

ṬAHA HUSAIN'S SKEPTICISM OF *JĀHILĪ* POET AND ITS POSITION IN THE QUR'AN: ANALYSIS OF ṬAHA HUSAIN'S THOUGHT IN *FĪ AL-SYĪRI AL-JĀHILĪ*

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Abstract

Ṭaha Husain has an educational background in Egypt and Paris, so it is not surprising that he sometimes adopts the methods of orientalist scepticism that he admires many while in Paris. However, he still paid attention to Egypt. As the father of literature at this time, he paid attention to popular Arabic literature, namely the poetry jahili, which he later booked, and he named *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*, which later changed its name to *Fī al-Adāb al-Jāhili*. With qualitative methods and data excavation categorized as research libraries, the author tried to reveal how Taha Husain's study of Arabic literature is contained in his work *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*. This research resulted in the fact that the poem jahili, according to Ṭaha, is no longer authentic. It has been infiltrated by some interests, both personal, tribal fanaticism, politics, and even religion. Even if there is still genuine poetry, then it is very little. This authenticity made Taha refuse and said that this no longer authentic poetry could not be used as a tool to understand the Qur'an. It must be the other way around because the Qur'an is the only original and most reliable Arabic literature.

Keywords: *Ṭaha Husain, Skepticism, Syair Jāhili, Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*

Abstrak

ṬahaHusain memiliki latar belakang pendidikan di Mesir dan di Paris, sehingga tidak heran jika ia terkadang mengadopsi metode skeptisisme orientalis yang banyak ia kagumi saat di Paris. Namun ia tetap menaruh

perhatiannya pada Mesir. Sebagai bapak sastra, kali ini ia menaruh perhatian kepada sastra Arab populer, yakni syair jahili yang kemudian ia bukukan dan ia beri nama *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili* yang kemudian berganti nama menjadi *Fī al-Adāb al-Jāhili*. Dengan metode kualitatif serta penggalan data yang terkategori library reseach, penulis berusaha mengungkapkan bagaimana kajian Taha Husain terhadap sastra arab yang dimuat pada karyanya *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*. Penelitian ini membuahkan hasil bahwa syair jahili menurut Taha tidak lagi autentik, ia sudah disusupi beberapa kepentingan baik itu pribadi, fanatisme kesukuan, politik bahkan agama. Seandainya pun masih ada syair autentik maka itu hanya sedikit sekali. Ketidakautentikan ini membuat Taha menolak dan mengatakan bahwa syair yang tidak lagi autentik ini tidak bisa dijadikan alat untuk memahami al-Qura'n, justru harus sebaliknya, sebab al-Qur'an adalah satu-satunya sastra Arab yang original dan paling bisa diandalkan.

Kata Kunci : *Taha Husain, Skeptisisme, Syair Jāhili, Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*

Introduction

The specialness of the Arab nation in terms of language and literature has contributed to the spread and development of Islam. Philip K. Hitti says, "*The success of the spread of Islam is one of them is caused by the power of the Arabic language, especially again the language of the Qur'an.*" Language is a means of communication by using signs, be it words or gestures, so making messages will be difficult to convey without language. Arabic itself is the original language of the Qur'an¹. It has several stages of development according to civilization. As in the Qur'an, we know several locations ranging from squat (point sign) to harakat (shakal). Arabic Qur'an here is by the language that has been used before, namely Arabic before the entry of Islam.

Before the entry of Islam, the *Jāhili* at that time had characteristics of expressing their feelings in the form of poetry. They put the poetry as high as possible, and maybe even they almost consecrated it². The Prophet did not blame the existence of poetry and its companions. Even the Prophet and the companions tend to like it³.

Even today, poetry is considered relevant and readily accepted to convey da'wah points in Indonesia. Because the delivery of da'wah with writing to the people in Indonesia is less infused⁴ and they do not struggle with it, they are more receptive to

¹ Akhiril Pane, "Urgensi Bahasa Arab; Bahasa Arab Sebagai Alat Komunikasi Agama Islam," *Komunikologi: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Sosial* 2, no. 1 (2018):77-88, <https://doi.org/10.30829/komunikologi.v2i1.5452>.

² Moch. Yunus, "Sastra (Puisi) Sebagai Kebudayaan Bangsa Arab" *Humanistika : Jurnal Keislaman* 1, no. 1 (2015): 35-52.

³ The Prophet Muhammad's attitude toward poetry can be demonstrated by the fact that he occasionally paid poets, such as when he donated 30 dirhams to a poet. Ibnu Raṣīq al-Qirwānī, *Al-'Umdah Fī Mahāsin Al-Syi'Ri Wa Adābihi* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifat, n.d.).

⁴ Imam Ghozali Said, "Saluting the Prophet: Cultural and Artistic Expression in Javanese Society," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 12, no. 1 (2018): 103–34, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2018.12.1.103-134>.

da'wah methods with poetry containing praise, philosophy of life, and others. The continuity of poetry in Indonesia is experiencing rapid development, and we know the poetry lir-ilir with Javanese to Madura language poetry that begins and follows wazan sholawat for example, *maulid al-dibāṭ*, *simṭu al-durār*, and others.⁵

As the same language between the Qur'an and the poetry *jāhili*, poetry is often used to break down poetry meaning and the development of word meaning. In fact, among friends, Ibn 'Abbas often used poetry to find the word's meaning.

This relationship between poetry and the Qur'an has a specific position in the rules of the Qur'anic language. As Gracia said, the language side is among those who play a role in determining the meaning of the verse.⁶ 'Audah Abu'Audah says that literature has a role in finding the meaning of the word, the development of importance, the shift in purpose, and the variation of the word's meaning. Not only him, Quraish Shihab, and even the majority of scholars legalized the role of poetry in interpreting the Qur'an as once practiced by Ibn Abbas and other interpretive scholars. But, Ṭaha Husain, who has a literary background, also critiqued *jāhili* poetry⁷. All his doubts about the verse and his role in interpreting the Koran were so controversial at the birth of the work *Fī al-Shi'ri al-Jāhili*. Ṭaha's argument seems to want to boycott the role of poetry in the Qur'an that has been in effect so far.

Several researchers, including Ahmad Kamel Muhamed, are interested in discussing poetry and interpretations. In his view, poetry has a critical position in contributing to and dramatically influencing the performance of the Qur'an. Friends have used this poem in understanding the Qur'an⁸. Inayatus Sholihah wrote about the relationship between *Jāhili* verses and the interpretation of the Qur'an. According to him, the terms used in the Qur'an have a close relationship with ignorant poetry, and ignorant poetry has an important role in interpreting the terms of the Qur'an, such as revealing the original meaning, foreign meaning (*garīb*), shifting new meanings, and variations of meaning in the Qur'an⁹. Meanwhile, Muhammad Azza Nasrul Khobir tried to explain the opinion of Ṭaha Husain. He said that many pre-Islamic poems were incompatible with pre-Islamic Arabia or objectively described the pre-Islamic Arab

⁵ A.A Teuw, *Bahasa Indonesia : Antara Kelisanan Dan Keberaksaraan* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1994).

⁶ Abd Kholid et al., "Rereading the Indonesian Interpretation of the Qur'an on Awliya': The Cases of Hamka and m. Quraish Shihab," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2021): 37–72, <https://doi.org/10.21043/QIJS.V9I1.7567>.

⁷ Inayatus Sholihah, "Peran Sya'ir-Sya'ir Jahili Dalam Menafsirkan Al-Qur'an (Telaah Kitab Al-Tathawwur Al-Dalali Baina Lugah Al-Syi'ri Al-Jahili Wa Lugah Al-Qur'an Al-Karim)" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, 2013).

⁸ Ahmad Kamel Mohamed and Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff, "Penggunaan Syair Dalam Penghujahan Pentafsiran Al-Quran: Kajian Terhadap Kitab Al-Lubab Fi Ulum Al-Kitab Karangan Ibnu Adel Al-Hambali," *Ma'ālim Al-Qur'ān Wa Al-Sunnah* 13, no. 14 (2017): 44–61, <https://doi.org/10.33102/jmq.v13i14.97>.

⁹ Sholihah, "Peran Sya'ir-Sya'ir Jahili Dalam Menafsirkan Al-Qur'an (Telaah Kitab Al-Tathawwur Al-Dalali Baina Lugah Al-Syi'ri Al-Jahili Wa Lugah Al-Qur'an Al-Karim)."

society. So to get an objective about pre-Islamic Arab culture, one must refer to the Qur'an, which has been confirmed to be valid¹⁰.

The journey of the use of poetry in the world of interpretation as done by the companions of the Prophet, al-Ṭabari, and others is also supported by many scholarly arguments such as Ibn Rasyiq, Quraish Shihab, and others. What the author finds, of the few figures who support, only Ṭaha Husain can express a strong argument for his rejection of the use of poetry in interpretation.

Ṭaha Husain, who is an Egyptian-born figure, has a particular study of the poetry *jāhili*, the study was then collected into one in his work *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili* which was revised content and titled into *Fi al-Adab al-Jāhili*. Unlike other figures, Ṭaha Husain has certain stages before deciding on poetry's position in interpretation. He looks at the poetry *jāhili* through the glasses of Rene Descartes's¹¹ philosophical skepticism,¹² doubting the credibility of everyone, including himself, companions of the Prophet, *jāhili* poetry and his position in the rules of interpretation.

In addition to expressing Thaha's arguments for jahiliyyah poetry using the research library methodology, this study also aims to raise new ideas in the world of interpretation with a poetry approach. Therefore, the thought of Ṭaha Husain in his work is interesting to study because it contains his comments about the poetry *jāhili* which in this case impacts the validity of its use in interpretation.

Jāhili Poetry And Tafsir

Long before the emergence of Islam and the Qur'an, if it were about the history of Arabic literature, the beginning of its emergence would surely lead to the era of Jahiliyah known as al-Muallaqat in the form of a long qasidah. It cannot be determined precisely when the poetry in the Jahiliyah era took place. It appearance since thousands of years before Islam and the Qur'an emerged.¹³ According to some experts, the Jahiliyah poetry has declined since Islam's presence in Jahiliyah society. The Arabs have since begun to be widely committed to spreading Islam and jihad against Persia and Rum, so the culture of poetry as identity must be put aside.¹⁴ This continuous war

¹⁰ Mohammad Azza Nasrul Khobir, "Dilema Penggunaan Syi'ir Jahiliyyah Dalam Tafsir 'Kajian Atas Pemikiran Thaha Husein,'" *Al-Munir: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2020): 55–92, <https://doi.org/10.24239/al-munir.v2i02.64>.

¹¹ Rene Descartes' skepticism is well-known, as is his proverb "Cogito Ergo Sum (I think, therefore I am)." Rene Descartes maintained that in order to uncover the truth, one must first discard a belief in order to acquire actual belief. Ngismatul Choiriyah, "Rasionalisme Rene Descartes," *Anterior Jurnal* 13 No. 2 (n.d.): 237–43.

¹² Rene Descartes' method of thinking philosophical skepticism is a very radical method of thinking. In order to seek the truth, everything will be doubted even to the realm of self. A philosophical skepticist would doubt his own existence in order to seek the truth of his existence so that he fell to the conclusion that the state of himself thinking of his self-righteousness was proof of the truth of his existence, I thought, therefore I exist. (Read : Rene Descartes, *Diskursus Dan Metode*, trans. Ahmad Faridl Ma'ruf (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2012).

¹³ Shinta Fitria Utami Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam, Dzulkifli M, Ahmad Subiyadi, *Sejarah Sastra Arab Dari Berbagai Prespektif* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2015).

¹⁴ Sofyuddin Yusof, Mohd Faiz Hakimi Mat Idris, and Nik Murshidah Nik Din, "Kedudukan Syair Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Islam Dan Masyarakat Kontemporer* 2 (2009).

makes the relics of pre-Islamic Arabic history challenging to find in the Arab region and the Arabic language.¹⁵ This is different from that conveyed by Husayn Atwan, who said that since Islam emerged, Jahiliyah poetry has not experienced amorousness, even experiencing rapid development.¹⁶

M. Quraish Shihab said that the *jāhiliyah* had suitable intellectual property. They understand in the fields of astronomy, meteorology, history, medicine, and even the most famous are literature, including prose, poetry, and parables. So when we read the poetry, we find that The Arab community is not as severe as some researchers say; Arab society is in a phase of ignorance, cruelty, and persecution.¹⁷

Poetry has its proud side for the Jahiliah, as also expressed by Ibn Rasyiq;" As a form of happiness if a poet appears from one tribe, then another tribe will come to congratulate. Not quite there, they also prepare a festive party, the women gather to play the lute, and other adult men and women gather to talk¹⁸.

In pre-Islamic historical records, Arabic experienced various developments ranging from the economy and relations with the international scene even to the aspect of language. Ḥassan Zayyāt and al-Iskandarī argue that Arabic literary historians divided the development of literature into five periods¹⁹. First, *al-'Aṣr al-Jāhili*, period of jahiliah. This period began from two centuries before Islam was born until Islam was born, or also about 150 years. Second, *al-Ṣadr al-Islām* and the Umayyad Kingdom, this period began from the birth of Islam until the collapse of the Umayyad kingdom. Third, *al-'Aṣr al-Abbāsi*, this period started from the Abbāsiyah dynasty until the defeat of Baghdad at the hands of the Mongolians. Fourth, *al-'Aṣr al-Turki*, this period began from the collapse of Baghdad until the rise of the Arab nation in the modern century. Fifth, *al-'Aṣr al-Hadīṣ* (Modern era), the emergence of contemporary literature is characterized by a sense of Arab nationalism until now.

The Qur'an as a kalāmullah, as it is also explained that it is not poetry or poetry, is convinced that it has high literary value and uniqueness in its rhythm and rhythm. It was also recognized by the English scholar Marmaduke Pickthall, who argued, "The Qur'an has an incomparable symphony, so every note from it can move people to cry and rejoice²⁰.

Classical Arabic poetry has a specific position in interpretation. The interpretation usually uses tools for understanding poetry, also known as *lughāwī*.²¹ pattern interpretation. Diving into poetry in terms of language is also necessary to

¹⁵ Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Depok: Rajawali Pers, 2018).

¹⁶ Husayn Atwan, *Muqaddimah Al-Qasidah Al-Arabiyyah Fi Sadr Al-Islam* (Beiru: Dar al-Jil, 1987).

¹⁷ Quraish Shihab, *Membaca Sirah Nabi Muhammad Dalam Sorotan Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis-Hadis Shahih* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2011).

¹⁸ Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam, Dzul kifli M, Ahmad Subiyadi, *Sejarah Sastra Arab Dari Berbagai Prespektif*.

¹⁹ Wildana Wargadinata dan Laili Fitriani, *Sastra Arab Dan Listas Budaya* (Malang: UIN Malang Press, 2008).

²⁰ Rosihon Anwar dan Asep Muharom, *Ilmu Tafsir* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2015).

²¹ The interpretation of *lughāwī* is based on linguistic rules such as *uslūb-uslūb* and the rules of the Arabic language. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 2007).

achieve a perfect experience. Abu Hayyan mentioned that a mufassir at least needs to prepare several devices, including the science of lughah and Arabic grammar rules, both when not composed in sentences or after writing sentences²². Thus, understanding the laws of the Arabic language and poet is indispensable in understanding the Qur'anic verse²³.

The search for the meaning of the poetry with the rules of the initial language was first done by the Prophet as the first mufassir. Although it is incomplete and only interprets at the point asked by the companions for his confusion,²⁴ the Prophet once searched for meaning by looking for synonyms of his words. That interpretation has evolved to this day.

From among friends, it can be said that the first time who used poetry as a means of interpretation was Ibn Abbas. He is the friend who is most asked about the meaning and synonyms of the word and often solves the problem with the approach of classical poetry²⁵.

Such as Ibn Abbas's interpretation of QS. Al-A'rāf [7]: 33 in the word "الإثم", he interprets the lafadz with khamr /arak (intoxicating goods). This is based on ancient Arabic poetry:

شربت الإثم حتى ضل عقلي # وكذلك تذهب بالعقول²⁶

Based on Ibn Abbas's interpretation which often makes poetry a tool to understand the Qur'an, the forerunner of madrasah lughah began to appear. Ibn Abbas was the spreader of tafsir in the Mecca region, which is, around the first century of hijra, then continued by his students, including Said bin Jabir, Mujāhid bin Jabar, 'Ikrimah, Ṭaus bin Kaisan, and Aṭa' bin Abi Rabah until the 2nd century Hijri²⁷.

Biography of Ṭaha Husain

Ṭaha Husain was born on November 14, 1889, in an area called Izbat al-Kīlu. Biographically, this area is located in the city of Magaḡah, Egypt. Ṭaha has a simple family background. His father is an employee at one of the sugar factories. At the age of five, Ṭaha Husain suffered from an eye disease that caused him to be no longer able to see, but it did not have an impact on his challenging spirit to study.

In his first education, he lived in kuttāb (a basic-level institution at the time) to memorize the Qur'an. At this stage, Ṭaha Husain can live it even before he turns nine²⁸. At a relatively young age, Ṭaha Husain has even been nicknamed a sheikh by his parents. He read all the actions as an inducement strategy so that he would go to

²² Abu Hayyan al-Andalusy al-Gharnāṭy, *Al-Bahr Al-Muhīt Fī Al-Tafsīr* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1992).

²³ Muhammad Yusuf Ahmad Hashim, "Mura'atu Al-Nazir Fi Lughah Al-'Arabiyyah," *QIIS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2013): 107–22.

²⁴ Ahmad Hariyanto, "Tafsir Era Nabi Muhammad SAW," *Jurnal At-Tibyan* 1, no. 1 (2016):70-93.

²⁵ Musā'id Muslim Abdullah Ali Ja'far, *Athar Al-Tahawur Al-Fikrī Fī Al-Tafsīr* (Beirut: Muasasah al-Risālah, 1984).

²⁶ Ahmad Sahidah, *God, Man and Nature* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2018).

²⁷ Musā'id Muslim Abdullah Ali Ja'far, *Athar Al-Tahawur al-Fikrī Fī al-Tafsīr*, 77-86.

²⁸ Ṭaha Husain, *Al-Ayyām* (Kairo: Hindawī, 2014).

kuttab to memorize the Qur'an, not because he deserved to be called a *shaykh* at that time.²⁹ Until then, Ṭaha managed to learn the Qur'an at that time, and then his father said that he was entitled to be called a *shaykh*³⁰. The ideals of Ṭaha Husain also memorized the book of Nahwu Alfiah Ibn Malik, who is rich in Arabic literature. He also remembered Majmu' al-Mutun, according to the recommendation of his brother, who had first received education at al-Azhar.³¹ In addition, before his departure to al-Azhar, he was also recommended to memorize several other books, including *al-Jauharah*, *al-Kharīdah*, *al-Sirājiyah*, *al-Rahabiyyah* and *Lāmiyah al-Afāf*³².

In 1902, Ṭaha Husain then left with his brother to al-Azhar to continue his education. This step he chose at the request of his father and mother so that he would become an 'alim. Initially, at Azhar, Ṭaha Husain studied the fiqh discipline "Ibn 'Abidin 'ala al-Duur" and nahwu. The following year, Ṭaha increased his academic busyness by studying at several other mosques in Azhar³³. Furthermore, Ṭaha Husain began to show his disappointment with the learning system at al-Azhar, which was too classical, to the point that he was expelled from one of the ḥalaqah due to excessive critical attitude. Ṭaha Husain also learned about modern thought from Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) twice a week in 'Ain Sham. Ṭaha's familiarity with two figures who often counter with Azhar resulted in him being disliked by al-Azhar.

Moreover, his familiarity when he studied literature with Shaykh AI-Marsyafi (d. 1931 AD). The problem has grown since he criticized al-Azhar's society too critically, resulting in his failure to take the final test of scholarship in 1968³⁴. Then he transferred to Cairo University, where he found a learning system that matched his heart. He then completed his studies at Cairo University in 1914 by defending his dissertation under the title "Dzikra Abi al-A'la" and obtaining the cumlaude predicate (*jayyid jiddan*)³⁵.

As a student, he could be said to be quite productive. He often wrote articles and then loaded in several magazines, one of which was al-Jaridah magazine, where he met Luthfi al-Sayyid, a founder and editor at the magazine. In Luthfi, he asked that he get a scholarship to be able to study in France. The application faltered and was only realized after 1915. There he had the army's ability to Durkheim, the great teacher he praised. Ṭaha also had the opportunity to study with Lanson and Levy Bruhl. Durkheim died in 1919 before Ṭaha Husain completed his dissertation discussing Ibn Khaldun's philosophy³⁶. A thesis entitled "La Loi de lese majeste sous Tibere d'Apres

²⁹ Husain., Jilid 1, 32.

³⁰ Husain., Jilid 1, 37.

³¹ Husain., Jilid 1, 49

³² Husain., Jilid 3, 10.

³³ Husain., Jilid 3, 141.

³⁴ Sugeng Sugiono, *Ṭaha Husain Pandangan Dan Teorinya Tentang Puisi Jahiliyyah* (Yogyakarta: Perpustakaan UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2008), 2.

³⁵ J Hatta, "Thoha Husain Dan Reformasi Pendidikan Islam : Suatu Upaya Interpretasi Kontekstual Atas," n.d., 167–80.

³⁶ Sugeng Sugiono, *Ṭaha Husain Pandangan Dan Teorinya Tentang Puisi Jahiliyyah*, 2.

Tacite" also earned him the diplome Superieur award in Classical, Latin and Greek History at the University of Sorbonne.

Upon returning to Egypt around 1921, he has appointed Professor at Cairo University for Roman and Ancient Greek History. He was also appointed Dean of the Faculty of Letters around 1928. Still, he only served for one day due to protests of disapproval of his appointment from the Wafd Education ministry. After that, in 1930, he was again appointed Dean of the same Faculty, but under the dictatorship of Ismail Sidiq, dragging him into conflict with the Ministry of Education. Not long after that, he retired again³⁷.

Ṭaha Husain later resigned from the Liberal Party to join the Wafd Party. He also purchased a license for the Wafd newspaper, where his writings were widely published. When the wafd party's power returned around 1942, ṬahaHusain took on the role of Advisor to the Ministry of Education there. Ṭahawas also appointed Rector at the newly established University of Alexandria. After the wafd party's victory in the last 1949 elections, Ṭaha Husain was appointed Minister of Education in January 1950. This position lasted only 2 years, because in 1952, the King dissolved the cabinet³⁸. After that, Ṭaha's career dimmed along with the receding role of the Wafd Party in Egyptian politics.

In 1952 Ṭaha Husain received a government award in the field of literature for his services to Ṭaha who was active in the academic area. His role was quite brilliant for the development of Arabic Literature. Thus he became the first person in Egypt to receive such an award. Although the writings of Ṭaha Husain at that time were still a point of concern and continued to be published, the flow of his report was not as equal as before. Ṭaha Husain married a French woman he had known since the beginning of his arrival, and he passed away on October 28, 1973, in Cairo³⁹.

The idea of secularization offered by Ṭaha Husain at the time in Egypt was horrendous and made many responses. The offer elicited much reaction from Egyptian scholars, especially the *Masyayikh* and traditionalist reformers⁴⁰. This idea of secularization even spread throughout the Islamic State, including Indonesia. Regarding Ṭaha Husain's thoughts, there are many pros and cons. In Indonesia, among those who are pro-minded are Nurkholis Majid, Harun Nasution and M. Dawan Raharjo⁴¹. According to Nurkholis Majid, secularization is not the same as secularism. Secularization is a recognition of science and its application in guiding worldly life, while secularism is a sophisticated understanding that almost all religions oppose. Secularization does not conclude with indoctrinating toward secularism, let alone

³⁷ Muhammad Azza Nazrul Khobir, "Dilema Penggunaan Syi'ir Jahiliyah Dalam Tafsir: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Ṭaha Huscin," *Al-Munir* 2, no. 2 (2020).

³⁸ Khobir.

³⁹ Sugeng Sugiono, *Taha Husain Pandangan Dan Teorinya Tentang Puisi Jahiliyyah*, 3.

⁴⁰ Barsihannor Annur, "Pemikiran Taha Husain," *Jurnal Al-Hikmah* 15, no. 1 (2014): 199.

⁴¹ Ibid.

turning Muslims into secularists, but with globalizing things that should be worldly-oriented and letting go of the tendency of Muslims to overthrow it⁴².

In spreading his thoughts, Ṭaha often wrote articles in several newspapers about the idea of secularization, and also sometimes in the form of books through educational institutions when he served as minister of education. The fruit of his work was then formed intact under the name *Mustaqbal al-Ṣaḡafah fi al-Miṣr* (Future Egyptian civilization). Although it contains some criticism of the state and even reaps conflicts, this is a form of Ṭaha's love for Egypt. He wants the development of education in Egypt to increase.

According to Ṭaha Husain, Egypt and Europe have one intellectual heritage. For him, civilization is divided into western culture and eastern society. Geographically, Egypt is not classified as the Eastern part. It should stop going to the East.⁴³ According to him, turning to the past causes the power of Islam not to increase but should strive aggressively for the concept of liberal and secular reforms oriented to the West. Therefore, the future of Egypt will not be seen except by returning to Ancient or Classical Egypt, but still, have to take lessons from European civilization. Egypt even had to be European in some way, in terms of being liked and hated, in terms of being hated and praised and bitter. It was very easy for Egypt because western civilization did not depend on Christianity, even regardless of those attributes⁴⁴.

For Ṭaha Husain, education is like water and air. If everything is lost, then life is extinct. Ṭaha Husain saw education in Egypt as very backward, even far from the West. However, Egypt not only needs the development of education to advance but also the arrangement of a political system that will support the advancement of education.⁴⁵

Ṭaha Husain is one of the figures who are quite productive in writing, either in short essays published in various magazines or the form of books. Some popular works of Ṭaha Husain is *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*. This book is a collection of his lectures. This book contains multiple criticisms about Jahiliyah's poetry that are no longer authentic. In the book, he says that some of the poetry felt at that time, even today, has been falsified by several factors: personal interests, religious fanaticism, national fanaticism, political interests, or just *qiṣah* (fantasy)⁴⁶.

In the book Ṭaha Husain poured a lot of personal criticism about the poetry jahiliyyah, he who has the ability in the field of literature is not reluctant to criticize all-out. The originality of the jahiliyyah poetry cannot be used as a reference to express

⁴² Nurkholis Majid, *Islam Kemoderenan Dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1994).

⁴³ What is meant by west and east is circacturally, not geographically imperfectual. John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, *Islam and Transition ; Muslim Perspectives Diterjemahkan Oleh Machnun Husain Dengan Judul Islam Dan Pembaharuan*, trans. Machnun Husain (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 1994).

⁴⁴ John J. Donohue dan John L. Esposito, 120.

⁴⁵ Annur, "Pemikiran Taha Husain.", 120-121.

⁴⁶ Khobir, "Dilema Penggunaan Syi'ir Jahiliyah Dalam Tafsir: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Ṭaha Husein.", 69-73

how the state of jahiliyyah,⁴⁷ both in terms of theology, economy, and politics, has all changed. To read their habits, seeing the Qur'an was the best solution for him. Ṭaha also compared the political conditions expressed by the jahiliyyah poetry with the Qur'an, as well as about their economy and daily life.

Because of this book, Ṭaha drew a lot of criticism, the book *Fī al-Shi'ri al-Jāhili* that has been spread is asked to be dismissed publication and is already on the market to be withdrawn. Therefore, Ṭaha again wrote a revision of the book under a different name, *Fī al-Adab al-Jāhili*, while removing some sensitive discussions.

Although the book *Fī al-Shi'ri al-Jāhili* withdrawn from pasaran because it reaped many conflicts, several figures, including Samah Kurayyim, still discuss this book, he commented on the original writings of Ṭaha Husain and then widely spread among academics, even those who are also authors hold. The book written by Samah Kurayyim has many pages, about 300 pages. Still, it lists the text of the book of *Fī al-Shi'ri al-Jāhili* originally from Ṭaha Husain in the backyard.

Ṭaha Husain's Thoughts On Jahiliyah Poetry

Regarding Jahiliyah Poetry, Ṭaha claimed that previously, no one had time to criticize Jahiliyah Poetry. Ṭaha Husain tried to apply the theories of literary criticism in assessing the poetry of jahiliyyah, thus raising suspicions about the poetry of jahiliyyah. He was the first.

In his work, Ṭaha said that he does not claim that he is an Ulama and does not like to riot, but he only wants to think, ponder and discuss some exciting things to convey to the general public⁴⁸. So far, he strongly suspects that the poetry of jahili so far is not from the jahiliyyah. It is the creation of a people after the emergence of Islam. The poetry of Jahili gives rise to more Islam than the identity of the Jahiliyahs. According to him, what is based on famous poets of the jahiliyyah period, such as 'Umru al-Qais, Antarah, Umkulsum, and Ṭarafah is made by mufassir, kalam experts, and hadiṣ experts who are then leaned on them. What made him most convinced of the allegations was that the Arab civilization presented by the poetry jāhili in no way reflected the political conditions at that time. It makes jahili poetry cannot be the primary reference to their lives⁴⁹

Indicators of Ṭaha Husain's Doubt Against *Jāhili*

Counter-narrative between the depiction of jahiliyyah poetry and the Qur'an about the jahiliyyah Arab society.

The Qur'an is a book that has just appeared in Arab society after the time of Jahiliyah. The Qur'an also brings the concept of renewal regarding discussion, language style, how to convey da'wah, and carrying religious decrees and new rules. The Qur'an

⁴⁷ Ṭaha Husain, *Fī Al-Syi'rī Al-Jāhili*, *Komentor Syaikh Samah Kurayyim* (Mesir: Dar al-Mishriyah al-Bananiyah, n.d.).

⁴⁸ Husain, *Fī al-Syi'rī al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim.*, 207.

⁴⁹ Husain. 208.

mentions some rejection of pagan Jews, naṣrani, Ṣabi'un, and Majūsī.⁵⁰ The Qur'an does not offend the Jews in Palestine, the Christians in Rūm, the Magi in Persia, and others, it only discusses specifics in the Arab areas, but we can certainly understand that the discussions conveyed by the Qur'an include the whole. We know who the Christians, Jews, Magi, and Sabiun are when he is mentioned⁵¹. This indicates that the depravity of the theology of the ignorant does exist. When we read the Poetry of Jahiliyah, we will not find it. The irregularities we see in the Poetry of Jahiliyah reveal they are innocent. The Qur'an mentions that they often engaged in wars with the Prophet, debate, and oppression.

The Incompatibility of Language and Lahjah

Ṭaha invites us to see how the development of Arabic has two parts. First: Qaḥṭaniyah, initially used in Yemen; second, 'Adnaniyah, originally used in the Hijāz region.⁵² These two languages have differences, as well as between them and Arabic fuṣṣah. But after being traced back, some irregularities that Ṭaha thinks are difficult to compromise. The Jahiliyah poetry should use both languages, Qahtaniyah and 'Adnaniyah. It uses a vocabulary that is almost no different from the language of the Qur'an.⁵³ The language of the jahiliyyah is not so. Or it was geographically located using the Qahtaniyah language, practically similar to the language of 'Adnaniyah, and vice versa.

In addition to language, evidence of the infatuation with jahili poetry is also caused by the misalignment of *lahjah* (dialectics). In addition to the people of 'Adnaniyah and Qaḥṭaniyah differ in language, they also differ in dialectics because of the difference in qabilah, especially the difference in language will also have an impact on *lahjah*.⁵⁴ Evidence of the inattention to the poetry of Jahiliyah is also indicated by the dialect (*lahjah*) it uses. According to the narration of Jahiliyah poetry, Adnan Arabic before the presence of Islam was not one type but different. So is the lahjah because they consist and several *Qabilah*. The difference between *Qabilah* certainly affects the language and its *lahjah*.

This adds to Ṭaha Husain's suspicion of the authenticity of Jahiliyah Poetry and dares to claim that the poetry appeared after the emergence of Islam, not in the time of Jahiliyah.

Ṭaha Husain also said that poetry propped up to 'Umru al-Qais, Antarah, Um al-Kulsum, and Ṭarafah have the potential for counterfeiting if you want to see how the past life before the arrival of Islam, namely in the time of Jahiliyah, at least look at the poetry brought by Farazdaq (728 AD), Jarir (729 AD), Dzi Rummah (735 AD), al-Akḥṭal (710 AD) and al-Ra'iy (708 AD).

⁵⁰ Ṭaha Husain, *Fī Al-Adāb Al-Jāhili* (Kairo: Percetakan Fārūq, n.d.).

⁵¹ Husain, *Fī al-Syi'r al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim.*, 217

⁵² Husain., 224. Compare with ; Husain, *Fī Al-Adāb al-Jāhili.*, 92.

⁵³ Husain, *Fī al-Syi'r al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim.*, 229.

⁵⁴ Aksin Wijaya, "Menggugat Otentisitas Syi'ir Jahiliyah," *'ANIL ISLAM; Jurnal Kebudayaan Dan Ilmu Keislaman* 3 (2010).

Factors that cause forgery of *jāhili* poetry

As known, the poetry in the jahiliyyah time has an important position. The intellectual benchmark of a person at that time can be assessed by the extent to which he could compose the poetry beautifully⁵⁵. Therefore, it cannot be blamed when Ṭaha Husain suspects that counterfeiting of *jāhili* several interests, including cause poetry

Political Interests

Since long ago, Arabs have been accustomed to following what people did in the previous era. In the last period, the scope of their continuity was not far between religion and politics.⁵⁶ It isn't easy to understand history when they do not understand their political and religious circumstances in detail.

When Islam came, everyone wanted to raise their Islam degree. At the same time, sometimes they must be more ambitious. Thus, their movement is difficult to escape from a religious background and politics⁵⁷.

The first jihad can be called a communicative war between the Prophet and the Companions against the Quraysh heathen and their allies. The debate was purely about using the Qur'an until the Prophet, and the companions decided to emigrate to Medina. From this movement rises a problem between the Prophet and the Quraysh. After the previous religious issues, then after that, the political situation was difficult to be solved. After the Prophet moved to Medina, the Quraysh became inferior because they saw the political power of the Prophet's group getting stronger then.⁵⁸ They feel the trade routes will be blocked. This caused the big battle, the Battle of Badr, which continued to the Battle of Uhud⁵⁹. After the Muslims could conquer Mecca city at that time, Umar forbade the narration of poetry because it would arouse resentment.⁶⁰

Ibn Salam argued that the narration of the poem in the jahiliyyah time was very little, but after Islamic times, the writing of the poetry more and more, I am sure that the report was aimed at satirizing the Anṣar.⁶¹

Religious Interests

This factor is almost similar to the political interests above. Ṭaha thought that this factor occurred not only in the *Khulafā' al-Rāsyīdīn* era but even in the *Umayyad* era. However, Ṭaha Husain reviewed again that the means of religious interests included when the Muslims wanted to prove the validity of the Prophet and the truth

⁵⁵ Aziz Anwar Fachrudin, *Pengantar Sejarah Dan Madzhab Linguistik Arab* (Sidoarjo: Lisan Arabi, 2017), 38.

⁵⁶ Husain, *Fī al-Syi'ir al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim.*, 117

⁵⁷ Husain., 246.

⁵⁸ Husain., 250.

⁵⁹ Husain., *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Husain., 254.

⁶¹ Husain., 254.

of his treatise. It can be obtained from some news and *sāṭir* (legend) to propagandize everyone that Arab scholars and priests and Jewish rabbis and Christian monks are waiting for an Arab Prophet to be raised from the Quraysh of Mecca⁶².

Counterfeiting poetry also occurs when explaining the majesty of the Prophet Muhammad. Ibn Hisham's and other works about Arabic history cite this a lot. Even Ṭaha mentioned that the Jahiliyah meant were not people who were human beings but jinns. From this, we can conclude that the poetry or additional legitimacy propped up on the People of the Jahiliyah era is not from them.

Another counterfeiting of poetry is when the storyteller finds a Qur'anic verse that explains the previous story and the story of the *'Ad* and the *Thamūd*. Ibn Salam has enough to give his criticism and analysis that the poetry jāhili which is propped up on the Tubba' and Himyars, is counterfeit and inauthentic⁶³.

The most crucial thing in this religion is one, that is, an agreement to believe that the Language of the Qur'an is Arabic. For that, we do not need to quote only poetry to prove that it uses Arabic as the narrators and the Mufassir said,⁶⁴ As also Abdullah ibn 'Abbas and Nafi' Ibn al-Azraq did. Most importantly, we are convinced and believe that there is one Arabic text which is absolute. Undoubtedly, an argument is the most reliable Arabic document, namely the Qur'an. From this, we should also reverse the usual thing that happens – interpreting the Qur'an with poetry – namely straightening the jahiliyyah poetry with the Qur'an⁶⁵.

The in-authentication of jahiliyyah poetry can begin from these two factors – politics and religion – but other factors envelop.

Tribal fanaticism

Since the defeat of the Persian State, their captives who were in the Arab territories then "Arabized" themselves by learning Arabic. It went on a long time even until they had descendents. The blood of nationalism was more proven evident after they also spoke Arabic and native Arabs. But they still did not accept as part of them until they could compose Arabic poetry and become Arab allies in the formation of political poetry.⁶⁶ The greatness of the Persians is revealed in ancient poetry that is widely falsified because of tribal fanaticism.⁶⁷

Qiṣṣah (Story)

Discussions of Muslims are common in mosques in various regions. They often mention ancient Arabic and non-Arabic terms and something related to nubuwwah. They sometimes drag on to interpret the Qur'an and Hadīṣ, historical narration,

⁶² Husain., 259.

⁶³ Husain., 276.

⁶⁴ Husain., 277.

⁶⁵ Husain

⁶⁶ Husain, *Fī al-Syi'rī al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim.*, 308.

⁶⁷ Husain, 307-317.

battles, and adventures, till they imagine as high as possible, even sometimes without scientific reason and truth. Those who listen to this story are used to being fascinated.

How ambushed the Caliphs and leaders realized that it was easy to influence in politics and religion term, so they made it up, controlled, and exploited it widely, and the usual device used was poetry.⁶⁸

The personal interest of narrators of poetry

In addition to counterfeiting with factors of religious and political interests, there are also individual factors, namely the interests of narrators. Thus, there are two possibilities, whether he is indeed an Arab or a person who the Arabs have influenced. Here, many of them pride themselves on using poetry.

Among them that Ṭaha mentioned was Hammād, a leader of the Kuffah people in narration and memorization, as well as al-Ahṡar, a Baṡrah leader in narration and memorization. These two men are too much when defining themselves, lacking of religious quality, morals, or politeness, and lacking dignity. The two men are also drunker, unscrupulous, and reckless⁶⁹.

If conclusions are drawn about Ṭaha Husain's thoughts on jahiliyyah poetry, the author's conclusion is; The presentation of the Qur'an sometimes includes about pre-Islamic Arabic history, and one of the reliable and surviving sources of history is the poetry of their people. But because of skepticism, Ṭaha Husain expressed the in-authentication of the jahiliyyah poetry. He also refused if the jahiliyyah poetry should be used as a reference or device to interpret the Qur'an. The images of the jahiliyyah condition that the Qur'an has revealed are not what has been expressed by the jahiliyyah poetry. Ṭaha Husain's conclusion about all is; to look at the jahiliyyah condition with Arabic texts whose authenticity has absolutely no doubt, namely the Qur'an⁷⁰.

Ṭaha adds; do not let our inconsistency towards the field of science make us swallow all in raw. Sometimes we read about history, language, and interpretation so that when we need something will arbitrarily extend his hand without suspicion, considering the Qur'anic poetry or speech of the pre-Islamic people to be true without any mistakes⁷¹.

Conclusion

The skepticism reason of Ṭaha Husain towards the jahiliyyah poetry makes the end of his research on the assessment that the jahiliyyah poetry is no longer authentic. Many interests infiltrated the jahiliyyah poem, which led to the change of the original text. It seems a pity when the jahiliyyah poetry should have a role in interpreting the

⁶⁸ Husain., 292

⁶⁹ Husain., 319.

⁷⁰ Aksin Wijaya, "Kritik Nalar Tafsir Syi'ri," *Jurnal Millah* 10, no. 1 (2010): 20.

⁷¹ Ṭaha Husain, *Fī al-Syi'ri al-Jāhili*, *Remarks Syaikh Samah Kurayyim*, 278.

Qur'anic poetry because the two sometimes intersect in depicting the condition of ancient Arabia.

Taha's criticisms and research results are different and boycott the concept of interpretive figures so far, for example, Ibn Abbas and other mufassir. They often use the verse to interpret the text of poetry, as once described by 'Audah Abu 'Audah in his work.

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