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A Critical Study of al-Baidhāwī's Exegetical Sources: Surah al-Baqarah: 30–32

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Abstract. Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī is widely regarded by scholars as one of the most significant forms of *ahammu al-tafsīr bi al-ra'y* (the most prominent interpretation based on rational inquiry). This assertion appears to contrast with al-Bayḍāwī's own acknowledgment in the preface of his work, where he mentions referencing various authoritative sources from the *ṣaḥābah* (Companions) and *al-ṣāliḥūn* (the righteous predecessors). Against this backdrop, this study aims to critically examine the interpretative sources employed by al-Bayḍāwī in his commentary on QS. al-Baqarah: 30–32. The focus of the study is directed toward several key questions: What types of interpretative sources does al-Bayḍāwī utilize? How stark is the compositional contrast between *āthār* (traditions) and *ra'y* (reason) in *Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī*? Furthermore, how accurate is the application of these interpretative sources? The methodology employed in this study is the critique of interpretative sources (*naqd manābi' al-tafsīr*), referencing the approach proposed by 'Abd al-Salām bin Ṣāliḥ bin Sulaimān in his work, *Naqd al-Ṣaḥābah wa al-Tābi'īn li al-Tafsīr*. The findings indicate that al-Bayḍāwī utilizes a diverse range of interpretative sources, with a predominance of linguistic approaches (*tafsīr lughawī*). More specifically, it was found that in the interpretation of QS. al-Baqarah: 30–32, al-Bayḍāwī employs nine expressions derived from *āthār* and nine others from *ra'y*. These findings confirm that the designation of *Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī* as *ahammu al-tafsīr bi al-ra'y* is not merely an assumption but is academically demonstrable. Although some references are considered less *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) or less relevant when evaluated against the *riwāyah* (tradition-based) approach practiced by the Prophet and the *ṣaḥābah*, al-Bayḍāwī generally demonstrates a proportional integration between *āthār* and *ra'y* in his exegetical construction.
Keywords: *Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī*, Interpretative Sources, Exegetical Criticism.

Abstrak. *Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī secara luas dinilai oleh para ulama sebagai salah satu bentuk ahammu al-tafsīr bi al-ra'y (tafsir ra'yi yang paling penting). Pernyataan ini tampak kontras dengan pengakuan al-Bayḍāwī sendiri di awal karyanya, di mana ia menyebutkan telah merujuk pada berbagai sumber otoritatif dari kalangan para ṣaḥābah dan al-ṣāliḥūn. Berdasarkan latar inilah, Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara kritis sumber-sumber penafsiran yang digunakan al-Baidhāwī dalam menafsirkan QS. al-Baqarah: 30–32. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada Bagaimana jenis sumber Penafsiran yang digunakan Al-Baidhawi?, Seberapa kontras komposisi antara atsar dan ra'y dalam tafsir Al-baidhawy?, serta bagaimana ketepatan penggunaan sumber-sumber tafsir ini?. Metodologi yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah kritik sumber tafsir (naqd manābi' al-tafsīr), dengan merujuk pada pendekatan yang ditawarkan oleh 'Abd al-Salām bin Ṣāliḥ bin Sulaimān dalam karyanya Naqd al-Ṣaḥābah wa al-Tābi'īn li al-Tafsīr. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa al-Bayḍāwī memanfaatkan ragam sumber tafsir, dengan dominasi pendekatan kebahasaan (tafsīr lughawī). Secara lebih spesifik, ditemukan bahwa dalam penafsiran terhadap QS. al-Baqarah: 30–32, al-Bayḍāwī menggunakan sembilan ungkapan yang bersumber dari āṯār (riwayat) dan sembilan lainnya dari ra'y (nalar independen). Temuan ini mengonfirmasi bahwa penyematan gelar ahammu al-tafsīr bi al-ra'y pada Tafsir al-Bayḍāwī bukanlah asumsi belaka, melainkan dapat dibuktikan secara akademik. Meski terdapat sebagian rujukan yang dinilai kurang ṣaḥīḥ atau kurang relevan apabila dikembalikan pada pendekatan tafsir*

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riwāyah sebagaimana praktik Nabi dan para ṣaḥābah, namun secara umum al-Bayḍāwī menunjukkan integrasi yang proporsional antara aṯār dan ra'y dalam konstruksi tafsirnya.
Kata kunci: *Tafsir al-Baidhawi, Sumber Penafsiran, Kritik Tafsir*

INTRODUCTION

The study of Qur'anic exegesis is an academic field that has continued to evolve from the time of revelation to the present day. This evolution is marked not only by the emergence of a wide variety of exegetical works, but also by differences in the approaches, methods, and ideological tendencies of exegetes. This dynamic enriches the body of Qur'anic studies while simultaneously demanding academic rigor to ensure that interpretations remain within scientifically accountable boundaries. A number of recent studies affirm that the development of exegesis cannot be separated from the intellectual, social, and theological contexts of the exegetes, which influence the construction of their interpretations (Ahady, 2025)

One of the key issues in the study of exegesis is the use of raʾy in understanding the verses of the Qur'an. Exegesis based on raʾy has long been a subject of debate among scholars, because while it is necessary for explaining the linguistic and rational aspects of the verses, it also has the potential to lead to problematic interpretations if not guided by authentic sources of tradition. Therefore, exegetical criticism serves as a vital tool within the Islamic scholarly tradition for evaluating interpretive tendencies and ensuring their alignment with authoritative sources (Wathani, 2018).

In this context, Imam al-Baidhāwī's exegesis Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Taʾwīl occupies a highly strategic position. This exegesis is widely recognized as one of the monumental works in the classical exegetical tradition and is frequently cited as a reference, both in the Islamic world and in the West. Several studies indicate that the popularity of al-Baidhāwī's exegesis is due not only to the conciseness of its presentation but also to the strength of the linguistic, legal, and theological analysis it contains (al-Baidhāwī, 1424; Jamarudin, 2011). This is why al-Baidhāwī's commentary is often referred to as the "master work" that synthesizes various earlier interpretive traditions.

Al-Baidhāwī is often regarded as an exegete who combines the methods of tafsir bi al-ma'ṡūr and tafsir bi al-raʾy. A number of recent studies confirm that al-Baidhāwī's exegetical method is analytical (taḥlīlī), dominated by a linguistic approach, while also being influenced by the theological framework of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, particularly the Ash'arī school (Ahady, 2025). However, at the same time, some scholars have also noted al-Baidhāwī's influence on the thought of earlier exegetes, particularly al-Zamakhsyarī, who, in certain verses, opened the door to ideological and methodological debates (Wathani, 2018).

The verses recounting the story of Prophet Adam in Surah al-Baqarah: 30–32 were selected as the focus of this study because they contain strong theological and epistemological dimensions and provide fertile ground for rational and linguistic interpretation. Interpretations of these verses often involve discourse on knowledge, God's will, and humanity's position as vicegerents on earth, thereby allowing for diverse uses of interpretive sources. Therefore, these verses are relevant for critically examining the composition and quality of the interpretive sources used by al-Baidhāwī.

To the best of the author's knowledge, studies on al-Baidhāwī's exegesis generally focus on general methodological aspects, theological characteristics, or the influence of specific ideologies in his exegesis. Studies on the theological and ideological nuances of al-Baidhāwī have been conducted quite extensively (Ahady, 2025; Wathani, 2018), Similarly, research that positions al-Baidhāwī's exegesis as a representative example of exegesis based on personal opinion (tafsir bi al-raʾy) in the post-Tābiʿīn period (Jamarudin, 2011). However, research that specifically and systematically examines al-Baidhāwī's sources of interpretation for specific verses remains relatively limited.

Meanwhile, an academic named Aditya Faruq Alfurqan from Ar-Raniry State Islamic University in Banda Aceh and his colleague Maizuddin have written an article titled "The Interpretation of Surah al-Dhuha According to al-Baidhawi and Bintu al-Syathi'," in which they discuss a comparison of the interpretations by Al-Baidhawi and Bintu al-Syathi' regarding Surah Ad-Dhuha : 9.(Alfurqan & Maizuddin, 2020)

This is in contrast to the article titled "A Theological Analysis of Ahl al-Sunnah on Quranic Surah Al-Anbiya: 22 According to Imam al-Baidhawi in the Tafsir Anwar al-Tanzil." The authors, Rheina Fattah Nadenggan and colleagues, found that research indicates the existence of more than one deity would lead to chaos in the order of the universe, in accordance with the Ahlusunnah principle of Tawhid al-Rububiyyah. Al-Baidhawi's exegesis also reflects the rational and textual approach characteristic of Ahlusunnah scholars in preserving the purity of creed from the influence of external thought, such as Greek philosophy and the theology of non-Sunni groups. This study is expected to enrich the discourse on classical Islamic theology and demonstrate the relevance of classical exegesis in responding to the challenges of contemporary thought. (Nadenggan dkk., 2025)

The study of Al-Baidhawi's exegesis is further enriched by a doctoral student at PTIQ Jakarta named Imanuddin, who focused his dissertation on the topic "As-Suyuti's Critique of Al-Zamakhshari's Epistemology of Exegesis in Al-Baidhawi's Hasyiyah." This dissertation generally supports as-Suyuthi's perspective in critiquing al-Zamakhsyari's exegetical epistemology across the fields of creed, exegesis, and the sciences of the Qur'an, hadith, language, and recitation—all grounded in textual evidence (the Qur'an and hadith) as well as rational evidence (logic and rational reasoning)— unlike al-Baidhawi, whose book still retains Mu'tazili views regarding the epistemology of al-Zamakhsyari's exegesis. (Imanuddin, 2026)

Based on this research gap, this article aims to critically examine the sources of exegesis used by al-Baidhāwī in interpreting Quranic Surah al-Baqarah: 30–32. The focus of the study is directed toward the following questions: What types of interpretive sources did al-Baidhawi use? How contrasting is the composition between atsar and raʾy? And how appropriate is the use of these interpretive sources?.

The method used in this study is the critique of exegetical sources (naqd al-masādir) proposed by 'Abdus-salam Shalih bin Sulaiman in his work *Naqd as-shahabah wa at-tabi'in li al-tafsir*, following these steps: 1. Presenting and reading the primary sources, 2. Understanding and relating the readings to one another, 3. Categorizing Al-Baidhawi's exegetical manuscripts according to their types, 4. Tracing the sources of interpretation, 5. Providing commentary, and 6. Explaining the rationale behind the commentary. The primary data sources used are the exegesis *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil* by Imam al-Baidhawi,

as well as the exegeses he referenced and those that cite him. In addition to *Naqd al-Shahabah wa al-Tabi'in li al-Tafsir*, the author also utilizes critical tools from various sources, such as the works of Dr. Muhammad Abdul Mun'im and Muhammad 'Ali Iyazi. The data collection methods used are as follows: 1. Beginning with a search for studies in the field of Al-Baidhawy's exegesis and related topics, starting with the most recent publications and then working backward through earlier editions, 2. Reading the abstract or summary of a report first to determine whether the research is relevant to the research problem or not, 3. Before taking notes, first quickly skim the report to identify the sections relevant to the research problem, 4. Taking notes directly on the page.(Soelistyarini, 2013). With this approach, the study is expected to strengthen the tradition of exegetical criticism and make an academic contribution to the mapping of classical exegetical methodologies, particularly in assessing the position of al-Baidhāwī's exegesis within the spectrum of exegesis based on reason (tafsir bi al-raʾy).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Types of Exegetical Sources Used by Al-Baidhawi

Based on the author's research, Al-Baidhawi employed a combination of Ma'tsur and Ra'yu sources. This is evident in his introduction, which reads as follows:

أصنف هذا الفن كتابا يحتوي على صفوة مما بلغني من عظماء الصحابة و علماء التابعين و من دونهم من السلف الصالحين و ينطوي على نكات بارعة و لطائف رائعة استنبطتها أنا و من قبلي من أفاضل الدتأخرين و أماثل المحققين و يعرب عن وجوه القرآءآة الدشهورة و الشواذ الدروية عن القرآء المعتبرين

"*I wrote this book (Tafsir) containing the essence of the narrations that have reached me from the leading Companions and the scholars of the Tabi'in as well as the Salafusshalih, involving enlightening reports and noble passages, which I have selected and sifted through, as did the scholars who preceded me from among the best of later scholars and some Muhaqqiqin. This (Tafsir) is explained based on the perspectives of the well-known (Masyhur) and rare (Syaz) readings from among the esteemed scholars of recitation . "*(Al-Baidhawy, 1424)

On the other hand, prominent scholars have commented that the source of interpretation he used in interpreting the verse was Ra'yu. Muhammad Abdurrahman Al-Mursya'ili, the editor of Al-Baidhawi's tafsir, states that this tafsir is أهم كتب التفسير. (Al-Baidhawy, 1424). In addition, there is also the opinion of Al-Zahabi, who states that Al-Baidhawi's exegesis is أهم كتب التفسير بالرأي المحمود (Muhammad, t.t.). In writing his work, Al-Baidhawi is also known to have used Fakhruddin Al-Razi's exegesis—which is also known for its reliance on reason—as his primary reference. Given this fact, it can be assumed that Al-Baidhawi's exegesis is a combination of sources based on both transmitted texts (bi al-ma'tsur) and reason (bi al-ra'yi).

The Composition of Atsar and Ra'yu

Before delving further into the composition of Atsar and Ra'yu in Al-Baidhawi's Tafsir, the author first presents the verses that form the focus of this study, QS. Al-baqarah 30-32:

وَإِذ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِل فِي ٱلأَرضِ خَلِيفَةٗۖ قَالُوٓاْ أَتَجعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَۖ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أَعلَمُ مَا لَا تَعلَمُونَ٣٠ وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلأَسمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُم عَلَى ٱلمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنۢبِـُٔونِي بِأَسمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُم صَٰدِقِينَ٣١ قَالُواْ سُبحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمتَنَآۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلعَلِيمُ ٱلحَكِيمُ٣٢

30-And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to appoint a vicegerent {Vicegerent means a successor, leader, or ruler.} on earth." They said, "Will You place upon it one who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we glorify You and sanctify Your name?" He said, "Indeed, I know what you do not know." 31- And He taught Adam the names of all things, then He presented them to the angels, saying, "Tell Me the names of all these things, if you are truthful!" 32- They replied, "Glory be to You; we know nothing except what You have taught us. Truly, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise"

An analysis of al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis of Qur'anic Surah al-Baqarah: 30–32 in Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl reveals a relatively clear composition of exegetical sources comprising both *atsar* and *ra'yu*. Based on a direct examination of the exegetical text, the sources used by al-Baiḍāwī can be identified, classified, and counted concretely, thereby providing an objective picture of his methodological tendencies (al-Baidhāwī, 1424, hlm. 72–78).

In his discussion of these verses, a total of 17 sources of interpretation were explicitly cited by al-Baiḍāwī. Of these, 8 sources fall under the category of atsar, while 9 fall under the category of ra'yu. Quantitatively, this distribution indicates that ra'yu is approximately 53% more dominant than atsar, which accounts for 47%, although the difference is not particularly significant.

The sources of hadith used by al-Baiḍāwī consist of two types. First, seven verses of the Qur'an that are used as cross-references, namely:

QS. al-Aḥqāf: 21

وَٱذكُر أَخَا عَادٍ إِذ أَنذَرَ قَومَهُۥ بِٱلأَحقَافِ وَقَد خَلَتِ ٱلنُّذُرُ مِنۢ بَينِ يَدَيهِ وَمِن خَلفِهِۦٓ أَلَّا تَعبُدُوٓاْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيكُم عَذَابَ يَومٍ عَظِيمٖ٢١

And remember (Hud), the brother of the 'Ād people, when he warned his people about the sand dunes; indeed, many warners had come before and after him, saying, "Do not worship anyone other than Allah; I truly fear that a terrible punishment will befall you on the Day of Judgment.

He used this noble verse to explain QS. Al-baqrah: 30 to emphasize the meaning of a word إذ what he explained means ظرف وضع لزمان نسبة ماضية وقع فيو أخرى (Zharaf which is used

for the past tense, with other words derived from it). From this perspective, it becomes clear that he uses the verse to reinforce and support the linguistic interpretation he employs.

QS. al-Anbiyā': 20

يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفتُرُونَ ٢٠

They (the angels) glorify God ceaselessly, day and night.

Imam al-Baidhawi used this verse to explain the attributes of angels as described by the philosophers. Angels are described as creatures of Allah who constantly glorify Him day and night by His command.

QS. at-Taḥrīm: 6:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُم وَأَهلِيكُم نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلحِجَارَةُ عَلَيهَا مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٞ شِدَادٞ لَّا يَعصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُم وَيَفعَلُونَ مَا يُؤمَرُونَ ٦

O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from the Fire whose fuel is people and stones; its guards are angels who are stern and severe, who do not disobey what Allah commands them and always carry out what they are commanded.

In this verse, angels are described as servants of God who always obey His commands and will never disobey anything He commands. They will never commit sin against God. To reinforce this understanding of angels, Imam al-Baidhawi cites this verse in support of his interpretation.

QS. al-An'ām: 9

وَلَو جَعَلنَٰهُ مَلَكٗا لَّجَعَلنَٰهُ رَجُلٗا وَلَلَبَسنَا عَلَيهِم مَّا يَلبِسُونَ ٩

And if We had made the Messenger an angel, We would certainly have made him a man, and We would certainly have left them in doubt, just as they are now in doubt.

Imam al-Baidhawi cites this verse as an explanation for why Adam was created as the vicegerent on earth, rather than an angel. It is thus clear that if an angel had been appointed as a messenger, he would have had to be created in the form of a man so that other humans could emulate him. If he had been created as a human, it would have been the same, since Allah created him from among the human race.

QS. al-Anbiyā': 26–27

وَقَالُواْ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱلرَّحمَٰنُ وَلَدٗا سُبحَٰنَهُۥۚ بَل عِبَادٞ مُّكرَمُونَ ٢٦ لَا يَسبِقُونَهُۥ بِٱلقَولِ وَهُم بِأَمرِهِۦ يَعمَلُونَ ٢٧

26- And they say, "The Most Merciful has taken (an angel) as a son." Exalted is He. In truth, they (the angels) are honored servants. 27- They did not speak out of turn, and they carried out His commands

Furthermore, in verse 31, Imam al-Baidhawi includes only one verse from the Qur'an in the second section, namely QS. Maryam: 4

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ ٱلۡعَظۡمُ مِنِّي وَٱشۡتَعَلَ ٱلرَّأۡسُ شَيۡبٗا وَلَمۡ أَكُنۢ بِدُعَآئِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيّٗا ٤

(Zechariah) said, "My Lord, my bones have grown weak and my head is covered with gray hair, yet I have never been disappointed in praying to You, my Lord

In his interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah: 32, he cited two verses from the Qur'an in the first section of his explanation. The verses in question are Surah Al-A'raf: 143 and Surah Al-Anbiya: 87. Here are the verses:

QS. al-A'raf: 143

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِيٓ أَنظُرۡ إِلَيۡكَۚ قَالَ لَن تَرَىٰنِي وَلَٰكِنِ ٱنظُرۡ إِلَى ٱلۡجَبَلِ فَإِنِ ٱسۡتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُۥ فَسَوۡفَ تَرَىٰنِيۖ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُۥ لِلۡجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُۥ دَكّٗا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقٗاۚ فَلَمَّآ أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ تُبۡتُ إِلَيۡكَ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١٤٣

And when Moses came for (private prayer) at the time We had appointed, and the Lord spoke (directly) to him, (Moses) said, "O my Lord, reveal (Yourself) to me so that I may see You." (Allah) said, "You will not be able to see Me, but look at that mountain; if it remains in its place (as it is), then you will be able to see Me." So when his Lord revealed (His majesty) to the mountain, {Some exegetes interpret this to mean the greatness and power of Allah, while others interpret that what was revealed was the light of Allah. In any case, Allah's appearance is not like that of His creation; it is only an appearance consistent with Allah's attributes, which cannot be measured by human standards.} the mountain crumbled to dust, and Moses fell unconscious. When Moses regained consciousness, he said, "Glory be to You! I repent to You, and I am the first to believe

QS. Al-Anbiya': 87

وَذَا ٱلنُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَٰضِبٗا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقۡدِرَ عَلَيۡهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِي ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ أَن لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٨٧

And (remember the story of) Jonah, when he went away in anger, thinking that We would not put him to the test, so he prayed from the depths of darkness, {inside the belly of the fish, in the sea, and at night.} "There is no god but You; You are the Most Holy. Truly, I am among the wrongdoers

This verse and the previous one contain the Prophet's supplication using the phrase "Subhan"; according to al-Baidhawi, supplicating with the phrase "Subhan" constitutes repentance, as demonstrated by Prophet Moses in the previous verse and Prophet Jonah in this verse. Thus, according to him, the angels are in fact repenting to Allah when they utter the word "Subhan" in verse 32.

These verses are used to explain the nature of angels, their obedience to God, and the relationship between angels and humans in the context of Adam's stewardship (al-Baidhāwī, 1424).

Second, there is a hadith of the Prophet regarding the creation of Adam from a handful of soil gathered from various parts of the earth. This hadith is widely known in hadith and

exegetical literature and is considered authentic by hadith scholars. However, in al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis, this hadith is not used as a direct interpretation of Quran 2:31, but rather as a reinforcement of the theological narrative regarding the origins of human creation (Al-alusi, 1415; al-Baidhāwī, 1424). Here is the hadith in question, as he interpreted it QS. Al-bqarah ayat 31:

وأنه تعالى قبض قبضة من جميع الأرض سهلها و حزنها فخلق منها آدم

"Indeed, Allah SWT took a handful of soil from every corner of the Earth, shaped it, and breathed life into it, then created Adam from it."

Functionally, the atsar in al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis do not serve as the primary focus of interpretation. Qur'anic verses and hadiths are more often cited after linguistic and rational analyses have been established, thus serving to legitimize or reinforce the meaning that has already been formulated. This pattern indicates that the atsar play a supporting role rather than serving as the primary determinant of the verse's meaning.

Conversely, the nine sources of ra'yu indicate the dominance of rational and linguistic approaches. These sources of ra'yu are divided into two categories. First, there are five linguistic sources of ra'yu, consisting of analyses of nahwu, sharaf, and balaghah, such as the explanation of the function of the term idh as a ẓarf zamān, etymological and semantic analysis of the word al-malā'ikah, the interpretation of the angelic istifhām as istifhām li al-ta'ajjub, and the interpretation of the term subḥān as a mashdar indicating the meaning of tanzīh(Ad-Darwīsyī, 1980; al-Baidhāwī, 1424). Below, the author presents the text phrase by phrase: There are a total of five sources of al-Baidhawi's interpretation derived from linguistics, starting with Explanation of Terms إذ. This issue is found in the first part of verse 30, when interpreting the noble Word of Allah SWT, which begins with **و إذ قال**, Imam al-Baidhawi explains as follows:

و إذ: ظرف وضع لزمان نسبة ماضية وقع فيه أخرى كما وضع إذا لزمان نسبة مستقبلة يقع فيه أخرى و لذلك يجب إضافتهما إلى الجمل كحيث في المكان و بنيتا تشبيها لهما بالموصولات و استعملتا للتعليل و المجازاة و محلهما النصب أبدا بالظرفية فإنهما من الظروف الغير المتصرفة لما ذكرناه .

and the word *إذ is the past tense form of "Zaraf," to which other words are attached. Just as the word إذا used for the future and used in another sense. That is why these two words must be attached to a phrase, such as the word* حيث *in the case of nouns of action. Both are mabni nouns due to their similarity to maushul nouns. Both are used to convey the meanings of ta'lil and majaz. Both always take the nashab case because they are zaraf. Both fall under the category of zaraf that cannot be inflected, as we have mentioned.*

Imam Al-Baidhawi then interprets the word الملآئكة.This linguistic explanation is provided by Imam al-Baidhawi on the same page as before, namely page 67 of the discussion of verse 30, first section, 12th line from the bottom. Here is the explanation:

و الملائكة جمع ملأك على الأصل كالشمائل جمع شمال و التاء لتأنيث الجمع و هو مقلوب مألك من الألوكة و هي: الرسالة لأنهم وسائط بين الله تعالى و بين الناس فهم رسل الله أو كالرسل إليهم.

Essentially, the word "Mala'ikah" is the plural form of "Mal'ak," just as "Syama'il" is the plural form of "Syam'al." The suffix "Ta'" is used to feminize the plural form. And (the words "mal'ak" and "mala'ikah") are derived from the word "ma'lak," which originally comes from "ulukah," meaning "message," because they serve as intermediaries between Allah and humanity. They are Allah's messengers, or like the prophets sent to them.

In the next section, Al-Baidhawi discusses the word إستفهام للتعجب. He wrote this in his commentary when the angels' response appeared regarding Allah's command concerning the appointment of a Caliph on earth, in the second part of verse 30, resulting in the use of an interrogative form with a hamza spoken by the angels, reflecting their astonishment at Allah's command. Here is the text of his commentary:

تعجب من أن يستخلف لعمارة الأرض و إصلاحها من يفسد فيها و يستخلف مكان أهل الطاعة أهل المعصية

It is shocking that the person who is to be appointed to bring prosperity to the earth and restore peace to it is someone who has caused destruction upon it, or that a sinner is being placed in a position that should be held by a righteous person.

Al-Baidhawi's linguistic analysis is extremely detailed; he even explains the meaning of the word "Adam" in the verse. This explanation appears on page 69 in the commentary on the first part of verse 31. Here is the explanation:

إسم أعجمي كآزر و شالخ و اشتقاقه من الأدمة أو الأدمة بالفتح بمعنى الأسوة

Non-Arabic names, such as Azar and Syalih, are derived from the word Udmah or Admah by omitting the hamza, and mean "Uswah"

In the final session, he also highlighted the word سبحان. In verse 32 on page 70, Imam al-Baidhawi explains the linguistic aspects of the word سبحان as follows:

و سبحان مصدر كغفران و لا يكاد يستعمل إلا مضافا منصوبا بإضمار فعله كمعاذ الله. و قد أجري علما للتسبيح بمعنى التنزيه

The word "Subhan" is a mashdar, like "Ghufran," which is rarely used except as a mudhaf in the nasab case with its verb implied, such as in "Ma'adzullah." And sometimes this word is used as a proper noun to refer to the act of tasbih

Second, four non-linguistic rational opinions, namely those of the al-'uqalā', the majority of Muslims, the al-ḥukamā', and a group of Christians regarding the nature of angels and the rationality of Adam's appointment as caliph. These opinions correspond with the rational discourse in the exegesis of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Abū al-Su'ūd, although they are not entirely rooted in authoritative traditions (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, 1981; Muḥammad bin Muḥammad Abū al-Su'ūd al-'Imādī, t.t.)

This pattern indicates that ra'yu, particularly linguistic ra'yu, serves as the primary driving force behind exegesis. Al-Baiḍāwī tends to begin his exegesis with a linguistic analysis, develop it through rational reasoning, and then present hadiths as supporting evidence. This

pattern underscores the nature of al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis as tafsir bi al-ra'yi with a strong linguistic orientation.

Analysis of the Accuracy and Validity of Sources

Within the framework of 'Abd al-Salām bin Ṣāliḥ bin Sulaimān's exegetical criticism, the validity of an interpretive source is measured not only by the authenticity of the narration, but also by the appropriateness of its application within the context of the verse. This assessment encompasses the source's alignment with the linguistic structure, the context of the verse, and the verse's intended meaning (Muhammad Shalih Muhammad Sulaiman, 1978).

Al-Baiḍāwī's use of Qur'anic verses in Sūrah al-Baqarah: 30–32 is generally thematically relevant, particularly in explaining the nature of angels and the concept of khilāfah. However, functionally, some of these verses serve more as conceptual reinforcements for linguistic and rational analysis rather than as direct interpretations of the verses' meanings (Syafirin, 2024). The use of the Prophet's hadith also follows the same pattern. Authentic hadith are used not to explain the core meaning of a verse, but to reinforce an established theological narrative. From the perspective of exegetical criticism, this practice is methodologically valid, but it demonstrates the subordination of atsar to ra'yu (Ride & Riyadi, 2022).

An evaluation of ra'yu reveals two sides. On the one hand, al-Baiḍāwī's linguistic ra'yu can be categorized as ra'yu maḥmūd because it is methodologically disciplined and does not contradict the nash. However, on the other hand, the dominance of this ra'yu has the potential to become problematic when language and rational reasoning become the primary determinants of the meaning of a verse, while the atsar serves only as a means of legitimization (Ride & Riyadi, 2022).

Within the framework of exegetical criticism, this does not invalidate the authority of al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis, but it does require a critical reading to ensure that the dominance of ra'yu does not exceed the bounds of methodological legitimacy. Thus, the critique of exegetical sources serves to place al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis in its proper context as a major work of classical exegesis that excels linguistically and rationally, yet still requires evaluation within the context of a balance between atsar and ra'yu.

CLUSIONCON

The author's study of al-Baiḍāwī's exegesis of Qur'anic Surah al-Baqarah: 30–32 draws on a comprehensive range of sources, including the Qur'an, hadith, scholarly opinions, linguistic analysis, and rational-philosophical perspectives. However, there is a sharp contrast in composition where the rational (ra'yi) approach is far more dominant and serves as the main axis compared to the hadith (atsar). The precision in the use of sources indicates that although the traditions employed are generally authentic in terms of transmission, these traditions often do not function as primary explanations of meaning but are merely placed in a subordinate role to legitimize the interpretive framework constructed through rational and linguistic analysis. This finding recommends a balanced methodological approach and the use of an objective framework of exegetical criticism to test the consistency and validity of sources in future studies.

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