interpretive orthodoxy, especially QS. al-Fāṭihah/1.

### **Rationalizing the Orthodoxy of *The Study Quran***

The term “*orthodox*” in Islam denotes distinct, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory concepts. While orthodox Islam is often used to refer to an abstract Islam without history, location, beliefs, or other problematic matters for certain groups, it is usually attached to Sunnite Islam, the Islam of the ‘*ulamā*, or polite Islam.<sup>13</sup> The use of orthodox Islam in the sense of the Sunnite group (Sunnism) means that correct belief and behavior are following the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad saw. and heresy if we disobey him. Although equating orthodoxy with Sunnism results in a definition that is both too narrow and broad at the same time, orthodoxy is a common translation of *sunnah*.<sup>14</sup> One argues that orthodox Islam can originate from popular Islam whose development stems from changes in society in general. As such, it is neither static nor timeless and does not depend on existing orthodox institutions.<sup>15</sup> The emergence of this and other different views does not negate that orthodox Islam cannot be separated from Sunnite Islam.

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<sup>13</sup> M. Brett Wilson, “The Failure of Nomenclature: The Concept of ‘Orthodoxy’ in the Study of Islam,” *Comparative Islamic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2009): 169–94.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Langer and Udo Simon, “The Dynamics of Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy. Dealing with Divergence in Muslim Discourses and Islamic Studies,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 48, no. 3/4 (2008): 273–88, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1163/157006008X364758>.

<sup>15</sup> Richard C. Martin and Abbas Barzegar, “Formations of Orthodoxy: Authority, Power, and Networks in Muslim Societies,” in *Rethinking Islamic Studies: From Orientalism to Cosmopolitanism*, ed. Carl W. Ernst and Richard C. Martin (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 179–202.

In Sunnite Islam, community and scripture are two primary elements, because they are fundamental epistemological category of Sunnite literature. The meaning of the scripture element is that the way to know God is through the holy books in which He reveals His existence through a written text called the holy book or revelation. Whilst the community element is God's self-disclosure to humans not through revelation, but rather a community, namely a particular society chosen by God in which true beliefs are articulated and maintained because that society is protected by Him and guarded against mischievousness. With the element of scripture and community, orthodox Islam is grasped as a group that has a text of salvation from which it takes its perspective on life, namely the Quran and hadith. The interpretation of these two texts is manifested in the form of practical and historical experiences of the Muslim community. It also establishes the intellectual experience of the Muslim community, giving rise to the tradition of theology, law, and exegesis. The intellectual tradition of Sunnite Islam includes a range of literary genres and literature traditions through which the Sunnite community expresses their understanding of their relationship with God and the prophet.<sup>16</sup>

Among the intellectual traditions in Sunnite Islam that provoke various literature and writing traditions is the study of the Quran and *tafsir*. Considered important in Muslim belief and practice, the study of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* covers topics necessary for the development of an accurate and correct understanding of the Quran which is essential preparation for Qur'anic study and research. Out of the works that represent the classic culmination of the process of establishment of this discipline are *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (by Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī) and *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī). Both are primary references in textbook on the topic of the quranic science.<sup>17</sup> In the Western world, the subject of *tafsir* studies places *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung* by Ignaz Goldziher as representative literature for research on the interpretation of Islamic holy books. Furthermore, *al-Tafsir wa al-Mufasssirūn* by Muḥammad Husayn al-Dhahabī is a secondary source for contemporary *tafsir* studies in the Muslim world. Goldziher and al-Dhahabi's work followed a pattern that had become rooted by the end of the classical period.<sup>18</sup> Scholars such as al-Zarkashī, al-Suyūṭī, and al-Dhahabī have authored works as representations of Sunnite Islam or orthodox Islam, especially in the science of the Quran.

The advent of the technical phrase "*the science of the Quran*" itself is attributed to the 6th/12th or the 7th/13th CE century, or even the beginning of the 5th/11th CE

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<sup>16</sup> Norman Calder, "The Limits of Islamic Orthodoxy," in *Defining Islam: A Reader*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Oxfordshire-New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 222–36.

<sup>17</sup> Jane Dammen McAuliffe, "Exegetical Sciences," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Massachusetts-Oxford-Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 403–19.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Dammen McAuliffe, "The Genre Boundaries of Quranic Commentary," in *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish, and Joseph W. Goering (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 445–61.

century. The exact time depends on our level of knowledge and there are no complete studies on this matter.<sup>19</sup> The exegetical endeavor in this discipline has been discussed in numerous literatures of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī mentioned four main sources for the interpretation of the Quran in al-Zarkashī's perspective, namely sources from the prophet, the words of companions, the linguistic infallibility, and the understanding of the *sharī'ah*.<sup>20</sup> Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṣābūnī stated three sources of interpretation through *riwāyah ma'thūr*, namely interpretation from the Quran (interpretation of the Quran with the Quran), *sunnah* (interpretation of the Quran with the *sunnah* of the prophet), and the words of companions (interpretation of the Quran with companions' *athar*).<sup>21</sup> Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān explains that *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* is an interpretation that complies with the validity of the source sequentially, namely the interpretation of the Quran with the Quran, the *sunnah*, the Companions' *riwāyah*, and the words of the great successors.<sup>22</sup> *Tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* in other term is also called *tafsīr* based on tradition or text which aims to restrict the use of independent reasoning in understanding and interpreting text and emphasizes the importance of *tafsīr* that refers to the Quran itself, the example of the Prophet Muḥammad saw., and the earliest Muslims (first and second generation of Muslims, namely *ṣahābah* and *tābi'īn*).<sup>23</sup>

Sunnite scholars of the Quran, however, base the classification of *tafsīr* according to the method used by the *mufasssīr* and not merely on the focus or content of a particular *tafsīr*. According to them, the classification of traditional *tafsīr*, beside *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* (*tafsīr bī al-riwāyah*/*tafsīr* with transmission), is *tafsīr bī al-ra'y* (*tafsīr* with reason) and *tafsīr bī al-ishārah* (*tafsīr* with disclosure). Muslim orthodoxy's attempt at this categorization aims to secure their legitimacy and implies their efforts to reject the methods of others who are heretical to it. To some extent, this is not disparate from the critical scholarly orthodoxy that establishes its legitimacy on the primacy of reason and the unquestioned written word and rejects unreliable argumentation or other unscientific modes of knowledge, such as intuition or the spoken word.<sup>24</sup> Thus, it can be understood that the theorization of orthodox interpretation of the Quran, especially regarding the *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* in Sunnite Islam, can be designated as a tradition that is upheld to avoid the incorrectness in *tafsīr* work so that intellectual validity is guaranteed.

Associating *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* with tradition requires a separate explanation regarding traditionalism in Islam. Islamic traditionalism is a major concern for two

<sup>19</sup> Claude Gilliot, "Traditional Disciplines of Qur'anic Studies," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, V (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 318–39.

<sup>20</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, v. 4 (Kairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-'Āmmah fī al-Kitāb, 1973), p. 207-209.

<sup>21</sup> Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṣābūnī, *al-Tibyan fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Karachi: Maktabah al-Bushrā, 2011), p. 92.

<sup>22</sup> Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāhith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, n.d.), p. 337.

<sup>23</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (London-New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 178-179.

<sup>24</sup> Farid Esack, *The Qur'an: A User's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2005), p. 131-136.

primary authorities, namely the Quran and tradition/practice originating from the Prophet Muḥammad saw. and several generations of the first Muslims and figures who followed. They revive, reform, and preserve the true and pure vision and norm of Islam and are in continuity and connectedness with the original community (*'ummah*). All these authorities serve as interpreter of God's revelation and as paradigm of the present and future. A special element of Islamic traditionalism is the aspect of connectedness (*ittiṣāliyyah*), namely the need or desire for personal connections throughout generations of different eras and figures of Islamic origin, a value that has persisted in Islamic thought and institutions for centuries.<sup>25</sup> *Tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* concurrently also symbolizes a connection with previous authorities in the interpretation of the Quran. As stated by Massimo Campanini, *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* is a type of interpretation method that follows traditional Islamic sciences, especially the science of hadith.<sup>26</sup> Even though Campanini seems to be contrasting between *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, this does not eliminate the essence that *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* is traditionalist.

The question is can *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* in *tafsīr* orthodoxy becomes a tradition that is open to rationality. The answer can perhaps be assisted by elaborating on what is meant by discursive tradition. Islam naturally tends to accept the concept of discursive tradition because of its position as both a religion and a worldview that has a set of clearly defined foundational texts and a history of logical arguments based on these texts. The Islamic discursive tradition is understood as a series of historically developed discourses that are manifested in the practices and institutions of Islamic society and are deeply embedded in the material life of the society that inhabits it. Thus, the Islamic discursive tradition is characterized by its own rationality or style of reasoning expressed in text, history, and institution.<sup>27</sup> Tradition by accepting this thought opens opportunities to develop *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* which also emphasizes tradition in interpretive work in the study of the science of the Quran. In our opinion, the development of *tafsīr bī al-ma'thūr* with this discursive tradition is found in the modern *tafsīr* work written by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and team, *The Study Quran*. In the said work, the authors explicitly mention the presence of this *tafsīr* as a representation of Islamic traditionalism which will be explained later.

### **What Is Behind *The Study Quran*: Sketching Tradition and Biography Tradition-Based *Tafsīr* in *The Study Quran*: A Context**

The journey of composing *The Study Quran* began in 2006 when the publisher HarperSanFrancisco, which is now HarperOne, asked Seyyed Hossein Nasr to be the editor in chief of the work to complement The HarperCollins Study Bible which was

<sup>25</sup> William A. Graham, "Traditionalism in Islam: An Essay in Interpretation," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, no. 3 (1993): 495–522.

<sup>26</sup> Massimo Campanini, *The Quran: The Basic*, ed. Oliver Leaman, 2nd ed. (London-New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 71.

<sup>27</sup> Ovamir Anjum, "Islam as a Discursive Tradition: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors," *Comparative Study of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 27, no. 3 (2007): 656–72, <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-2007-041>.



also published by the same company. Even though initially rejecting this profound duty, he realized that this was a responsibility that God had placed on his shoulder that could not be refused, in which this project might not be realized if he did not agree to it. He finally accepted with humility that this would be the endeavor of a Muslim and, although it used contemporary language and was based on the highest scholarship, the work did not refer to or be guided by the accounts of the studies by Western non-Muslim scholars and orientalist who studied the Quran as a historical, linguistic, and sociological document, or even a religious text but did not accept it as the word of God and authentic revelation. Otherwise, this work draws on classical Islamic traditions to give readers access to how the Quran was understood and explained by Muslims over fourteen centuries. Nasr required that he freely choose the authorship members and other collaborators.<sup>28</sup>

Nasr determined only Muslim scholars to collaborate with him in this task. Moreover, he did not want the work to be limited by belief, ethnicity, and geography. It must be both universal and traditional, expressing traditional Islamic views and not incorporating modern or fundamentalist interpretations that have emerged in some areas of Islam in the last two centuries. Nasr wanted to produce a text that reflected how Muslims understood the Quran throughout their long history and how traditional Muslims appreciate it today. To this end, he chose three American editors with a doctoral degree in Islamic studies from leading American universities and all of whom had direct experience in the Islamic world and were familiar with traditional Islamic scholarship as well as mastered classical Arabic. As a representation of diversity, Nasr preferred two men, Joseph Lumbard and Caner Dagli, and one woman, Maria Dakake. Lumbard and Dakake are American Muslims with a Christian background, while Dagli is an American Muslim of Circassian descent. The project, by the time passed, added an assistant editor, Mohammed Rustom, a Canadian Muslim of South Asian descent with a doctorate in Islamic studies from a leading Canadian university.<sup>29</sup>

Given that this collaborative task requires a unified body of work, Nasr's preference of the four editors above was based on the reason that they were among those who had studied with him previously. Therefore, there is a unity of intellectual vision, spiritual perspective, and academic attitude among them which makes it possible to produce unified work. This unity in translation and interpretation is not due to coercion, but because of the presence of the same vision. They consulted each other at every opportunity, and in case of disagreement among the editors, Nasr became the final decision maker. The collaboration between them is harmonious, which may impress some people in this era of individualism. Each editor has primary responsibility for the translation, research, and composition of different parts of the Quran. Even though it refers to the English translation of the Quran as written by Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, Muhammad Asad, A.J. Arberry, 'Alī

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<sup>28</sup> Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. xl.

<sup>29</sup> Nasr et al, p. xl-xli.

Qūlī Qarāfī, and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, the translation of *The Study Quran* is based on its own Arabic text, not on the previous translation.<sup>30</sup>

The composition of the *tafsīr* of *The Study Quran* derives from the entire Islamic intellectual tradition as an interpretation of the Quran in various forms, such as traditional *tafsīr*, *sīrah* literature, *sunnah*, hadith (both from Sunni and Shiite), including masterpieces of Islamic architecture itself to the *Mathnawī* poetry by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. As explicitly stated, *The Study Quran* is intended to present an explanation of the diversity of views and interpretations regarding law, theology, spirituality and sacred history put forward by traditional Islamic authorities. *The Study Quran* is a new *tafsīr* that is completely based on traditional Islamic thought and previous *tafsīr* traditions. The source and origin of the interpretation is displayed transparently and explains the views of the authors of *The Study Quran*. Although it relies heavily on traditional sources, *The Study Quran* is also based on academic scholarship on the study of the Quran while being vigilant against bias in it.<sup>31</sup> The total number of traditional *tafsīr* referred to is 41 exegetical works, starting from the earliest, *Tafsīr Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān*, to the most recent, *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, by Muḥammad Husayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī.<sup>32</sup> *The Study Quran's* great attention to the traditionalism of interpretation is, thereby, an intensification of Islamic orthodoxy in the science of the Quran, especially in the theory of *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* as an interpretation that utilizes *riwāyah* as a reference or what is usually called tradition-based interpretation.

### The Editors' Biography of *The Study Quran*

As discussed previously, *The Study Quran* is a collaborative work of five editors and, thus, their tendencies and interests are affecting how the commentary is crafted.<sup>33</sup> Serving as an editor in chief of the team, Seyyed Hossein Nasr is an Iranian scholar who has an influential family background of Muslim scholar. He received his primary education in Iran and then continued his secondary education in New Jersey, United States. As for his higher education, he pursued at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was a student of many scholars, such as Georgio De Santillana and Bertrand Russel. In addition, Nasr learned traditional thought while studying at M.I.T from the writings of Rene Guenon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Frithjof Schuon. After completing undergraduate degree, he earned his master's degree at Harvard University in the field of Geology and Geophysics as well as Paleontology. In regard of the doctoral degree, he switched to the field of History of Science at the same

<sup>30</sup> Nasr et al, p. xli-xlii.

<sup>31</sup> Nasr et al, p. xliii-xlv.

<sup>32</sup> A list bibliography of traditional *tafsīr* in *The Study Quran* could be found in *Commentary Key*. See Nasr et al, p. lvii-lix.

<sup>33</sup> For a discussion in depth how these factors affect a *tafsīr* work, see Ahmad Zaenuri, "Classical and Modern Exegesis Styles: The Evolution of The Development Exegesis Styles from Classical and Modern Periods," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 8, no. 1 (2023): 20–38, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32505/at-tibyan.v8i1.6007>.

university. At Harvard, Nasr is academically benefited from Harry Wolfson, Sir Hamilton Gibb, and I.B. Cohen who then supervised his Ph.D thesis, *Conception of Nature in Islamic Thought and Methods Used for Its Study by Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, al-Bīrūnī, and Ibn Sīnā* which later became a book entitled *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrine* (1958). While studying perennial philosophical thought from Guenon, Schuon, and Coomaraswamy, Nasr also comprehended Islamic philosophy from the thought of Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, and Mullā Ṣadrā.<sup>34</sup>

Having finished his doctoral degree, he taught at Teheran University, Iran. William C. Chittick and Sachiko Murata are among several scholars who become pupils of his long teaching career. In addition to his teaching activity in Iran, Nasr was also trained by several traditionalist scholars, like Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim 'Aṣṣār, al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Abū al-Ḥasan Qazwinī, Mahdī Ilahī Qumshā'ī, and Jawad Muṣliḥ. Not to mention, Nasr considered Henry Corbin to become his teacher in multiple opportunities. He then returned to the United States to proceed his academic career by teaching at several universities, and eventually acquired a professorship in Islamic studies, such as the University of Utah, Temple University, and George Washington University. Alongside his doctoral dissertation, Nasr has produced many works in the form of books and articles, for example *Science and Civilization in Islam*, *Three Muslim Sage*, *Ideal and Realities of Islam*, *Islamic Life and Thought*, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man*, *Living Sufism*, *The Transcendent Theosophy of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī*, *Knowledge of the Sacred*, *Encyclopedia of World Spirituality*, *The Essential Writing of Frithjof Schuon*, *Religion and the Order of Nature*, *History of Islamic Civilization*, *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, *The Need for the Science*, and so on.<sup>35</sup>

The second editor is Caner K. Dagli, an American-born scholar of Circassian descent who has conducted field research in Türkiye. Dagli was a special advisor on interreligious affairs at the Royal Hashemite Court of Jordan in 2006-2007. Dagli participated in the agenda *A Common Word Between Us and You* which was signed by 137 Muslims in October 2007. He previously taught at Roanoke College, Virginia. Currently, Dagli is an associate professor of religious studies at the College of the Holy Cross, Massachusetts. His scientific fields are Sufism, Islamic philosophy, interreligious dialogue, and quranic studies. He completed his undergraduate education at Cornell University in the field of Near Eastern Studies with a B.A. Afterward, he continued his education at George Washington University in the field of Religion and received an M.A. degree. His doctoral studies were taken at Princeton University in the same field as his undergraduate level until he earned a Ph.D.<sup>36</sup> Some of the works

<sup>34</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Ramin Jahanbegloo, *In Search of The Sacred: A Conversation with Seyyed Hossein Nasr on His Life and Thought* (California: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2010), p. 1-59.

<sup>35</sup> Nasr and Jahanbegloo, p. 61-138.

<sup>36</sup> A glimpse of Caner K. Dagli profile could be found in some websites, like <https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/people/caner-dagli> and

Dagli has produced include *The Ringtone of Wisdom* (*Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*'s translation by Ibn 'Arabī), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Science, Philosophy, and Technology* (as senior co-editor), *Ibn al-'Arabī and the Islamic Intellectual Tradition: From Mysticism to Philosophy*, and so on.<sup>37</sup>

The third editor is Maria Massi Dakake, an American Muslim and associate professor of Religious Studies at George Mason University, Virginia. Her expertise is Shiism, Sufism, Islamic philosophy and theology, the Quran, interreligious dialogue, women's issues and classical Islamic feminism. Dakake's higher education began at the undergraduate level at Cornell University in Government with a B.A. She then obtained an M.A and Ph.D degree at Princeton University in the field of Near Eastern Studies with his dissertation entitled *Loyalty, Love, and Faith: Defining the Boundaries of the Early Shi'ite Community*. Among Dakake's other writings are *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam*, *Writing and Resistance: The Transmission of Knowledge in Early Shi'ism* (in *The Study of Shi'i Islam: History, Theology, and Law*), *Sacred Land in Qur'an and Hadith and Its Symbolic and Eschatological Significance*, *Hierarchies of Knowing in Mullā Ṣadrā's Commentary on the Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, *Guest and Inmost Heart: Conception of the Divine Beloved among Early Sufi Women*, and so on.<sup>38</sup>

The fourth editor is Joseph E. B. Lumbard, an American Muslim who serves as a professor of Islamic studies in Arabic studies at American University, Cairo. Lumbard earned a B.A degree in English Literature and Religious Studies from George Washington University. At the same institution, he pursued an M.A. in the field of Religious Studies which was then continued with a doctoral degree at Yale University in the field of Islamic Studies. Lumbard's research is mostly related to Islamic Civilization with a focus on intellectual tradition and has excellent skills in Arabic and Persian. He is a former advisor on interreligious affairs to King Abdallah II of Jordan, associate professor of Islamic Classics at Brandeis University, and chair of the Middle Eastern and Islamic studies program. Lumbard is the founder of the Islamic Research Institute (IRI), which is a forum for Islamic scholars to contextualize issues related to Islam and implement traditional Islamic doctrine in the modern era. He is also an assistant professor in the Arabic Language Studies and Translation Study program at the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Lumbard's expertise is Quranic studies, Sufism, Islamic philosophy, comparative theology, and Islamic

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<https://holycross.academia.edu/Dagli/CurriculumVitae>, or viewed in the editor's biography chapter of *The Study Quran* in Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. xi.

<sup>37</sup> See Caner K. Dagli, *The Ringtones of Wisdom* (Chicago: Kazi Publication/ABC International Group, 2004); see also Ibrahim Kalin, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Science, and Technology in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); see also Caner K. Dagli, *Ibn Al-'Arabī and the Islamic Intellectual Tradition: From Mysticism to Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>38</sup> A glimpse of Maria Massi Dakake's profile and some of her works could be viewed at websites like <https://religious.gmu.edu/people/mdakakem> or could be seen in his brief curriculum vitae in *The Study Quran* in Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. xi.

ecology.<sup>39</sup> Some of his works include *Aḥmad al-Ghazālī, Remembrance, and the Metaphysics of Love, Submission, Faith, and Beauty: The Religion of Islam, From Hubb to 'Ishq: The Development of Love in Early Sufism*, and so on.<sup>40</sup>

The fifth and final, an assistant editor, is Muhammed Rustom, a Canadian scholar with South Asian ancestry. Rustom's higher scholarly journey began at the University of Toronto with a B.A. in the fields of Islamic Studies and Philosophy. He obtained a Ph.D degree in Islamic Philosophy and Quranic Studies in the Near and Middle Eastern Civilization study program from the same institution. He is a research fellow at the Iranian Institute of Philosophy based in Teheran. Rustom has received the *Tarjumān* award from the Ibn 'Arabī Society Latina due to his contribution to scholarship concerning Ibn 'Arabī. Several institutions also awarded him, such as the Annemarie Schimmel Member Institute of Isma'ili studies, the Iranian World Award in the book of the year category, and the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute of Arabic Language Library and Humanities Research. He is a professor of Islamic thought at Carleton University, Canada. Rustom's area focus on non-Western philosophy, particularly post-Ibn Sina Islamic philosophy. His expertise is Sufism, Islamic philosophy and theology, and quranic exegesis. His works have been translated into multiple languages, such as Albanian, Chinese, German, Italian, Persian, Spanish and Turkish.<sup>41</sup> Among Rustom's works are *The Triumph of Mercy: Philosophy and Scripture in Mullā Ṣadrā, Ibn 'Arabī Letter to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: A Study and Translation, The Metaphysics of the Heart in the Sufi Doctrine of Rūmī*, and so on.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> A glimpse of Joseph E. B. Lumbard's profile could be viewed in website <http://www.worldwisdom.com/public/authors/Joseph-Lumbard.aspx> or in Joseph E. B. Lumbard, *The Uncommonality of "A Common Word"* (Brandeis University: Crown Center for Middle East Study, 2009), p. 33; or in his brief curriculum vitae in Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. xi-xii.

<sup>40</sup> See Joseph E. B. Lumbard, *Aḥmad Al-Ghazali, Remembrance, and the Metaphysics of Love* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016); see also Joseph E. B. Lumbard, *Submission, Faith, and Beauty: The Religion of Islam* (California-Kentucky: Zaytuna Institute-Fons Vitae, 2009); see also Joseph E. B. Lumbard, "From Hubb to 'Ishq: The Development of Love in Early Sufism," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, no. 3 (2007): 345–85.

<sup>41</sup> A glimpse of Muhammed Rustom's profile could be viewed in some websites, like <http://www.mohammedrustom.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Rustom-CV.pdf>, <https://carleton.ca/islamstudies/people/mohammed-rustom/>, <https://www.mohammedrustom.com/>, and <https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/research/faculty-labs-and-projects/humanities-research-fellowship-program/research-fellows/past-fellows/mohammed-rustom0.html>, or could be found in his brief curriculum vitae in Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. xii.

<sup>42</sup> See Mohammed Rustom, *The Triumph of Mercy: Philosophy and Scripture in Mullā Ṣadrā* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012); see also Mohammed Rustom, "Ibn 'Arabī's Letter to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: A Study and Translation," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, no. 2 (2014): 113–37; see also Mohammed Rustom, "The Metaphysics of the Heart in the Sufi Doctrine of Rūmī," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, no. 1 (2008): 3–14.

## The Study Quran: An Orthodoxy Analysis

### The Delineation of Tradition in QS. al-Fātiḥah/1's Interpretation

We are about to draw up a tradition-based interpretation framework for each verse of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 in *The Study Quran*. In general, we group this tradition-based interpretation into several categories. *First*, interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses, that is, the form of tradition in which *The Study Quran* figures out QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 which benefits from explanations of other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses. *Second*, interpretation with the prophet's hadith, that is, the form of tradition in which *The Study Quran* makes sense of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 by incorporating *riwāyah* from the Prophet Muhammad saw. *Third*, interpretation using the reports of companions and successors, that is, the form of tradition in which *The Study Quran* interprets QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 with the reports of *ṣahābah* and *tābi'īn* originating from various sources. *Fourth*, interpretation with a traditional *tafsīr* or account, that is, the form of tradition in which *The Study Quran* apprehends QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 by referring to previously existing traditional interpretation or knowledge. *Fifth*, interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines, that is, a form of tradition in which *The Study Quran* cites assorted intellectual Islamic views, such as theology, *fiqh*, Sufism, and Islamic metaphysics and cosmology. More details can be observed in the following tabulation:

Table 1: The Tradition Framework in QS. al-Fātiḥah's Interpretation

First Verse	
<i>In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful</i>	بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
Tradition Category	Source of Tradition
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<b>Other Verses:</b> QS. an-Naml/27:30, QS. az-Zukhruf/43:87, QS. al-'Ankabūt/29:61,63, QS. Luqmān/31:25, QS. al-Zumar/39:38, QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:154, QS. al-Mā'idah/5:50, QS. al-Ahzāb/33:33, and QS. al-Fath/48:26 <b>Interpretation of Other Verses:</b> Interpretation of QS. al-Ikhlāṣ/112:1
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	<b>Prophet's Hadith 1:</b> Ibn Ḥanbal ( <i>Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa mā unzila min al-Qur'ān bī Makkah wa mā unzila bi al-Madīnah</i> ), Ibn Mājah ( <i>Sunan Ibn Mājah</i> ), Abū Dāwud ( <i>al-Sunan</i> ), Ibn Ḥibbān ( <i>Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān bī tartīb Ibn Balbān</i> ), al-Nasā'ī ( <i>Kitāb al-Sunan al-</i>

	<i>Kubrā</i> ), and Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī ( <i>al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i> )
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	<p><b>Report 1 (Anas bin Mālīk):</b>  al-Bukhari (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>), Muslim (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i>), al-Nasā'ī (<i>Sunan al-Nasā'ī</i>), Ibn Mājah (<i>Sunan Ibn Mājah</i>), Mālīk (<i>al-Muwaṭṭa'</i>), Ibn Khuzaymah (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah</i>), Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i>), al-Qurṭubī (<i>al-Jāmi' lī aḥkām al-Qur'ān</i>), al-Shawkānī (<i>Fath al-Qadīr</i>), and al-Zamakhsharī (<i>al-Kashshāf</i>)</p> <p><b>Report 2 (Abū Hurayrah):</b>  al-Nasā'ī (<i>Sunan al-Nasā'ī</i>), al-Ḥākim (<i>al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn</i>), Ibn Khuzaymah (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah</i>), and Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i>)</p> <p><b>Report 3 (Ibn 'Abbās):</b>  Abū Dāwud (<i>al-Sunan</i>), al-Ḥākim (<i>al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn</i>), al-Bayhaqī (<i>al-Sunan al-Kubrā</i>), and al-Shawkānī (<i>Fath al-Qadīr</i>)</p> <p><b>Report 4 (Ja'far al-Ṣādiq):</b>  Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī (<i>al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>) and al-Ṭabrisī (<i>Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>)</p>
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<p><b>Traditional Tafsīr:</b>  Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i>), al-Shawkānī (<i>Fath al-Qadīr</i>), al-Zamakhsharī (<i>al-Kashshāf</i>), Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī (<i>al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>), al-Ṭabrisī (<i>Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (<i>Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb</i>), al-Maybudī (<i>Kashf al-Asrār wa 'uddat al-Abrār</i>), al-Biqā'ī (<i>Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar</i>), and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Khāshānī (<i>Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān al-Karīm</i>)</p>
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and	<p><b>Account 1 (Theology):</b>  Shiite Scholar View</p> <p><b>Account 2 (Fiqh):</b></p>

Cosmology)	View of Multiple <i>Fiqh</i> Schools <b>Account 3 (Sufism):</b> al-Ghazali's View
<b>Second Verse</b>	
<i>Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds</i>	الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
<b>Tradition Category</b>	<b>Source of Tradition</b>
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<b>Other Verses:</b> QS. ar-Ra'd/13:16, QS. al-Isrā'/17:102, QS. al-Kahf/18:14, QS. Maryam/19:65, QS. al-Anbiyā'/21:56, QS. al-Shu'arā'/26:24, QS. al-Şāffāt/37:5, QS. Şad/38:66, QS. az-Zukhruf/43:82, QS. al-Dukhān/44:7, QS. al-Naba'/78:37, and QS. al-Isrā'/17:44
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	<b>Prophet's Hadith 1:</b> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī ( <i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān</i> ) and al-Muttaqī al-Hindī ( <i>Kanz al-'Ummāl fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wa al-Af'āl</i> ) <b>Prophet's Hadith 2:</b> Muslim ( <i>Şaḥīḥ Muslim</i> ), al-Tirmidhī ( <i>al-Jāmi' al-Mukhtaṣar min Sunan al-Tirmidhī</i> ), Abū Dāwud ( <i>al-Sunan</i> ), Ibn Mājah ( <i>Sunan Ibn Mājah</i> ), and al-Qushayrī ( <i>Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt</i> )
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	-
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<b>Traditional Tafsīr:</b> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī ( <i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān</i> ), al-Qurṭubī ( <i>al-Jāmi' fī Ahkām al-Qur'ān</i> ), al-Qushayrī ( <i>Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt</i> ), and Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> ) <b>Traditional Account:</b> Traditional Etiquette of Islam
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology)	-
<b>Third Verse</b>	
<i>the Compassionate, the Merciful</i>	الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ



Tradition Category	Source of Tradition
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<b>Other Verses:</b> QS. al-Tawbah/9:128, QS. al-Isrā'/17:110, QS. al-Aḥzāb/33:43, QS. Ṭaha/20:5, QS. al-Furqān/25:59, and QS. al-A'rāf/7:156
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	-
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	-
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<b>Traditional <i>Tafsīr</i>:</b> Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> ), al-Qushayrī ( <i>Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt</i> ), Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī ( <i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān</i> ), and Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabaṭabā'ī ( <i>al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i> )
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology)	<b>Account 1:</b> Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology
<b>Fourth Verse</b>	
<i>Master of the Day of Judgement</i>	مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
Tradition Category	Source of Tradition
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<b>Other Verses:</b> QS. Gāfir/40:16, QS. al-Zumar/39:67, QS. al-Baqarah/2:156, 245, 281, QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:55, 83, QS. al-Mā'idah/5: 48, 105, QS. al-An'ām/6: 36, 61, 62, 108, 164, QS. al-A'rāf/7:29, QS. al-Anbiyā'/21:93, QS. al-Baqarah/2:282, QS. al-Nūr/24:25, QS. Gāfir/40:17, QS. al-Jāthiyah/45:28, and QS. al-A'rāf/7:8, 9 <b>Interpretation of Other Verses:</b> Interpretation of QS. al-Anbiyā'/21:47 and QS. al-Qāri'ah/101:6, 9
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	<b>Prophet's Hadith 1:</b> al-Bukhārī ( <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i> ), Muslim ( <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i> ), Abū Dāwud ( <i>al-Sunan</i> ), Abū Ya'lā ( <i>Musnad Abī Ya'lā</i> ), and Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> ) <b>Prophet's Hadith 2:</b> Ibn Mājah ( <i>Sunan Ibn Mājah</i> ) and al-Ṭabarānī ( <i>al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ</i> )

Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	<b>Report 1 (Umar bin Khaṭṭab):</b> Ibn Abī al-Dunyā ( <i>Mawsū'ah Ibn Abī al-Dunyā</i> ), Abū Nu'aym ( <i>Ḥilyat al-Awliyā' wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā'</i> ), al-Tirmidhī ( <i>al-Jāmi' al-Mukhtaṣar min Sunan al-Tirmidhī</i> ), and Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> )
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<b>Traditional Tafsīr:</b> al-Qurṭubī ( <i>al-Jāmi' lī Ahkām al-Qur'ān</i> ), Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī ( <i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān</i> ), al-Zamakhsharī ( <i>al-Kashshāf</i> ), and Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> )
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology)	-
<b>Fifth Verse</b>	
<i>Thee we worship and from Thee we seek help</i>	إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
<b>Tradition Category</b>	<b>Source of Tradition</b>
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<b>Other Verses:</b> QS. Maryam/19:93, QS. al-Zumar/39:2, and QS. Muḥammad/47:38 <b>Interpretation of Other Verses:</b> Interpretation of QS. al-An'ām/6:165
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	-
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	<b>Report 1 (Ja'far al-Sadiq):</b> Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī ( <i>al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i> )
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<b>Traditional Tafsīr:</b> Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i> ), al-Qurṭubī ( <i>al-Jāmi' lī Ahkām al-Qur'ān</i> ), Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī ( <i>al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i> ), Ibn 'Aḡibah ( <i>al-Baḥr al Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd</i> ), and al-Biqā'ī ( <i>Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar</i> )
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and	-

Cosmology)	
<b>Sixth Verse</b>	
<i>Guide us upon the straight path</i>	إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
<b>Tradition Category</b>	<b>Source of Tradition</b>
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<p><b>Other Verses:</b>            QS. al-Baqarah/2:143, QS. al-Nisā'/4:175, and QS. Hūd/11:56</p> <p><b>Interpretation of Other Verses:</b>            Interpretation of QS. al-Shūrā/42:52,53</p>
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	<p><b>Prophet's Hadith 1:</b>            al-Ḥākim (<i>al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn</i>), Ibn Ḥanbal (<i>Musnad</i>), al-Ṭabarānī (<i>Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn</i>), al-Tirmidhī (<i>al-Jāmi' al-Mukhtaṣar min Sunan al-Tirmidhī</i>), and Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i>)</p> <p><b>Prophet's Hadith 2:</b>            al-Bukhārī (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>), Muslim (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i>), al-Bayhaqī (<i>Shu'ab al-Imān</i>), Ibn Ḥanbal (<i>Musnad</i>), Abū Ya'lā (<i>Musnad Abī Ya'lā</i>), and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Aṣqalānī (<i>al-Maṭālib al-'Aliyah</i>)</p>
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	-
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<p><b>Traditional Tafsīr:</b>            Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (<i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān</i>), al-Ṭabrisī (<i>Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>), al-Qurṭubī (<i>al-Jāmi' fī Ahkām al-Qur'ān</i>), al-Biqā'ī (<i>Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar</i>), al-Sulamī (<i>Haqā'iq al-Tafsīr</i>), Ibn 'Aḡibah (<i>al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Maḥīd</i>), Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm</i>), Muḥammad Ibn Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (<i>al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>), and al-Qummī (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>)</p>
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology)	<p><b>Account 1 (Theology):</b>            Shiite and Sunnite's View</p>
<b>Seventh Verse</b>	

<i>the path of those whom Thou hast blessed, not of those who incur wrath, nor of those who are astray</i>	صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ
<b>Tradition Category</b>	<b>Source of Tradition</b>
Interpretation with other verses of the Quran or with interpretations of other verses	<p><b>Other Verses:</b></p> <p>QS. al-Nisā'/4:69, QS. an-Nahl/16:106, QS. al-Shūrā/42:16, QS. al-Fath/48:6, QS. al-Nisā'/4:93, QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:90, QS. al-Nisā'/4:136, QS. al-Qaṣaṣ/28:50, QS. al-Mujādalah/58:11, QS. al-An'ām/6:62, QS. al-Inshiqāq/84:6, QS. al-Mā'idah/5:18, QS. al-Baqarah/2:285 QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:28, QS. al-Nūr/24:42, QS. Luqmān/31:14, QS. Faṭir/35:18, QS. Gāfir/40:3, QS. al-Shūrā/42:15, QS. Qaf/50:43, QS. al-Mumtaḥanah/60:4, QS. al-Taghābun/64:3, QS. al-Mulk/67:22, QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:38, QS. al-Ra'd/13:15, QS. al-Ra'd/13:27, QS. Yūnus/10:44, QS. al-Shu'arā'/26:20, QS. al-Ḍuḥā/93:7, QS. al-Baqarah/2:108, QS. al-Baqarah/2:61, QS. al-Baqarah/2:90, QS. Āli 'Imrān/3:112, QS. al-Mā'idah/5:60, and QS. al-Mā'idah/5:77</p> <p><b>Interpretation of Other Verses:</b></p> <p>Interpretation of QS. al-Nisā'/4:167, QS. al-An'ām/6:83, and QS. al-Mujādalah/58:11</p>
Interpretation with the prophet's hadith	<p><b>Prophet's Hadith 1:</b></p> <p>al-Tirmidhī (<i>al-Jāmi' al-Mukhtaṣar min Sunan al-Tirmidhī</i>), Ibn Ḥibbān (<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bī Tartīb Ibn Balbān</i>), al-Ṭabarānī (<i>al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ</i>), Abū Dāwud al-Ṭayālīsī (<i>Musnad Abī Dāwud</i>), Ibn Kathīr (<i>Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm</i>), Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī/Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (<i>Tafsīr al-Jalālayn</i>), al-Qurṭubī (<i>al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān</i>), Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (<i>Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Ay al-Qur'ān</i>), and al-Zamakhsharī (<i>al-Kashshāf</i>)</p> <p><b>Prophet's Hadith 2:</b></p>

	al-Bukhārī ( <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i> ), Muslim ( <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i> ), Mālik ( <i>al-Muwatṭaʿ</i> ), Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm</i> ), and al-Qurṭubī ( <i>al-Jāmiʿ lī Ahkām al-Qurʾān</i> )
Interpretation using the reports of companions and successors	-
Interpretation with a traditional <i>tafsīr</i> or account	<b>Traditional <i>Tafsīr</i>.</b> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī ( <i>Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Ay al-Qurʾān</i> ), al-Qurṭubī ( <i>al-Jāmiʿ lī Ahkām al-Qurʾān</i> ), al-Ṭabrisī ( <i>Majmaʿ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān</i> ), al-Qushayrī ( <i>Laṭāʾif al-Ishārāt</i> ), Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī ( <i>Taʾwīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah</i> ), Nizām al-Dīn al-Nisābūrī ( <i>Tafsīr Gharāʾib al-Qurʾān wa Raghāʾib al-Furqān</i> ), Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī ( <i>al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān</i> ), Ibn ʿAḡibah ( <i>al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Maʾīd</i> ), Ibn Kathīr ( <i>Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm</i> ), Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī/Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī ( <i>Tafsīr al-Jalālayn</i> ), and al-Zamakhsharī ( <i>al-Kashshāf</i> )
Interpretation with account in Islamic scholarly disciplines (theology, <i>fiqh</i> , Sufism, Islamic Metaphysics and Cosmology)	<b>Account 1 (Theology):</b> Sunnite's View

Constructing the Orthodoxy Reasoning of *The Study Quran* as A Tradition-Based *Tafsīr*.

*The Study Quran* managed to retain the traditional ways of interpreting the Quran involved in the *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*'s method. It accommodates interpretive sources in the form of verse from the Quran, hadith of the prophet, and the report of companion or successor. We will disclose how the four of them are elaborated by *The Study Quran*, especially in verse 1 of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1. Several verses from the Quran are quoted to provide explanations and arguments regarding the meaning of the expression “*basmalah*.” By means of QS. al-Naml/27:30, *The Study Quran* seems to argue that “*basmalah*,” the first verse of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1, appears elsewhere. Whereas QS. al-Zukhruf/43:87 is taken into consideration to show that the use of the word “*Allāh*” in the first verse of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 indicates that the pre-Islamic Arab community already knew about Him. This same indication can also be found in QS. al-'Ankabūt/29:61, 63, QS. Luqmān/31:25, and QS. al-Zumar/39:38. *The Study Quran*

then refers to QS. Āli ‘Imrān/3:154, QS. al-Mā'idah/5:50, QS. al-Aḥzāb/33:33, and QS. al-Fath/48:26 to demonstrate the meaning of “*jāhiliyyah*,” a term used by the Quran to refer to an era of ignorance in which most people who worshiped idols did not accept the absolute sovereignty of *Allāh* Almighty. Not only verses, *The Study Quran* also implies referring to the interpretation of QS. al-Ikhlāṣ/112:1 as an explanation of the argument of several opinions which say that the word “*Allāh*” is a name that covers everything and encompasses all names and attributes of God.<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, this verse is further interpreted using the hadith of the prophet and the report of companion or successor. In term of hadith, *The Study Quran* put forwards the prophet's saying, “*Any important matter not begun with the Name of God shall be cut off*,” when contending the necessity of a Muslim to purify all their righteous actions with this phrase because, from the perspective of the Quran, everything must be done in the name of God. As for the report of companion, *The Study Quran* quotes Anas bin Mālik ra., “*I have prayed behind the Prophet, Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and Uthman, and they each began their recitation with ‘Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds,’ without mentioning ‘In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful,’ as an proposition for not reciting basmalah in the five daily prayers. The Study Quran also quotes the report of Abū Hurayrah ra., “Among you I perform the prayer that is closest to the prayer of Messenger of God,” as an argument for reciting basmalah during the prayers. Abū Hurayrah ra. is said he recites basmalah while leading the prayer and then raises the report in question. Likewise, the report of Ibn ‘Abbās ra. is also quoted that the prophet did not know the point at which to separate one sūrah from the next until God revealed “In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.” Among the successors referred to is Ja'far al-Ṣādiq ra., that basmalah is “the greatest verse in the Book of God,” as the argument of Shiite scholars who hold basmalah is a verse of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 and every sūrah begins with it.<sup>44</sup>*

*The Study Quran* integrates traditional interpretations to elucidate the meaning of *basmalah*. By relying on several *tafsīr* literatures, namely *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, and *Kashf al-Asrār wa 'Uddat al-Abrār*, *The Study Quran* offers an alternative way to read *basmalah* practically. The preposition in (*bi*) could imply a verb at the beginning of the sentence, such as “*I begin*” or “*I seek help in the name of God*,” or a noun, such as “*The beginning of the discussion is in the name of God*.” Alternately, these same phrases could be seen as following verse, for example, “*In the name of God I begin.*” “*In the name of God*” is also understood to mean, “*I began in the name of God, so you too begin,*” as if God were saying, “*I begin through My Name, was united with My Name, and have commenced in My Name, so begin through My Name, unite with My Name, and commence in My name.*” By citing several other traditional exegeses, namely *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar*, *Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān al-Karīm (Tafsīr Ibn 'Arabī)*, *The*

<sup>43</sup> Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*, p. 5-6.

<sup>44</sup> Nasr et al.

*Study Quran* proceeds to discuss the name of God in *basmalah*. According to one, “*Allāh*” comes from the word “*al-Ilah*” (God). Some refer to “*Allāh*” as the All-Encompassing Name, which comprises all of Names and Attributes of God. The ordering of the three divine names in the *basmalah* can be seen as an allusion to the levels of divinity in relation to the created order: *God (Allāh)* refers to the Divine Principle or Self, *the Compassionate (al-Raḥmān)* refers to the unity of God's Attributes, and *the Merciful (al-Raḥīm)* refers to the unity of God's acts.<sup>45</sup>

What's unique about *The Study Quran* is that it doesn't just focus on the four sources of interpretation above. This work of interpretation is open to various discourses that develop in Islam, even though they have different identities of Islamic concept. To illustrate, *The Study Quran* does not deny the disparities in Islamic jurisprudence regarding *basmalah*. It is stated that most schools of Islamic law, except Shāfi'i and Ja'fari, do not recite *basmalah* in the *sūrah* while performs daily prayers. Two companions' reports are also included, both those that support the recitation of *basmalah* and those that do not, as previously explained. Not only in legal matters, the views of Islamic theological schools also enliven the discourse as an attempt develop the interpretation. Concerning *basmalah*, Shiite scholars all maintain that this expression is a verse from QS. al-Fātiḥah/1 and every other *surah* begins with it.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, the disagreement of the Shiite groups is more clearly outlined by comparing them with the Sunnite. In the sixth verse, it is explicitly stated that many Shiite accounts interpret “*the straight path*” as referring to only the first Shi'ite Imam, ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib ra., or to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBHU) and the first Imam. Meanwhile, some Sunnite commentaries say it refers to the prophet and his two companions, Abū Bakr ra. and Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ra., the first two caliphs. According to *The Study Quran*, each of these interpretations indicates something that different Muslim groups believe will ensure a person on the straight path as long as he follows it.<sup>47</sup>

In the seventh verse, the views of the Sunnite group can also be located. After completing the recitation of QS. al-Fātiḥah/1, it is claimed that it is customary among Sunnite Muslims to say “*āmīn*” after a moment of silence, which indicates the difference between it and the Quran. It is not an obligation but has become a habit of the prophet and is highly recommended by Sunnite scholars.<sup>48</sup> Alongside the different views of Islamic legal and theological groups, *The Study Quran* also involves a discourse in the science of Islamic metaphysics and cosmology, precisely in the third verse. It is said, “*by God breathing ‘the breath of the Compassionate’ (Nafas al-Raḥmān) upon the immutable essences (al-a'yān al-thābitah) which are the archetypes of all things in Divine Knowledge, that the world brought into being.*” From this perspective, the very existence of the world is in the essence nothing but the breath of

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<sup>45</sup> Nasr et al.

<sup>46</sup> Nasr et al.

<sup>47</sup> Nasr et al, p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> Nasr et al, p. 11.

Divine Compassion.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, in addition to paying great attention to *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* in interpreting the Quran, *The Study Quran* appears to consider the dynamics of thought and rationality in various Islamic views, such as law, theology, and Islamic metaphysics. We consider that *The Study Quran* is identical to the discursive tradition in Islamic traditionalism. This interpretive work not only has an awareness of always being connected to the tradition of the early Muslim generations but also suggests the importance of a series of historical discourses embedded in Islamic community.<sup>50</sup> This can be observed in how *The Study Quran* elaborates on the diversity of discourses within the Sunnite and Shiite groups previously.

## Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, we conclude that the orthodoxy of tradition-based interpretation in *The Study Quran* is an endeavor to preserve traditional methods in interpreting the Quran to sustain it from methodological misconducts that may occur. The academic work of Nasr and his team in writing *tafsīr* in the modern era is a form of orthodox awareness that knowing the official teachings of religion is none other than through the holy book itself. This is what Calder means by the scriptural element in Islamic orthodoxy, where the disclosure of God's will and purposes to humans is through the presence of revelation to them. In this vein, *The Study Quran* was written to be a means of perpetuating the traditions formed by the holy book. Meanwhile, Nasr and his team's efforts to open themselves to various Islamic communities, such as by citing Sunnite and Shiite views, indicate their attention to traditions that are also shaped by certain communities. In the perspective of Calder's community elements of Islamic orthodoxy, the disclosure of God's will and purposes can also be obtained from a community chosen by Him and Himself who keeps them from going astray. Each Sunnite and Shiite community certainly have an authoritative community to produce traditional views that are at least recognized and complied by their own followers. Furthermore, the openness of *The Study Quran's* openness to diverse Sunnite and Shiite discourses exemplifies its discursive approach to interpretive orthodoxy. Its academic consequence corroborates that modernity embraces old conducts in quranic exegesis scholarship taken for granted in traditional *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* and that modern *tafsīr* orthodoxy is supplemented by the dynamics of thoughts of diversified religious groups in Islam.

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<sup>49</sup> Nasr et al, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> Anjum, "Islam as a Discursive Tradition: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors."



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