

## FROM AL-WĀHIDĪ TO AL-SUYŪTĪ: THE EVOLUTION OF ASBĀB AL-NUZŪL THOUGHT

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### Abstract

The study of asbāb al-nuzūl occupies an important position in 'ulūm al-Qur'ān because it serves as a bridge between the text of revelation and its historical context. Two central figures who exerted significant influence in this discipline are al-Wāhidī (d. 468 AH) and al-Suyūtī (d. 911 AH). This article aims to examine the evolution of asbāb al-nuzūl thought in the works of these two scholars by employing qualitative methods through a library-based approach, as well as historical, comparative, and philosophy-of-science frameworks to analyze the aspects of nature (ontology), sources of knowledge (epistemology), and the function of asbāb al-nuzūl (axiology). This study shows that, ontologically, al-Wāhidī understood asbāb al-nuzūl as broad historical events that could have occurred long before the revelation of a verse, whereas al-Suyūtī restricted them to incidents occurring simultaneously with the descent of the verse. From an epistemological perspective, al-Wāhidī's approach is more compilatory without deep scrutiny of transmission chains, while al-Suyūtī applied stricter selection and validation of reports. Axiologically, al-Wāhidī positioned the causes

of revelation as the basis for understanding meaning and legal rulings, whereas al-Suyūṭī strengthened the function of *asbāb al-nuzūl* through more authentic and comprehensive narrations to support more authoritative interpretation. Thus, this study affirms that there was a significant evolution from a compilatory–descriptive stage to a methodological–critical one. The contribution of this article lies in demonstrating the relevance of ontological, epistemological, and axiological frameworks in tracing the development of Qur’anic exegesis, while also opening space for the actualization of *asbāb al-nuzūl* in contemporary scholarship.

**Keywords:** *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, *al-Wāḥidī*, *al-Suyūṭī*, *Ontology*, *Epistemology*, *Axiology*.

### Abstrak

Kajian *asbāb al-nuzūl* menempati posisi penting dalam ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān karena menjadi jembatan antara teks wahyu dengan konteks historisnya. Dua tokoh sentral yang berpengaruh besar dalam disiplin ini adalah al-Wāḥidī (w. 468 H) dan al-Suyūṭī (w. 911 H). Artikel ini bertujuan menelaah evolusi pemikiran *asbāb al-nuzūl* dari kedua tokoh tersebut menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan kepustakaan, analisis historis, komparatif, serta kerangka filsafat ilmu untuk mengurai aspek hakikat (ontologi), sumber pengetahuan (epistemologi), dan kegunaan *asbāb al-nuzūl* (aksiologi). Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa secara ontologis al-Wāḥidī memahami *asbāb al-nuzūl* sebagai peristiwa historis luas yang dapat terjadi jauh sebelum turunnya ayat, sedangkan al-Suyūṭī membatasinya pada kejadian yang berlangsung bersamaan dengan turunnya ayat. Dari sisi epistemologis, al-Wāḥidī lebih bersifat kompilatif tanpa kritik sanad mendalam, sementara al-Suyūṭī menerapkan seleksi dan validasi riwayat yang lebih ketat. Secara aksiologis, al-Wāḥidī menempatkan sebab turunnya ayat sebagai dasar memahami makna dan hukum, sedangkan al-Suyūṭī memperkuat fungsi *asbāb al-nuzūl* melalui riwayat yang lebih autentik dan komprehensif untuk mendukung penafsiran yang lebih otoritatif. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa terjadi evolusi signifikan dari kompilatif-deskriptif menuju tahap metodologis-kritis. Kontribusi artikel ini ialah memperlihatkan relevansi kerangka ontologi, epistemologi, dan aksiologi dalam membaca perkembangan ilmu tafsir, sekaligus membuka ruang bagi aktualisasi *asbāb al-nuzūl* dalam kajian kontemporer.

**Kata Kunci:** *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, *al-Wāḥidī*, *al-Suyūṭī*, *Ontologi*; *Epistemologi*; *Aksiologi*.

## Introduction

Understanding the Qur'an cannot be done only by relying on mastery of the Arabic language, much less through translation. An adequate set of scientific instruments is needed so that the interpretation of the Qur'an is not arbitrary and arbitrary. One of these important instruments is the science of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. *Asbāb al-nuzūl* is literally a combination of the two words *al-asbāb* and *al-nuzūl*. In terms of the root word, *al-asbāb* is the plural form of *cause* which can be interpreted as cause, way,<sup>1</sup> reason, or 'illat.<sup>2</sup> While the word *al-nuzūl* means *qidd al-ṣuūd* or "descend".<sup>3</sup> Based on the basic meaning of these two words, *asbāb al-nuzūl* is understood as the cause of the descent of something. However, it can also be interpreted as a way or an intermediary for the descent of verses.

Furthermore, *asbāb al-nuzūl* serves as a historical context that determines the meaning of the Qur'anic text. Without an understanding of the context, the meaning of the text has the potential to be distorted. By knowing the background of the descent of the verse, the possibility of distortion of meaning can be minimized, even avoided.<sup>4</sup> This is as al-Shāṭibī affirms, that understanding *asbāb al-nuzūl* essentially means understanding the context of the situation surrounding the verse.<sup>5</sup>

Understanding *asbāb al-nuzūl* also helps a person in determining whether a verse has a general or special legal scope, as well as explaining in what context it should be applied. The essential meaning of a verse can often only be understood precisely through knowledge of the background of the verse's descent.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, *asbāb al-nuzūl* makes it easier for a person to memorize the verses of the Qur'an, because there is a strong connection between the cause and cause of the law, the events and the perpetrators, and the time and place of the events. All of these elements are important factors that can strengthen memory and make it easier to visualize the context when the verse is memorized or understood.<sup>7</sup>

Among the works that specifically discuss *asbāb al-nuzūl* are the books *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by al-Wāḥidī and *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* by Jalaluddin al-Suyūṭī. These two books are considered the main references in the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and have become important holdings for scholars, both in the classical, intermediate, and contemporary

<sup>1</sup> This is as interpreted by Ibn Manzūr as the *way* or *means* of something over something else. See more on Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, t.t.), 1119.

<sup>2</sup> Ahmad Warson Munawir, *Al-Munawir: Arabic–Indonesian Dictionary* (Surabaya: Pustaka Progresif, 1997), 602.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmad Warson Munawir, *Al-Munawir: Arabic–Indonesian Dictionary*, 1409.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Najib, "Analysis of Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Wāḥidī and al-Suyūṭī: On al-Nūr 3 and al-Furqān 68-70," *Journal of Oral al-Hāfi* 7, no. 1 (June 2013): 169

<sup>5</sup> Ibrahim bin Musa al-Shāṭibī, *al-Muwāfaqāt* (Cairo: Dār Ibnu 'Afan, 1997), 164.

<sup>6</sup> Ahmad Izzan, *Ulumul Qur'an* (A Study of the Textuality and Contextuality of the Qur'an), Cet. 1, (Bandung: Tafakur, 2005), 98-99.

<sup>7</sup> Heri Gunawan, *Ulumul Qur'an Study of Qur'anic Sciences*, Cet 1, (Bandung: Arfino Raya, 2015), 47

traditions of interpretation. Therefore, making these two works the object of further academic study is not only relevant, but also strategic to understand how the scientific framework of *asbāb al-nuzūl* developed and how it contributed to the reading of the Qur'an across the ages.

The two books not only play an important role in helping the mufassir understand the socio-historical context of the verses, but also become a methodological instrument in establishing *a more accurate history of asbāb al-nuzūl* of the verses in question.

In the course of history, the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* itself has undergone significant development. These developments are not only related to the technique of collecting history, but also include a transformation of the perspective on its essence, source, and function. Two major figures who represent this development are al-Wāhidī (d. 468 AH) and al-Suyūtī (d. 911 AH). Through *asbāb al-Nuzūl*, al-Wāhidī is considered to lay the foundation for the systematic codification of the narrations due to the descent of verses, although the methodological pattern is still compilative and accepts the narration in general.<sup>8</sup> However, his work became an important milestone because it succeeded in collecting data that was previously spread in the books of *tafsir* and *hadith*. Meanwhile, al-Suyūtī through *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl* not only continues the tradition, but also introduces the criticism of the *sanad*, the sorting of the narration, as well as certain criteria for accepting or rejecting the narration of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>9</sup>

From this, it can be seen that there is an intellectual evolution that shifts the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* from a mere collection of historical histories to a more methodological and selective discipline. This shift shows that understanding the context of the descending of the verse is not enough just to collect classical narratives, but requires the verification of the *sanad*, the analysis of the *matan* criticism, and the assessment of its relevance to the structure of the verse. Thus, the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* developed into a more mature scholarly effort, not only tracing the events of the Prophet's time, but also establishing an epistemological framework that could be used to read the verses more proportionately in various contemporary scientific contexts.

However, previous studies generally still view this development from a historical or philological perspective, such as the example of research related to the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* has been done by many previous authors. Among them are Ahmad Zaini's article entitled "Asbāb al-Nuzūl and its Urgency in Understanding the Meaning of the Qur'an"<sup>10</sup>; Mukhlis' article entitled "Analysis of the Study of Asbābun Nuzūl: Its

<sup>8</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2016), 7–8.

<sup>9</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1983), 10–12

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Zaini, "Asbāb al-Nuzūl and Its Urgency in Understanding the Meaning of the Qur'an," *Hermeneutics: Journal of the Science of the Qur'an and Tafsir* 8, no. 1 (2014), <https://doi.org/10.21043/hermeneutik.v8i1.902>.

Urgency and Contribution in the Understanding of the Qur'an"<sup>11</sup>; and Herni, Helda, and Hayatun Nida's collaborative work entitled "Understanding the Meaning and Urgency of Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Qur'an."<sup>12</sup> All of these works have the same relatively same focus of study, which is to discuss *asbāb al-nuzūl* in general and its urgency as one of the instruments in the interpretation of the Qur'an. In addition, research that has a close theme is an article by Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, and Medina Chodijah entitled "*The Urgency of Asbāb al-Nuzūl Perspective al-Wāhidī*." The research specifically focuses on the thought of al-Wāhidī.<sup>13</sup> And research that specifically examines the conception of *asbāb al-nuzūl* according to al-Suyūtī has been carried out by Mochammad Faiz Nur Ilham, Khulwani, and Suqiyah Musafa'ah.<sup>14</sup>

However, as far as the author's research is concerned, no research has been found that specifically compares the evolution of thought between al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī and places *asbāb al-nuzūl* within the framework of the philosophy of science, namely by examining its ontology, epistemology, and axiology aspects. In fact, this kind of philosophical analysis is important to answer questions related to the scientific building of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. (1) Ontology: what is the essence of *asbāb al-nuzūl*? Is it an essential part of the text of revelation itself, or is it just an external hermeneutical instrument that helps to understand the meaning of the verse? (2) Epistemology: how is knowledge about *asbāb al-nuzūl* constructed, verified, and used as an authoritative basis in the process of interpretation? (3) Axiology: What is the contribution of *asbāb al-nuzūl* to the development of tafsir and how does it provide practical value in reading the verses of the Qur'an more precisely?

In line with that, according to Manna' al-Qaṭṭān in *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qurān*, for example, more emphasis is placed on the authenticity of the history and legal functions of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>15</sup> In Indonesia, Abdul Mustaqim emphasized the need to critically re-read *asbāb al-nuzūl* in order to remain relevant to the current context. According to him, classical studies that are too textual need to be complemented by a contextual approach to be relevant to the challenges of the times.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Mukhlis, "Analysis of the Study Asbabun Nuzul: The Urgency and Contribution in Understanding the Qur'an," *Al-Muhith: Jurnal Ilmu Qur'an dan Hadits* 2, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.35931/am.v2i2.2945>.

<sup>12</sup> Herni, Helda, and Hayatun Nida, "Understanding the Meaning and Urgency of Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Qur'an," *Mushaf Journal: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith* 2, no. 2 (2022), <https://mushafjournal.com/index.php/mj/article/view/30>.

<sup>13</sup> Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, and Medina Chodijah, "The Urgency of Asbāb al-Nuzūl According to al-Wāhidī," *Al-Bayan: Journal of the Study of the Science of the Qur'an and Tafsir* 2, no. 1 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.15575/al-bayan.v2i1.1808>.

<sup>14</sup> Mochammad Faiz Nur Ilham, Khulwani, and Suqiyah Musafa'ah, "The Conception of the History of Asbāb al-Nuzūl The Perspective of al-Suyūtī (A Study of the Book of *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*)," *Al-Dzikra: Journal of the Study of the Science of the Qur'an and al-Hadith* 18, no. 2 (December 2024): 173, <https://doi.org/10.24042/al-dzikra.v18i2.22664>.

<sup>15</sup> Manna' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qurān*, (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma'ārif, 1996), 89–92.

<sup>16</sup> Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemology of Contemporary Interpretation*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010), 132–133.

Based on this framework, this article seeks to analyze the evolution of *asbāb al-nuzūl thought* from al-Wāhidī to al-Suyūtī through the perspective of the philosophy of science. Thus, the development of this discipline is not solely seen as a technical shift in the method of collecting history, but also as an epistemological transformation that reflects the intellectual dynamics of Islam from the classical period begun by al-Wāhidī to the middle period developed by al-Suyūtī.<sup>17</sup>

This research uses a qualitative method with the type of library *research*, because all data is obtained from written works, both primary and secondary sources, which are relevant to the theme of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. Literature research was chosen to study and analyze textual data in the literature of the two figures, so as to gain a deep understanding of the evolution of al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī's thought.

The approach used includes three dimensions. First, the historical approach, to trace the development of the concept of *asbāb al-nuzūl* in the socio-intellectual context of the two figures. Second, a philosophical approach, especially in the framework of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, which serves to reveal the essence, source of knowledge, and usefulness of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. Third, comparative analysis, to compare the thinking and methodology of the two in order to find the continuity, difference, and direction of evolution.

The data sources of this research consist of: (1) primary, namely *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by al-Wāḥidī and *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by al-Suyūṭī; and (2) secondary, in the form of tafsir literature, books of *ulūm al-Qurān*, books and relevant scientific journals. Data is collected through documentation techniques, namely reading, recording, and selecting information related to the concepts, methodologies, and thought patterns of the two characters.

Data analysis was carried out using descriptive-analytical, comparative, and critical-reflective models. Descriptive analysis is used to systematically present the thoughts of al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūṭī. Comparative analysis is used to find similarities and differences between the two. Meanwhile, critical-reflective analysis is directed to evaluate its relevance in the context of the development of interpretation. Thus, this methodology allows the study to present a complete picture of the evolution *of asbāb al-nuzūl thought* from a descriptive-narrative to a systematic-methodological one.

# Al-Wāḥidī and the Early Conception of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* Biographers Intellectual al-Wāḥidī

Al-Wāhidī, as mentioned in the book *Tabaqāt al-Mufassirin*,<sup>18</sup> has the full name 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Abī al-Ḥasan al-Wāhidī al-Naisābūrī. His laqab was entrusted to his grandfather, Abī al-Ḥasan. Meanwhile, according to the *muhaqqiq* of the book *al-Waṣīṭ*, the name al-Wāhidī is attributed to al-Wāhid ibn Muhrāh. He was born into a merchant family in the town of Sawah, a town between the towns of Ray and Hamzān.<sup>19</sup> He is one of the important figures in the tradition of tafsir, especially in the field of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>20</sup> He was born around 398 AH, and his name began to be known in the 5th century AH. He is also known as one of the scholars who succeeded in writing a complete book of tafsir al-Qur'an in 30 juz and mastered the discipline of linguistics.<sup>21</sup>

Al-Wāhidī's intellectual journey in the science of tafsir, one of them, was filled with the activity of studying with Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ta'labī (d. 427 H) who was the figure behind the book *Tafsīr al-Ta'labī*. Meanwhile, his teachers in the science of nahwu include Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Qandazī al-Ḍarīr al-Naisābūrī and Abū al-Ḥasan 'Imrān ibn Mūsā al-Maghribī al-Mālikī. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Fārisī was also his teacher in the field of qirā'āt, and to al-Qādī Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Hīrī, al-Wāhidī studied hadith,<sup>22</sup> and studied linguistics from Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-'Arūḍī. In addition, he also learned from Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī bin Aḥmad al-Bustī, Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd bin Muḥammad al-Ḥayrī, and many other influential scholars of his time.<sup>23</sup>

Living in the period of Islamic intellectual transition, which is a period when the tradition of narration is getting stronger, while the method of writing the science of tafsir also began to develop. His death in 468 AH placed al-Wāhidī in the era of codification, a phase when the various histories and commentaries previously scattered in oral books and traditions began to be systematically compiled.<sup>24</sup>

In the world of science, al-Wāhidī is known as a mufassir who pays special attention to the narrations that explain the background of the descent of verses. His scientific style is more compilative, namely collecting, summarizing, and compiling history so that it can be easily used as a reference.<sup>25</sup> This is in line with the spirit of his time which prioritized the authority of narration as the basis for the explanation of the Qur'an, although the technique of sanad criticism at that time was not as strict as the discipline of hadith that developed later; the era of al-Suyūtī.

<sup>18</sup> Ahmad al-Dāwūdī, *Tabaqāt al-Mufassirin*, Juz 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 394.

<sup>19</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Naisābūrī al-Wāhidī, *al-Waṣīṭ fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, Vol. II (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1994), 22.

<sup>20</sup> Imam al-Suyuti, *Asbabun Nuzul; The Reasons for the Descent of the Qur'anic Verse*, terj. Andi Muhammad Syahril and Yasir Maqasid, (East Jakarta: Pustaka Timur, 2015), XV

<sup>21</sup> Manī' 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, *Tafsīr Methodology: A Comprehensive Study of the Methods of Tafsīr Experts* (Jakarta: PT RajaGrafindo Persada, 2006), 213.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *al-Waṣīṭ fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, Vol. II, 24–25.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 6

<sup>24</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2016), 6

<sup>25</sup> Manna' al-Qaṭān, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 2000), 102.

The works of al-Wāhidī were born from a solid scientific environment, supported by a network of scholars, the existence of libraries, and educational institutions (madrasas). The presence of al-Wāhidī's works has a very significant function, especially in systematically collecting *asbāb al-nuzūl*. This effort makes a great contribution to the mufassir, qāri', and fuqahā' in understanding the text of the Qur'an as well as relating it to the issue of interpretation and Islamic law.

In the field of tafsir, al-Wāhidī also has works. He is known as the author of three monumental works, namely *al-Wajīz*, *al-Wasīt*, and *al-Basīt*, each of which has different characteristics and depth in describing the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an<sup>26</sup>

Although he did not always pay attention to criticism of the authenticity of the history, al-Wāhidī's position was very important. It laid the foundation for the codification of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, so that the generations that followed had a foothold for developing a more systematic method of sanad criticism and a more systematic approach to the discipline.

### Monumental Works and Characteristics of al-Wāhidī's Thought on *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*

The work of al-Wāhidī that made him widely known is *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. The title of this book explicitly shows its focus, which is to collect narrations that explain the reason for the descent of the verses of the Qur'an. The compilation of this book follows the order of surahs and verses, making it easier for readers to immediately find the history that is relevant to the verses being studied. This systematic method of presentation makes al-Wāhidī's work one of the most important early references in the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>27</sup>

Looking at al-Wāhidī's work and methods, there are a number of characteristics that mark the initial conception of *asbāb al-nuzūl* in him:

1. Narration as the center of interpretation: al-Wāhidī places narration as the key to understanding the Qur'an. The setting of the event is considered a direct explanation of the meaning of the verse, answering the question of who, when, and why the verse descends.
2. Ontology of *asbāb*: specific events: According to him, *asbāb al-nuzūl* is understood as a concrete event that directly triggers the descent of a particular verse. This results in an interpretation that is strongly tied to certain historical events, although he accepts causes that occurred much earlier, such as the events of the army fighting for the *asbāb al-nuzūl* of Surah al-Fil.
3. Compilative method: it works as a data collector: the history is compiled and presented briefly without much analysis. The advantage is that the resources that were originally scattered can be centralized. The weakness is that the quality of sanad and matan is not always rigorously researched.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad Ḥusayn al-Ζahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn*, Jilid 1 (Kairo: Dar al-Hadits, 2000), 103

<sup>27</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 539

4. Literal-historical tendencies: Its orientation to concrete events makes the interpretation tend to be literal: the verse is understood according to the setting of the accompanying event. In the legal context, this strengthens the role of history as the basis of fiqh arguments.
5. Practical and pedagogical function: the arrangement of the book based on the order of the surahs facilitates its use, both in teaching, fatwa, and commentary. Therefore, this book was quickly widely accepted among scholars.
6. The limitations of the sanad criticism, but rich in historical data: Although it does not select the sanad strictly, the collection of narrations in this book holds a high historical value. He records the collective memory of Muslims of the events that accompanied the revelation.
7. Intellectual legacy: Al-Wāhidī laid the initial foundation for the *discipline of asbāb al-nuzūl*. Subsequent generations, such as al-Suyūtī, made this work a primary source to be filtered, rearranged, and given a more mature methodological dimension.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that al-Wāhidī represents the initial phase of the codification of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. It presents a broad and structured collection of history, with a primary orientation on historical narration and events. This contribution is very important because it provides the data foundation for the next generation, although at the same time it leaves methodological work behind: selecting history, criticizing sanad. This evolution is only more evident when it comes to the work of post-classical scholars such as al-Suyūtī.

### Al-Suyūtī and the Development of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*

#### Intellectual biography of al-Suyūtī

His name is Jalāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī Bakr ibn Muḥammad al-Suyūtī. He was a great scholar of the Shafi'i sect, an expert in hadith, history and Arabic literature. Suyūtī is the name of his father's birthplace.<sup>28</sup> He was born on 1 Rajab 849 H, coinciding with 3 October 1445 AD, in Egypt, precisely in the area of Ashūt.<sup>29</sup> Scientifically, al-Suyūtī received his early education from his own father, Kamāl al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Suyūtī. However, his study with his father did not last long, as his father died on 5 Šafar 855 AH, when al-Suyūtī was only about five and a half years old.<sup>30</sup>

Scholastic, al-Suyūtī studied the Qur'an as the initial focus of his intellectual journey. He managed to complete the memorization of the Qur'an before the age of eight. After that, he began to deepen his study of fiqh and Arabic grammar. In the field of jurisprudence, he studied a number of important works such as '*Umdat al-Aḥkām*,

<sup>28</sup> Faridah, al-Suyuti's thoughts on *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 10

<sup>29</sup> E. M. Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī: Biography and Background* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 24.

<sup>30</sup> Sartain., 24.

*Minhāj al-Tālibīn*, and *Minhāj al-Wuṣūl*. In the field of Arabic grammar, he studied the monumental work of *Alfiyyah Ibn Mālik*. In addition, he also pursued various other disciplines such as the Qur'an, hadith, fara'id, and other branches of Islamic science.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout his life, he wrote hundreds of works covering almost all branches of Islamic science, with an estimated number of around 600 titles. These works cover various disciplines such as tafsir, hadith, jurisprudence, history, Arabic grammar (nahwu and sharaf), balāghah (bayān, ma'ānī), targhīb wa tarhīb, morality, Sufism, thabaqāt, praise of the Prophet (madā'iḥ nabawiyah), and other fields.<sup>32</sup> Brokelman, a German orientalist, counted about 415 written works: some have been published and some are still in manuscript form. Ibn Iyas said: "His writings reached 600 pieces", discussing various branches of Islamic, Arabic and historical knowledge.<sup>33</sup> According to the confession of one of his disciples, al-Dāwūdī, as quoted by Ḥusain al-Dhahabī, al-Suyūtī wrote no less than three sheets every day.<sup>34</sup> Taken as a whole, during his lifetime al-Suyūtī is estimated to have produced no less than five hundred titles in various fields of knowledge, such as tafsir, 'ulūm al-Qur'ān, hadith, jurisprudence, history, linguistics, and other disciplines.<sup>35</sup>

Among the most popular works of al-Suyūtī, especially in the study of tafsir and the science of tafsir, are *al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr*, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, *Asrār al-Tanzīl*, *al-Ikīl fī Istibnāt al-Tanzīl*, *al-Taḥbīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr*, and *Mu'tarak al-Aqrān fī Ḥājat al-Qur'ān*, as well as other works.<sup>36</sup>

His multidisciplinary skills allow al-Suyūtī to place *asbāb al-nuzūl* not merely as a collection of historical histories, but as a methodological tool that serves to support the interpretation of law, harmonization between relevant verses, and a broader contextual analysis beyond the mere compilation of histories commonly found in previous generations.<sup>37</sup>

Al-Suyūtī died on Thursday, 19 Jumādā al-Ulā in 911 AH, after suffering from illness for approximately seven days. His body was buried near *Khanqāh*, a place of

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Faridah, *Al-Suyuti's Thoughts on Asbab al-Nuzul*, see A. Mudjab Mahali, *Asbabun Nuzul A Study of the Deepening of the Quran*, (Rajawali Pers. Jakarta. 1989), XI

<sup>33</sup> Al-Suyuthi, *Mukhtasar Al Itqan Fi Ulumil Quran*. Terj. Aunur Rafiq Shalih Tamhid, What is the Quran, (Gema Insani Press, Cet. 11, Jakarta. 1996), 13

<sup>34</sup> Muḥammad Ḥusain al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn*, Jilid 1 (Kairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2005), 218.

<sup>35</sup> As narrated by Manī' 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, quoting al-Kannānī, al-Suyūtī wrote at least 73 titles in the field of tafsir, 237 titles in the study of hadith, 71 titles in the field of fiqh, 20 titles in the field of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *uṣūl al-dīn*, and Sufism, 72 titles in language studies, 80 titles in studies collected from various disciplines, 30 titles in the field of *tabaqāt* and history, as well as 37 titles in encyclopedic studies. See Manī' 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, *Manāhij al-Mufassirūn* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī, 2000), 247–248

<sup>36</sup> Al-Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ayyāzī, *al-Mufassirūn: Hayātuhum wa Manhajuhum*, Jilid 2 (Teheran: Wizārat al-Thaqāfah wa al-Irshād al-Islāmī, 2008), 792.

<sup>37</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 3

worship and spiritual activity for Sufis in the Cairo region of Egypt. With his immense productivity and scholarly contributions, al-Suyūtī has established himself as one of the great scholars who has exerted a profound influence on Islamic studies, particularly in the discipline of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*.<sup>38</sup>

### Monumental Works and Characteristics of al-Suyūtī's Thought on *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*

One of al-Suyūtī's greatest contributions to the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is his work *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. In his preface, al-Suyūtī expressly admits that he was inspired by al-Wāhidī's *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, and he even praises it as the best book in this field, although on a number of issues he expresses a different view.<sup>39</sup> *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* comes as a continuation of the scientific tradition of al-Wāhidī, but with a more critical and systematic approach. Al-Suyūtī not only compiles the narration, but also applies the criticism of the sanad, assesses the authenticity of the narration, and selects the narration according to strict scientific standards.<sup>40</sup>

In terms of writing systematics, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* is not much different from *al-Wāhidī's Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. Al-Suyūtī mentions a verse first, then elaborates on the historical history of *asbāb al-nuzūl* related to that verse. The arrangement of this book follows the order of verses and chapters as ordered in the mushaf, making it easier for readers to trace *asbāb al-nuzūl* systematically and thematically according to the order of the surah.

The analysis of al-Suyūtī's work and methods shows several important characteristics:

1. Criticism and Selection of History: in contrast to al-Wāhidī which tends to be compilative, al-Suyūtī emphasizes the validity of the history through the criticism of the sanad and consideration of the quality of the narration. He assessed the connection of the sanad and the credibility of the narrator, so that the received history had a stronger epistemological foundation.<sup>41</sup>
2. Contextualization and Harmonization of Relevant Verse: Al-Suyūtī sees *asbāb al-nuzūl* as a tool for contextually interpreting verses, connecting the text to historical situations, and at the same time facilitating harmonization between relevant verses.<sup>42</sup>
3. Ontology of *asbāb*: ontologically, al-Suyūtī limits *asbāb al-nuzūl* to events that take place at the very moment the verse is revealed, so he criticizes Al-Wahidi's

<sup>38</sup> Mochammad Faiz Nur Ilham, Khulwani, Suqiyah Musafa'ah, "The Conception of the History of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* The Perspective of al-Suyūtī (Study of the Book of *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*)," *Al-Dzikra: Journal of the Study of the Science of the Qur'an and al-Hadith*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (December 2024), 176. DOI: 10.24042/al-dzikra.v18i2.22664.

<sup>39</sup> Mochammad Faiz Nur Ilham, Khulwani, and Suqiyah Musafa'ah, "The Conception of the History of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* The Perspective of al-Suyūtī (Study of the Book of *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*)," *Al-Dzikra: Journal of the Study of the Science of the Qur'an and al-Hadith*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (December 2024), 176. DOI: 10.24042/al-dzikra.v18i2.22664.

<sup>40</sup> Subhī Ṣāliḥ, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al- 'Ilm li al-Malāyīn, 1988),

<sup>41</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 8

<sup>42</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 17

definition of *asbāb al-nuzūl* surah al-Fil, which refers to an elephant army, even though the verse is far from the incident of the elephant army attacking the Kaaba.<sup>43</sup> Similar to the stories of the previous prophets, according to him it is not *asbāb al-nuzūl*, because the time between the stories of the prophets and the verses that came down is different.

4. Methodological Approach; al-Suyūṭī developed a systematic methodology: classifying history based on sources, strength of sanad, legal relevance, and historical context. This approach places *asbāb al-nuzūl* as an instrument of scientific analysis, not just a historical record.
5. Practical Relevance; al-Suyūṭī's work remains application-oriented: helping mufassir, judges, and teachers to interpret the verse contextually, formulate legal arguments, and understand the text more broadly. This pedagogical and practical function makes *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* relevant to the contemporary era.
6. Intellectual Heritage; al-Suyūṭī's thought enriched the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, complementing al-Wāhidī's contribution with a methodological, selective, and critical approach. The next generation used this work as a reference to deepen the study of interpretation and develop more valid historical context-based legal applications.

In summary, al-Suyūṭī's contribution to the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* constitutes a significant methodological development of al-Wāhidī's early conception. He succeeded in combining historical compilation with a critical approach, sanad analysis, and historical classification. This approach makes *asbāb al-nuzūl* not only a record of events, but an epistemological instrument that can support the interpretation of the law, and the contextualization of texts in different eras.

### **The Dialogue of al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūṭī: The Evolution of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl***

The study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* cannot be separated from the contributions of two central figures: al-Wāhidī (d. 468 H) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 H). Both represent two important phases in the epistemological development of *asbāb al-nuzūl*: the initial codification phase and the methodological development phase.

Al-Wāhidī can be called the pioneer (*mu'assis*) in this tradition. He lived at a time when the criticism of sanad and matan hadith (*takhiṣ al-hadīth*) had not developed as rigorously as in the later period. Therefore, the method adopted by al-Wāhidī is more comprehensive-descriptive: collecting the narrations of *asbāb al-nuzūl* from various sources and compiling them systematically. This effort is very important to maintain the authority of the interpretation of the Qur'an while preventing deviations born from the practice of interpretation without a historical basis. The works of al-Wāhidī, such as *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, emerged in response to the phenomenon of many people interpreting the Qur'an without understanding the context of the descent of the verses,

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

thus giving rise to a misunderstanding. It is in this context that the works of al-Wāḥidī, especially *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, come as a scientific response to the need to order the process of interpretation by presenting historical data that is more systematic and accountable.<sup>44</sup>

By compiling the narrations that explain the reason for the successive descent of verses, al-Wāḥidī succeeded in laying the initial foundation for the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* as a stand-alone branch of science. This foundation not only made it easier for the next generation of scholars to understand the historical background of revelation, but also paved the way for the development of a more mature methodology, as later refined by later figures.<sup>45</sup>

In contrast, al-Suyūṭī lived in the middle ages; the golden age of Islam, when the discipline of hadith had reached methodological maturity. Criticism of sanad and matan developed rapidly, even al-Suyūṭī himself wrote a work in the field of *'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, namely *Tadīb al-Rāwī fī Sharḥ Taqīb al-Nawawī*. Therefore, in his work *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, he not only collected the narration, but also verified the sanad and selected the narration to a stricter standard. With this methodological-critical approach, al-Suyūṭī succeeded in taking the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* to a more advanced stage: from a mere compilation of narratives to systematic and critical analysis. His works were born as an intellectual response to the shortcomings in al-Wāḥidī's work, especially regarding aspects of sanad criticism.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, it can be concluded that the roles of al-Wāḥidī and al-Suyūṭī are complementary. Al-Wāḥidī was the pioneer who laid the foundation, while al-Suyūṭī was the developer who refined the methodology. What al-Wāḥidī considers "lacking" is not a weakness, but a limitation of the context of his time. He was "perfect" in his time, as he managed to build a solid foundation for the development of the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. As for al-Suyūṭī, with its more advanced methodological tools, it succeeded in elevating this discipline to a more critical and systematic level of sanad verification.

### **Similarities and Differences of Thought between al-Wāḥidī and al-Suyūṭī**

In general, al-Wāḥidī and al-Suyūṭī have a common goal: to provide a clear understanding of the context of the descent of the verse to support the interpretation of the Qur'ān's text and the understanding of its meaning. Both view *asbāb al-nuzūl* as a hermeneutical tool that bridges the text with historical situations. However, there are fundamental differences in their approaches that will be discussed within the framework of the philosophy of science, including ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

### **Ontological Comparison**

<sup>44</sup> Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 10-11

<sup>45</sup> Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 10-11

<sup>46</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūṭī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 6

From an ontological point of view, al-Wāḥidī views *asbāb al-nuzūl* as a decree that must be based on history and hearing information from people who witnessed the revelation firsthand, knew firsthand the causes, researched the knowledge, and were earnest in seeking it.<sup>47</sup> And he is also of the view that *asbāb al-nuzūl* can be an event related to the verse historically and contextually, therefore, he accepts that *asbāb al-nuzūl* occurred long before, such as the incident of the elephant army led by Abrahah to destroy the Kaaba in *the asbāb al-nuzūl* of Surah al-Fil, according to him it includes *asbāb al-nuzūl* Even though the distance between the story and the rest of the verse is not the same.<sup>48</sup> Another example is as in Surah al-Baqarah verse 114:<sup>49</sup>

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِنْ مَنْ نَعَمَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ ۝ وَسَعَىٰ فِيٰ حَرَاجًا أُولَئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا  
خَابِفُونَ ۝ هُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَرْبٌ وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

Translation: "Who is more unjust than the one who forbids the mosques of Allah to be used as a place of dhikr in them and tries to demolish them? They are not worthy to enter it, except with the fear (of Allah). They will be disgraced in this world and will receive a severe punishment in the Hereafter." (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 114).

Al-Wāḥidī reveals that *asbāb al-nuzūl* in this verse contains three Narrations:

1. This verse comes down with regard to Tithus the Romans and his followers from among the Christians. They once attacked the Children of Israel, killed their soldiers, captured their children, burned the Torah, damaged Jerusalem, and threw carcasses into it. This is the meaning explained by Ibn 'Abbas in the narration of al-Kalbī.
2. From Qatādah and al-Suddī said: What is meant by the above verse is Bukhtanashar and his army (the Babylonians). They attacked the Jews and destroyed Jerusalem, and the Christians of Rome assisted them in that action.
3. And the last one from Ibn 'Abbas in the narration of 'Athā' says: This verse came down with regard to the polytheists of Mecca who prevented the Muslims from mentioning the name of Allah Ta'ala in the Grand Mosque.<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, al-Suyūṭī emphasizes that *asbāb al-nuzūl* must be really related to the time of the descent of the verse. He does not provide a formal definition of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. However, he mentions the phrase (أَنَّهُ مَا نَزَّلَتِ الْآيَةُ أَيَّامٌ وَقَوْعَدَهُ which can be understood as *asbāb al-nuzūl* is a verse that came down on the day of the event<sup>51</sup> Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān supports the opinion of al-Suyūṭī which emphasizes that the event

<sup>47</sup> Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 10-11

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 491

<sup>49</sup> Șubhī al-Şālih. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. trjm. Paradise Library Team. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 181

<sup>50</sup> Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 39

<sup>51</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 4

must be within a period of time with the descent of the verse.<sup>52</sup> In other words, some verses of the Qur'an were revealed in response to an event at the time of revelation. So in *the above verse* (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 114) al-Suyūtī narrated two narrations:

1. From Ibn Abī Ḥātim who narrated through the previously mentioned route that the Quraysh once prevented the Prophet ﷺ from performing prayers near the Kaaba, in the Grand Mosque. So, Allah sent down His words: "*And who is more unjust than the one who forbids (others to enter) the mosques of Allah...*"
2. From Ibn Jarīr narrated from Ibn Zayd who said: This verse came down in relation to the polystyrene when they prevented the Prophet ﷺ from entering Mecca on the occasion of Ḥudaybiyah.<sup>53</sup>

From al-Suyūtī's definition, he comments on the opinion of al-Wāhidī who states that *the asbāb al-nuzūl* Surah al-Fīl was an attack by the armed forces led by Abrahah. According to al-Suyūtī, this is not correct, because the event occurred long before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and cannot be used as the cause of the direct descent of the verse.<sup>54</sup> Including the stories of the earlier people, such as the Nūh, 'Ād, or Ṭamūd, is only the historical background *or background* described by the verse, not because of the descent of the verse itself, because it occurred long before the time of revelation.<sup>55</sup>

The explanation confirms that the history of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is a historical narrative that is directly related to the moment of the descent of the verse. The term "direct event" (أيام وقوع) indicates that the revelation descends at the same time as an event to which the verse responds, either in the form of a social event or a question from the companions.<sup>56</sup>

If the definition of al-Wāhidī is followed, i.e. that all the preceding stories can be *asbāb al-nuzūl*, then it is as if each verse of the Qur'an has a special cause. Therefore, al-Suyūtī emphasizes the need to distinguish between past events and current events with the descent of revelation. Many narrations of the Companions relate a verse to a certain event not as *asbāb al-nuzūl*, but as interpretive ijtihad to explain the context of the meaning of the verse.<sup>57</sup>

Al-Suyūtī also adds that the descent of the verse is entirely *haqq tasharruf* (the prerogative of God), so it cannot be certain that a particular event is the exact cause of the descent of the verse. Some classical scholars do understand *asbāb al-nuzūl* in terms of causality, as if there is a cause-and-effect relationship between social phenomena and the descent of verses. It is this view that is criticized and corrected by al-Suyūtī

<sup>52</sup> See Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Discussion of the Sciences of the Qur'an*, translated by Halimuddin, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1993), 86.

<sup>53</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 17

<sup>54</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 4

<sup>55</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 5

<sup>56</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 4

<sup>57</sup> Shidqy Munjin, "The Concept of Asbāb al-Nuzūl in 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān," *Al-Tadabbur: Journal of Qur'anic Science and Tafsir*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2019), p. 66, doi: 10.30868/at.v4i01.311.

who defines *asbāb al-nuzūl* as the moment or situation when one or more verses are revealed, not as a causal cause that ensures the descent of a verse.<sup>58</sup> From this limitation it appears that al-Suyūtī is one of the scholars who reject the concept of causality in *asbāb al-nuzūl*, i.e. the assumption that without a certain event the verse will not come down.

From the ontological meaning and its impelment, it is clear that the difference between al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī in the time span of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is evident, which indicates a significant ontological evolution: from a broad understanding to a stricter time constraint, from seeing the cause of the descent of the verse as a long series of historical events to the understanding that *asbāb al-nuzūl* must be directly related to the moment of revelation. This evolution marked a shift in the way the two figures interpreted the relationship between text, context, and historical reality in the interpretation of the Qur'an.

In this case, according to the author, the efforts made by al-Wāhidī in contextualizing *asbāb al-nuzūl* aim to know historical events, such as the story of the nomadic army (*ashhāb al-fīl*), the Babylonian attack under Bukhtanashar, and the invasion of Titus from the Romans, so that the reader can understand the historical background of the previous ummah related to the narrative of the verse. This approach also facilitates the process of interpreting the Qur'an through the presentation of stories that are the background for the verses.

As al-Wāhidī stated: *"It is impossible for a person to know the interpretation of the Qur'an without understanding its story and the information about its descent. This statement shows that knowledge of the cause of the descent of the verse through the narrations of the story is one of the clearest ways to understand the context of the descent of the verse.<sup>59</sup>* However, such an approach is inversely proportional to al-Suyūtī's view that the narration of *asbāb al-nuzūl* must be derived from the events that actually occurred at the time the verse was revealed, not from historical accounts that are far from the time of the verse's descent.

The above narration of al-Wāhidī is also commented on by Subhī Shāliḥ. According to him: al-Wāhidī's mistake is understandable, since he is not a historian. Because the fact that the Christians united with Bukhtanashar in destroying the city of Jerusalem (Jerusalem), it happened in 633 B.C. And<sup>60</sup> Tithus who destroyed Jerusalem occurred in 70 A.D.<sup>61</sup> And this also does not correspond to the events when the verse descends.

Al-Wāhidī also quotes another narration from the statement of Ibn 'Abbās through the path of 'Aṭā' (third narration): "The verse comes down about the polytheists of

<sup>58</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī Bakr Al-Suyūtī, *Al-Itqān Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Kitab al-Šaqafah, 1996), 85

<sup>59</sup> Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to Al-Wahidi, *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Tafsir Studies*, 2, 1 (June 2017), 55

<sup>60</sup> Subhī al-Šāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. trjm. Paradise Library Team. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 181

<sup>61</sup> Subhī al-Šāliḥ, 182

Makkah who forbade Muslims to mention the name of Allah SWT in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. This statement refers to the events of 'Umrah Ḥudaibiyyah,<sup>62</sup> as well as the second narration in *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* al-Suyūṭī. At first glance, the narration seems closer to the meaning of the verse and more in accordance with the historical context of Islam, or at least more likely true than the stories of Tithus and Bukhtanasar, which are far from the times and have no direct correlation with the events of the descent of the verse.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, the only event that is most likely as the meaning of the verse is the prohibition of the polytheists against the Prophet PBUH and his companions to enter the city of Makkah when they were about to perform 'Umrah Ḥudaibiyyah.<sup>64</sup>

The definition put forward by al-Wāḥidī regarding the period in the discussion of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is complemented by Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ. According to him, it can logically be understood that the stories of the people or the previous prophets can only be called as 'general causes', not *asbāb haqīqiyyah* (special causes that occur at the same time as the revelation is revealed). Thus, the reason for the absence of *specific asbāb al-nuzūl* in a number of verses can be explained through the following two general forms of causes:

1. The mental strengthening of the Prophet through the previous story. An example is the story of the Prophet Musā who is repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'an with various versions. All the verses about the Prophet Moses came down without any special cause, because there was no particular special event in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that directly triggered his descent. If it is said that these verses have a cause, then the reason is general, namely to strengthen and strengthen the Prophet in the face of violence and opposition from his stubborn people. These verses came down in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, not in the time of the Prophet Musā, so it is not correct to consider them "descended about" Moses and his people, because the event had been going on for centuries.<sup>65</sup>
2. The revelation of the verse is an answer to the question of the companions or the people of the Ahlul Kitab. The clearest example is the story of the Prophet Joseph. Based on authentic narration, Surah Yūsuf came down at the request of the Companions who said, "*O Messenger of Allah, it would be wonderful if you told us*

<sup>62</sup> "Umrah Ḥudaibiyyah" refers to the historical event in which the Prophet ﷺ and 1,400 companions set out to perform Umrah in the year 6 Hijri, but were prevented by the Quraysh in Ḥudaibiyyah and finally agreed to the Ḥudaibiyyah Agreement.

<sup>63</sup> Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ, 182

<sup>64</sup> It should be noted that the two narrations narrated from Ibn 'Abbas contradict each other. One of them is sourced from the narration of al-Kalbī, while the other comes from the narration of 'Atā'. What is surprising is that both narrations are attributed to Ibn 'Abbas, but give two different contexts: on the one hand it is stated that it was descended with regard to the Romans, while on the other hand it is stated to be descended with regard to the Arabs (the polytheists of Mecca).

<sup>65</sup> Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 39. The hadith comes from a companion of the Prophet named Sa'ad bin Abi Waqash, See: Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. trjm. Paradise Library Team. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 185

*the story.*" It is from this Request that Allah sends down His revelation:<sup>66</sup> "These are the clear verses of the Book (the Qur'an). Indeed, We have sent down it (the Holy Book) in the form of the Qur'an in Arabic so that you may understand. We tell you (the Prophet Muhammad) the best story by revealing this Qur'an to you. Indeed, you were among those who did not know before that." (QS. Joseph (12:1-3)

It is clear that there is a reason for the revelation of the verses concerning the story of the Prophet Joseph cannot be denied, because it is based on a valid narration.<sup>67</sup> In addition, what came down was not only the first verses of Surah Yusuf, but the entire surah.<sup>68</sup> This is directly related to the request of the Prophet's companions who were eager for the stories of the Qur'an as lessons and warnings. They are really thirsty for stories that can give advice and are very eager to hear the best stories from the Prophet.<sup>69</sup>

The same is true of the Jewish question about Dzul-Qarnain. Qatadah said: "The Jews asked the Messenger of Allah about Dzul-Qarnain, then Allah SWT., lowered the verse: "They asked you about Dhul-Qarnain. Answer: I will read you part of the story. (al-Kahfi [18]: 83).<sup>70</sup>

Thus, it is not correct to say that the entire Qur'an came down without a cause, but it is also wrong if each verse is considered to have a specific cause. The majority of verses, especially those containing Qur'anic stories, the news of the previous people, the picture of the Day of Judgment, Paradise, and Hell, basically descend without any special cause. The causes of the descent of verses that can really be verified through authentic narration are only a small part. This principle should be a guide for every researcher when understanding the concept of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>71</sup>

If a mufassir puts forward a *ta'wil* approach like this, he will be more easily avoided from mistakes in explaining *asbāb al-nuzūl*. Through this approach, he can distinguish precisely between verses or surahs that do not have a specific cause and verses that only relate to general causes, based on the consideration that the majority of verses of the Qur'an are revealed without a special cause.<sup>72</sup>

### Epistemological Comparison

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> The mukhrij of the hadith is al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (2/345), and Imam al-Żahabī authenticated it. See al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, *tahqīq* of Kamāl Basnī Zaghlūl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2016), 275.

<sup>68</sup> Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. trjm. Paradise Library Team. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 186

<sup>69</sup> Based on a hadith that also comes from Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas, that they (the companions of the Prophet) said: "O Messenger of Allah, it would be good if you told us". Then Allah sent down His revelation: "Allah sent down the best words (i.e., the book (the Qur'an) which are uniform (in its parts)" (az-Zumar, 23). Sa'ad responded to the verse by saying: "It is all so that people can believe in the truth of the Qur'an See al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2016), 275-276.

<sup>70</sup> al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 306

<sup>71</sup> Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*, 186-187

<sup>72</sup> Șubḥī al-Şāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*, 184-185.

In establishing *asbāb al-nuzūl*, Al-Wāhidī emphasizes that one should not speak about the cause of the descent of the Qur'anic verses except on the basis of authentic narration. The history must come from people who witnessed the process of revelation, knew the cause, and understood its meaning. In addition, seriousness is needed in researching and tracing the history.<sup>73</sup>

The method used by Al-Wāhidī was very careful, both in choosing sources and in incorporating the history into his work. Every hadith and opinion he lists has a clear basis and can be accounted for. In addition to being sourced from his teachers, these narrations also come from classical literature before his time, such as the books of *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, and *History*.<sup>74</sup>

However, in fact, some of the narrations assessed by the scholars afterwards proved to be weak, some even classified as *da'if* and irrelevant to the context of the descent of the verse. This is as stated by Al-Katalī, he states: *"Neither al-Wāhidī nor his teacher, al-Tha'labī, had a profound mastery of the science of hadith. In fact, in their tafsir works, especially the tafsir of Imam al-Tha'labī, there are false hadiths and stories whose truth cannot be accounted for."*<sup>75</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah also commented that in addition to quoting the sahih hadith al-Wāhidī also quoted the hadith that is *dha'if*.<sup>76</sup>

Despite its weaknesses in verifying the narration of the hadith, al-Wāhidī still received a lot of praise from scholars. They considered him to be a highly knowledgeable figure, a linguist, and an important figure in interpretation. Among these appreciations: Al-Subkī: *"al-Wāhidī was one of the leading commentators of his time"*. Ibn Qādī Syuhbah: *"he is a scholar of jurisprudence, nahwu, language, and tafsir"*. Al-Dzahabī: *"high imam, commentator and Arabic commentator"*. Al-Suyūtī,

<sup>73</sup> Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to Al-Wahidi, *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an Studies and Tafsir*, 2, 1 (June 2017), 51

<sup>74</sup> Șubhī al-Šāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. Cet. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 169-170.

<sup>75</sup> Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to al-Wahidi, 52-53

<sup>76</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah commented: "The narrations quoted from the book of *tafsir al-Tha'labī* have been compiled by the scholars of hadith. They state that *al-Tha'labī* has narrated a number of false hadiths, such as the hadith that he mentioned at the beginning of each surah from Abu Umāmah regarding the virtue of surahs, and other similar examples. Therefore, some scholars consider that he is like someone who gathers firewood at night. So was *al-Wāhidī* as his disciple and his successors among the commentators; They quoted sahih hadiths as well as *da'if* hadiths. It is different with Imam al-Baghawī. He was a hadith scholar with a higher level of knowledge than *al-Tha'labī* and *al-Wāhidī*. *Tafsir al-Baghawī* is a summary of *tafsir al-Tha'labī*, but in *tafsir al-Baghawī* there are no false hadiths narrated by *al-Tha'labī*. Nor is there any mention of the narrations of the *tafsir* of the group of heretics as contained by *al-Tha'labī*, although *al-Tha'labī* himself has many good deeds and good faiths. However, he does not have sufficient knowledge to distinguish between authentic hadith and weak hadith." See: Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to Al-Wahidi, *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an Studies and Tafsir*, 2, 1 (June 2017), 52-53.

al-Quftī, al-Bākhirzī, and 'Abd al-Ghāfir also praised him as a prolific writer, a professor, and a person who mastered linguistics and interpretation.<sup>77</sup>

According to the author's analysis, the praise of the scholars shows that al-Wāhidī's expertise lies in the field of interpretation, language, and jurisprudence, not in the science of hadith. Therefore, it is natural that some of the narrations of *asbāb al-nuzūl* that he quoted are not verified and mixed between sahih and da'if. It is also natural that al-Wāhidī, as a disciple of al-Tha'labī, was not careful in verifying the history of hadith, because both of them were not known to have strong authority on the science of hadith. Their scientific focus is more on language, tafsir, and adab, so that the criticism of sanad and matan is not the main concern.

In addition, this was also influenced by the conditions of the times and the limitations of the hadith verification method at that time. The paradigm of writing tafsir at that time was more oriented towards collecting history and presenting various opinions without strict selection. Therefore, the existence of the narration of da'if and even maudhū' in some of their works was not considered problematic in his time, although according to the standards of hadith criticism in the later era it was considered inadequate.

Al-Wāhidī also received a narration with the status of a *mauqūf hadith*, which is a hadith whose narration was stopped in the companions of the Prophet. If the words of the companions are related to matters where there is no gap for ijtihad, then the ruling is the same as the *hadith marfū'* that was attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), because it is impossible for the companions to falsify the hadith.<sup>78</sup>

Meanwhile, al-Suyūṭī's work tends to be more concise because it has gone through a strict sanad verification process. In addition, he sometimes compiled more narrations, adding narrations that were not mentioned by al-Wāhidī, and giving special marks in the form of symbols (ؑ) as additional signals. Al-Suyūṭī traces each hadith back to its primary source in the great books of which he is acknowledged to be authoritative. The sources cited can be divided into two categories:<sup>79</sup>

1. First, the hadith literature, which includes: *Şahīh al-Bukhārī*, *Şahīh Muslim*, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Sunan al-Tirmidī*, *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, *al-Mustadrak* by al-Ḥākim, *Şahīh Ibn Ḥibbān*, *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*, *Sunan al-Dāruqutnī*, *Musnad Aḥmad*, *Musnad al-Bazzār*, *Musnad Abī Ya'la*, *al-Mu'jam* by al-Ṭabarānī, and various other hadith books.
2. Second, al-Suyūṭī also quotes the narration of *asbāb al-nuzūl* from classical tafsir works, such as *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qurān*, *Tafsīr Ibn Abī Ḥātim*, *Tafsīr*

<sup>77</sup> Abu al-Hasan 'Ali bin Ahmad al-Wāhidī, *Al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Ażz* (Beirut: Dār al-Samiyyah, t.t.), 23–24. See: Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to Al-Wahidi, *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an Studies and Tafsir*, 2, 1 (June 2017), 54

<sup>78</sup> Siti Muslimah, Yayan Mulyana, Medina Chodijah, The Urgency of Asbabul Nuzul According to Al-Wahidi, *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an Studies and Tafsir*, 2, 1 (June 2017), 52

<sup>79</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 2002), 9. Bandingkan dengan Andrew Rippin, 9–10.

*Ibn Mardawayh, Tafsīr Abī al-Shaykh, Tafsīr Ibn Ḥibbān, Tafsīr al-Faryābī, Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq, Tafsīr Ibn Mundhir*, and other works.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to the quality of his references, al-Suyūtī also details some elements of novelty (*al-jadīd*) in *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* compared to the works of his predecessors. There are at least six update points that he mentions:

1. Al-Suyūtī composed his works in a more concise and systematic format.
2. Added additional information not found in al-Wāhidī's work.
3. Referring to the narrations listed in authoritative books and mentioning the party who performed *takhrīj* (mukharrij).<sup>81</sup>
4. Separating authentic hadiths from inauthentic hadiths, as well as distinguishing between acceptable and rejected narrations.
5. Compile hadiths that seem to contradict each other to be compared and analyzed.
6. To separate the narrations that according to his analysis cannot be included in the category of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, al-Suyūtī expands the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* by incorporating an analysis of the narration chain and establishing a more systematic method of assessing and classifying the history of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. This methodological development is what distinguishes it from al-wahidi.<sup>83</sup>

*Lubāb al-Nuqūl* became a more comprehensive and methodological reference work than his predecessors. This work is not only cited in the great post-classical commentaries, but it also serves as a basis for scholars to develop the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl* with a more scientific approach.

Al-Suyūtī also received the narration of the *musnad*<sup>84</sup> from the Companions. Also, the narration from the *tābi'īn* is also considered *marfū'*<sup>85</sup> even though it is *mursal*,<sup>86</sup> with the narration still accepted if the sanad is valid and comes from *tafsir* scholars who have indeed studied directly from the companions, such as Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, and

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> *Mukharrij* is *ism al-fā'il* (active participle) of the verb تَخْرِجَ which means "one who performs the process of *takhrīj*." In the context of hadith science, *mukharrij* is a person who quotes a hadith in his work along with the chain of sanad. See Abdul Majid Khon, *Ulumul Hadith* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2013), p. 114.

<sup>82</sup> Al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fi Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, hlm. 8.

<sup>83</sup> Mochammad Faiz Nur Ilham, Khulwani, Suqiyah Musafa'ah, "The Conception of the History of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* The Perspective of al-Suyūtī (Study of the Book of *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fi Asbāb al-Nuzūl*)," *Al-Dzikra: Journal of the Study of the Science of the Qur'an and al-Hadith*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (December 2024), 173. DOI: 10.24042/al-dzikra.v18i2.22664.

<sup>84</sup> *Musnad* is a hadith whose sanad reaches the Prophet

<sup>85</sup> *Marfu'* is a hadith that is relied on directly to the Prophet, both speech, deeds, decrees and attributes.

<sup>86</sup> The *mursal* hadith is the absence of any mention of the companions from the narrator's lineage, and the *tabi'īn* directly raises the hadith directly to the Prophet, and Imam Al-Suyuthi accepts the *mursal* hadith on the condition that is: The *mursal* hadith is from a person who is *tsiqah* such as Sa'id bin Al-Musayib, The *mursal* hadith is strengthened by other *mursal* hadiths or *musnad* practiced by the companions. Most scholars have issued a *fatwa* with this hadith, see the book *Ar-Risalah* by Imam Ash-Shafī'i (461-463)

Sa'īd bin Jubair, 'Atha', Hasan al-Bashri, Sa'īd ibn Musayyab, and adh-Dhahak.<sup>87</sup> In addition, the *mursal* history is stronger if it is supported by other mursal histories that are in line.<sup>88</sup>

In contrast, al-Wāhidī sometimes narrates hadith and its sanad, but this often makes the discussion long and sometimes it is not clear who the narrator came from. In fact, he sometimes only mentions the narration in *maqtū'* (interrupted), so it is not known whether he has a valid sanad or not.<sup>89</sup> In this case, attributing narration to the great books that have been mentioned is certainly stronger and more reliable than simply relying on *takhrīj* al-Wāhidī.<sup>90</sup>

Furthermore, al-Suyūtī distinguishes *the authentic* from the inauthentic narrations, sorts out the acceptable narrations from the rejected, and tries to compromise the different narrations so that the explanations are more integrative. He also omitted narrations that did not fall into the category of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, making his work more selective and systematic.<sup>91</sup>

Furthermore, both al-Suyūtī and al-Wāhidī developed the concept that a single verse can have *multiple narrations* (more than one cause of descent), as long as the narrations are considered valid. The difference between the two lies mainly in the epistemological principles and methods of sanad criticism. Therefore, it is natural that the history quoted by the two is often different. There are even narrations that are not mentioned by al-Wāhidī but are included by al-Suyūtī, such as the narration of *asbāb al-nuzūl* Surah al-Humazah.<sup>92</sup> This is because al-Suyūtī refers directly to authoritative sources in the books of hadith and classical commentary that are not always used by al-Wāhidī. On the other hand, there are also narrations that are included by al-Wāhidī but not included by al-Suyūtī, because al-Wāhidī is more compilative, while al-Suyūtī is more selective in filtering narrations that are considered to meet the standards of authenticity.

Thus, the differences between the two figures are obvious and are a consequence of their respective epistemological principles, which reflect the general tendencies of

<sup>87</sup> Șubhī al-Şāliḥ. *Discussing the Sciences of the Qur'an*. trjm. Tim Pustaka Firdaus, Cet. 1. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1990), 177

<sup>88</sup> Imam al-Suyuti, *Asbabun Nuzul; The Reasons for the Descent of the Qur'anic Verse*, terj. Andi Muhammad Syahril and Yasir Maqasid, (East Jakarta: Pustaka Timur, 2015), xviii

<sup>89</sup> Al-Qurṭubī in his *muqaddimah* (1/51). And my condition in this book is to add words to those who say them, and hadiths to those who collect them. Indeed, it is said, "One of the blessings of knowledge is to rely on the one who says it, and most of the hadiths in the book of fiqh and tafsir are not clearly known who is *takhrīj* except the one who refers back to the book of hadith. So a person who has no experience in this matter will be confused because he does not know what is valid and what is *ḍaīf*, and knowing this is a great knowledge. Therefore, it cannot be used to argue and argue until the hadith is relied upon by the scholars who have taken up his *takhrīj* and the famous people who are *thiqah* from the scholars of Islam.", see: Imam al-Suyuti, *Asbabun Nuzul; The Reasons for the Descent of the Qur'anic Verse*, terj. Andi Muhammad Syahril and Yasir Maqasid, xx

<sup>90</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 6

<sup>91</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 6

<sup>92</sup> Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*, 305

the times and the scientific traditions they represent. Al-Wāhidī moved in the early tradition of *tafsir bi al-ma'thūr* which was still oriented towards the collection of history without the demands of strict verification, so that the aspect of the validity of the *sanad* was not yet the main focus. On the contrary, al-Suyūtī was born at a time when the science of hadith had undergone methodological maturation, so he brought a more established standard of criticism to the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl*.

The difference in scientific background and the development of hadith disciplines in their time also shaped their respective methodological patterns. In other words, the diversity of approaches is not just personal differences, but part of the scientific evolution of interpretation that moves from the compilative-descriptive phase to the methodological-critical phase

### Axiological Comparison

The axiological difference between *al-Wāhidī's* *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* and *al-Suyūtī's Lubāb al-Nuqūl* lies in the value, purpose, and implications of its use in the study and interpretation of the Qur'an. The book of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* al-Wāhidī places an axiological focus on the use of *asbāb al-nuzūl* as an instrument to affirm the validity and correctness of the meaning of the verses. Al-Wāhidī views the cause of the descent of verse as the main basis for understanding the historical context and the establishment of the law. However, in some cases there appears to be inconsistencies, mainly due to the limitations of authentic history at the time, so that its axiological function is more basic causality in understanding the verse.

In addition, *al-Suyūtī's Lubāb al-Nuqūl* offers a broader axiological value by complementing the shortcomings of *al-Wāhidī's* work, particularly in terms of completeness and authenticity of the history. *Al-Suyūtī* emphasizes the importance of the continuity of time between the events and the descent of verses as the main principle in determining the validity of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, as well as applying a stricter selection of narrations. The axiology in *al-Suyūtī's* work not only strengthens the legal arguments and interpretations with a more comprehensive narration, but also makes *asbāb al-nuzūl* the foundation for purifying the meaning of the verse and affirming the authority of interpretation.

In summary, the axiology of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* al-Wāhidī focuses more on the function of causality and the basic explanation of the meaning of the verse based on available narration, while *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* al-Suyūtī adds dimensions of authenticity, historical continuity, and critical selection of history in order to present a more accurate, comprehensive, and authoritative interpretation for the development of contemporary interpretation.

### Synthesis of the Evolution of Thought

On a comprehensive examination, the intellectual dialogue between al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī shows a significant transformation in the discipline of *asbāb al-nuzūl*:

From an ontological perspective, there is a shift from a loose conception to a stricter formulation. Al-Wāhidī views the cause of the descent of the verse as a series of extensive historical events that can occur long before the verse is revealed. On the contrary, al-Suyūtī asserts that *asbāb al-nuzūl* must be directly related to the moment of revelation. These changes show an ontological evolution from a wide temporal scope towards more precise time constraints, so that the relationship between text and historical reality becomes more measurable and accurate.

From an epistemological aspect, evolution appears to be based on the source verification approach. Al-Wāhidī emphasizes the compilation of narration in a compilative manner without in-depth sanad criticism. However, al-Suyūtī developed a more selective methodology by tracing the sources of the narration, conducting the sanad criticism, distinguishing the authentic from the weak narrations, and systematically compromising multi-narration. This transformation represents a shift from descriptive epistemology to critical-verifiable epistemology that demands accuracy and clarity of sources.

From the axiological dimension, the function of *asbāb al-nuzūl* has expanded. In al-Wāhidī, *asbāb al-nuzūl* serves as a tool to explain the basic meaning of the verse and the legal context based on the available narration. Meanwhile, al-Suyūtī expanded its function to become an instrument of refinement of meaning, strengthening the authority of interpretation, and refining the legal basis through a more authentic and comprehensive history. Thus, the axiological orientation moves from mere contextual explanations to strengthening the validity of interpretation and historical consistency.

Overall, and it is very important to note that, this synthesis of thought shows that the work of al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī are not two contradictory positions, but rather two complementary stages of development in the history of *asbāb al-nuzūl*: al-Wāhidī as the initial compilative foundation and al-Suyūtī as the methodological and critical refiner, at the next stage. Thus, the evolution of thought of both made a great contribution in shaping the scientific standard of *asbāb al-nuzūl* studies that are used until the contemporary era.

Table 1. Comparison of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī

Aspects	al-Wāhidī	al-Suyūtī	Analysis/Implications
Ontology	Understanding <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i> broadly and loosely in terms of time; events that occurred long before the verse descended can be considered as causation (e.g., the story of the attack of the nomadic army for the	Limiting <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i> to events that occurred immediately at the time of the descent of the verse; rejects the ontological expansion of al-	There is an ontological evolution from a wide temporal scope (al-Wāhidī) towards strict time constraints and historical precision (al-Suyūtī).

	<i>asbāb</i> of Surah al-Fīl).	Wāḥidī's version.	
<b>Epistemology</b>	It is compilative-descriptive; compiling the narration without deep sanad criticism; The authenticity of history is not always sorted out.	Selective-verifying; develop sanad criticism, assess the validity of history, and choose only authentic and relevant history.	Epistemology evolved from a collection model to a critical-verification model, increasing scientific accuracy and authority.
<b>Axiology</b>	Its axiological function is more basic causality in understanding the verse, due to the limitations of authentic narration of the time	Expanding the function of <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i> as a reinforcement of the validity of tafsir, purification of history, as well as the legal basis and harmonization of relevant verses	Axiology moves from the function of basic explanation to strengthening the authority of interpretation and legal accuracy.
<b>Serving Style</b>	It is long, narrative, and mixed between <i>sahih</i> narration and <i>dhaīf</i> without strict separation.	It is concise, concise, systematic, and built with a clear methodological framework.	In short, al-Suyūṭī's style of presentation is not a form of material reduction, but the result of methodological selection that displays only the strongest and most reliable history
<b>Added/Unused History</b>	It contains a number of narrations that were later not taken by al-Suyūṭī because they were considered weak or less relevant.	Added other narrations that are not listed in al-Wāḥidī due to wider access to sources with stricter selection.	This difference is natural, not a contradiction, but a consequence of the principles of selection, access to resources, and intellectual needs of the time.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates a clear methodological evolution in the understanding of asbāb al-nuzūl between al-Wāhidī and al-Suyūtī. Ontologically, al-Wāhidī adopts a broad conception of asbāb al-nuzūl that includes events preceding revelation, whereas al-Suyūtī restricts it to events directly related to the time of revelation, reflecting a shift in the perception of the relationship between text and historical context.

Epistemologically, al-Wāhidī employs a compilative approach with limited sanad verification, while al-Suyūtī develops a selective-critical methodology that prioritizes authentic narrations and systematic analysis. Axiologically, al-Wāhidī uses asbāb al-nuzūl primarily to explain the basic meaning of verses, whereas al-Suyūtī expands its function as an instrument for strengthening interpretive authority and legal reasoning.

Overall, the evolution from al-Wāhidī to al-Suyūtī marks a transition from a descriptive-compilative model to a critical-methodological paradigm. This confirms that the concept of asbāb al-nuzūl is dynamic and continuously shaped by historical, methodological, and intellectual factors, rather than being static or contradictory.

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