

THE QUR'ANIC INTERPRETATION IN JAVANESE PEGON SCRIPT:

An Analytical Study of *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī* by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli (1958-2003)

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Abstract

This article examines one of the Javanese-Pegon Quranic exegeses emerging from the background of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). The subject of this study is the *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'ān wa Nuzulihā* by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli. Through the Gadamerian hermeneutic approach, this study demonstrates that the emergence of *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī* is a response to the local communities' demand to study and understand the Quran without language difficulties. This *tafsīr* also reflects Mudjab Mahalli's academic concern in responding to previous exegeses that he deemed insufficient in contextualizing the Quran among the local community. In terms of appearance, the *tafsīr* was written in Javanese language and *pegon* script, indicating the author's close connection with *pesantren* culture. Furthermore, from the communicational aspect, Mudjab Mahalli preferred to use polite Javanese language (*Jawa krama*) in his delivery, making the conveyed message more accessible to the local community. Regarding his interpretation, Mudjab Mahalli appeared accommodating towards Javanese cultural forms of address, such as using honorifics like *Paduka* and *Pangeran*. Moreover, the hierarchy of the Javanese language employed in his *tafsīr* indicates the Mufassir's careful consideration of linguistic etiquette. These local elements were shaped by Mudjab Mahalli's interaction with religious values present in the *pesantren* environment.

Keywords: Quranic Interpretation, *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī*, Pegon Script, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli.

Tafsir al-Qur'an Aksara Pegon dan Bahasa Jawa: Studi Analisis Tafsir al-Maḥalliy karya Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli (1958-2003)

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji kitab Tafsir al-Maḥalliy li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'an wa Nuzulihā karya Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli, salah seorang ulama tafsir Nusantara. Melalui pendekatan hermeneutika Gadamer, kajian ini menunjukkan bahwa lahirnya tafsir al-Maḥalliy merupakan respons atas permintaan masyarakat setempat yang ingin mempelajari dan memahami Al-Qur'an tanpa ada kendala bahasa. Selain itu, tafsir ini juga merupakan pengejawantahan atas kegelisahan akademik Mudjab Mahalli dalam merespons karya tafsir terdahulu yang dianggap belum mampu membumikan Al-Qur'an di kalangan masyarakat setempat. Tafsir ini ditulis dalam bahasa Jawa dan aksara pegon yang merepresentasikan bahwa penulisnya erat dengan budaya pesantren. Bahasa yang digunakan adalah bahasa Jawa krama agar pesan yang disampaikan akan lebih mudah dipahami oleh masyarakat. Penulis tafsir juga tampak akomodatif terhadap bentuk-bentuk sapaan dalam budaya Jawa seperti penggunaan kata sapaan Paduka dan Pangeran. Adanya hierarki bahasa Jawa dalam tafsir ini menunjukkan bahwa mufasir tersebut sangat memperhatikan aspek unggah-ungguh dalam berbahasa. Unsur-unsur lokalitas tersebut terbentuk dari interaksi Mudjab Mahalli dengan nilai-nilai keagamaan yang ada di lingkungan pesantren.

Kata kunci: *Tafsir al-Qur'an, Tafsir al-Maḥallī, Aksara Pegon, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli.*

تفسير القرآن الكريم المكتوب بأحرف عربية بيجون واللغة الجاوية: دراسة تحليلية لـ «التفسير المحلي»
تأليف أحمد مجاب محلي (١٩٥٨-٢٠٠٣)
ملخص

تناول هذه الدراسة كتاب «اب التفسير المحلي لمعرفة آيات القرآن ونزولها» لأحمد مجاب محلي، أحد علماء التفسير الإندونيسيين. ومن خلال منهج هرمنيوطيقا غادامر، تبين هذه الدراسة أن ولادة تفسير المحلي جاءت استجابة لطلب المجتمع المحلي الذي أراد دراسة القرآن وفهمه دون أي حواجز لغوية. علاوة عن ذلك، فإن هذا التفسير هو أيضًا تجسيد للقلق الأكاديمي لمجابهة محلي في الرد على أعمال التفسير السابقة التي اعتبرت غير قادرة على تثبيت القرآن بين المجتمع المحلي. هذا التفسير مكتوب باللغة الجاوية وأحرف عربية بيجون مما يدل على أن المؤلف مرتبط ارتباطًا وثيقًا بثقافة البرانترين (المدرسة الداخلية الإسلامية). اللغة المستخدمة هي الجاوية الراقية بحيث يسهل على الجمهور فهم الرسالة المنقولة. ويبدو أيضًا أن مؤلف التفسير يتكيف مع أشكال الألقاب في الثقافة الجاوية، مثل استخدام كلمتي بادوكا (جلالة) وبانغيران (سمو الأمير). ومما يوضح وجود التسلسل الهرمي للغة الجاوية في هذا التفسير أن مؤلفه يهتم حقًا بجوانب الآداب في اللغة. تتشكل هذه العناصر المحلية من تفاعل مجابهة محلي مع القيم الدينية الموجودة في بيئة البرانترين (المدرسة الداخلية الإسلامية)

الكلمات المفتاحية: تفسير القرآن، تفسير المحلي، أحرف عربية بيجون، أحمد مجاب محلي

Introduction

The history of the dynamics of writing and publishing Quranic exegeses in the Archipelago (Nusantara) fundamentally goes beyond merely interpreting the Quranic text by a Mufasssir. Regardless of that, a Mufasssir inevitably engages in direct dialogue with the culture and socio-political realities of the society at that time. Thus, a work of Quranic exegesis is a manifestation of cultural products; this can be seen in the use of language, script, as well as social, political, and ideological issues contested within it. Specifically, in the early 20th century, the Indonesian language and *Latin* script reached the peak of their popularity, supported by Dutch ethical politics and coinciding with the momentum of the Youth Pledge in 1928. However, the use of the Javanese language still demonstrates its existence in the tradition of writing Quranic exegeses in Indonesia through the presence of various scripts such as *Javanese*, *Latin*, and *Pegon* (Gusmian 2016: 143).

The use of *Pegon* script in the history of the tradition of writing Quranic exegeses in Indonesia has largely been dominated by the pesantren community. For example, among the exegeses written in *Pegon* script are *Tafsīr Faiḍ al-Raḥmān fī Tarjamāh Kalām Mālik ad-Dayyān* by KH. Saleh Darat (1820-1903 CE), *Tafsīr al-Iklīl fī Ma'ānī at-Tanzīl* by KH. Misbah Zainul Mustafa (1916-1994 CE), and *al-Ibrīz li Ma'rifati Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz* by KH. Bisri Mustafa (1915-1977 CE). Among the many Quranic exegeses born from the pesantren background, one of the books written using the *Pegon* script stands out. This is none other than the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'ān wa Nuzulihā*, hereinafter referred to as *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy*. This exegesis was written by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli and published in 1989. Although it has not yet been completed to cover all 30 juz (parts), Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli's contribution has enriched the collection of Quranic exegeses in the Archipelago that utilize the *Pegon* script with the Javanese language. This simultaneously fills a void paradigm that had not been touched upon by its predecessors, also born from the womb of Javanese pesantren. Furthermore, the existence of this exegesis also confirms that *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* is suspected to be the last heritage of Quranic exegesis born from the womb of pesantren, using the *Pegon-Javanese* script.

Research that examines Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli from the perspective of his character includes studies by Muhammad Murtadlo (2015)¹ and Fandi

¹ In this regard, Muhammad Murtadlo discusses three scholars from Yogyakarta who composed their works using *Pegon* script, including KH. Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli. However, this article only outlines the intellectual journey and works of KH. Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli utilizing the *Pegon* script.

Simon Raharjo (2011).² Meanwhile, studies focusing on the domain of *Tafsīr al-Maḥallīy* include research conducted by Wachyuningasih (2007),³ Didik Saepuddin (2019),⁴ Ahmad Baidowi (2020),⁵ and Tri Febriandi Amrulloh (2023b).⁶ Although previous research on Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli and his exegesis works has been extensively studied by previous researchers, each previous study has yet to specifically address the aspect of locality contained within *Tafsīr al-Maḥallīy*. Thus, there appears to be a gap to further discuss the local wisdom that emerges during the process of interpreting the Quran as written through Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli's exegesis work titled *Tafsīr al-Maḥallīy li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'ān wa Nuzulihā*.

Pegon Script in Javanese Language Exegesis Work

The term "Pegon" has many naming variations in reality. In Malaysia, for example, *Pegon* is referred to as *Jawi* script. This is different from what has been traditionally understood by the pesantren community as *Arabic-Pegon* script. Similarly, in the Sundanese region, Pegon is more commonly known as *Gundul*. In a broader context, *Pegon* script is referred to as *Arabic-Malay* script. This is because Arabic letters in the Indonesian language have rapidly developed in the Malay region, from Terengganu (Malaysia), Aceh, Riau, Sumatra, Java, Brunei, to Southern Thailand (Rohmana 2014: 44).

As it has evolved, *Pegon* script is not only used in the Javanese language but also in other regions besides Java. For example, in West Java, it is used with the Sundanese language, in Sulawesi with the Buginese language, and in Sumatra with the Malay language. This is similar to what Denys Lombard proposed, stating that by the late 1880s, Arabic script still dominated its usage in Malay and several local languages, such as Acehnese or Minangkabau (Denys Lombard 2000: 164). In the 17th century, Quranic exegesis works in the Malay Archipelago were predominantly written in

2 This research presents the influence of the ideas of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli, who has a background as a scholar and also as the head of an Islamic boarding school, on students (*santri*) and the general community.

3 In her research, Wachyuningasih attempts to discuss *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī* regarding the aspect of interpretive methods used by KH Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli.

4 Although having a similar material object as previous research, Didik Saepuddin in his study specifies the direction of his examination on *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī* by targeting the dialectic of the text (the Quran) and the historical-verbal context of the exegesis (*asbāb al-nuzūl*).

5 In his study, Baidowi attempts to explain the phenomenon of the use of *Pegon* script in exegesis works arising from a pesantren background. This includes briefly discussing *Tafsīr al-Maḥallī* authored by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli.

6 Through his study, Febriandi seeks to demonstrate the influence of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli's interpretation on the exegesis of *al-Ibrīz* using Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality. In his research, which is focused on Surah al-Fatihah, he identifies several elements of *al-Ibrīz* in several verses of Surah al-Fatihah.

Arabic-script Malay (*Jawi* script). This may be attributed to the findings of research conducted by Anthony H. Johns, indicating the emergence of local Islamic discourse in various regions of the Malay Archipelago by the end of the 16th century, as evidenced by the use of Arabic script later known as *Jawi* and *Pegon* scripts (Johns 1998: 121). This is further supported by the discovery of a Quranic exegesis work titled *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* written by Abd al-Rauf al-Singkili, which was written using *Pegon* script, also known as *Malay-Jawi* script.

The translation and interpretation activities of the Quran into Javanese have a long historical record and hold exotic value. This is because the exegeses developed and written in various scripts, such as *Javanese*, *Latin*, and *Pegon*. One of the exegeses written in *Pegon* script is the *Tafsir al-Qur'an Primbon* by Sheikh Imam Arga. From a codicological aspect, this manuscript measures 19.5 × 16 cm with a thickness of 366 pages, containing 14 lines of text on each page and written on European paper. This exegesis manuscript contains several texts, including copies of Quranic verses and some texts related to *primbon*. The surahs discussed in this exegesis include *Patekah* (al-Fātiḥah), *Dakan* (ad-Dukhān), *Rahman* (ar-Raḥmān), *Watangat*, *Anabail*, *Anaza'at* (an-Nāzi'āt), *Abbas* ('Abasa), *Kuret* (Qurays), *Antaqat*, *Buresj* (al-Buruj), *Syamsi* (as-Syams), and *al-Takasur*. Some of these texts contain interpretations written in Javanese and *Pegon* script beneath the Quranic verses. According to some notes and numbers within the text, this exegesis manuscript is estimated to have been copied in 1876-1877 CE (T.E. Behrend dan Pudjiastuti 1997: 449).

Moving on to the 19th century CE, there is another exegesis work titled *Tafsir al-Quran Saha Pethikan Warna Warni* with the code SB 12. This manuscript is written in Javanese language and *Pegon* script, currently housed in the library of the Sonobudoyo Museum in Yogyakarta. This manuscript consists of three types of texts. The first text, pages 4-27, contains excerpts from surahs al-Fātiḥah to al-Baqarah (2):84 that are legible. This is because the ink on the last page of the first text has faded, and it is suspected that there are still continuations of verses after it. Quranic verses in this excerpt are followed by inter-paragraph notes, providing translations or interpretations of words in Javanese using *Pegon* script. The second text, pages 29-75, contains various texts, including notes on *fiqh* issues. Some of these notes are written in Arabic with translations underneath, while others are written in Javanese, and some in Arabic without translations. The third text, pages 76-90, consists of quotes from the Prophet's hadiths written in Arabic (T.E. Behrend 1990: 558).



Figure 1. Tafsir Al-Qur'an Saha Pethikan Warna Warni
(Photo: Tri Febriandi Amrulloh)

In 1856, a manuscript of Quranic exegesis emerged in Sumedang titled *al-Qur'an*, copied by R. Haji Abdoel Madjid and presumably authored by him as well. This manuscript contains the verses of the Quran, each line accompanied by interpretations in Javanese language and *Pegon* script. Codicologically, the manuscript measures 44.5 × 28 cm with 637 pages, and the space for the text within the exegesis manuscript measures 34 × 21 cm. The manuscript is written on European paper with a medallion watermark and a countermark inscribed with J HONIG & ZONEN. The manuscript's condition is somewhat worn, with slightly yellowed paper. It is currently housed in the Museum Prabu Geusan Ulun Sumedang (Ekadjati dan Darsa 1999: 234). Next is a Quranic exegesis manuscript titled *Tafsir al-Qur'an*. This manuscript is written in Arabic as the original text of the Quranic verses, while Javanese language is used for the interpretation of these verses. Codicologically, this exegesis measures 29.5 × 18.4 cm with 698 pages, and the space for the text within the exegesis manuscript measures

21 × 12.5 cm. The manuscript is written on locally made wooden bark and covered with embossed leather. The physical condition of the paper manuscript is somewhat brownish, with some pages missing at the beginning and end, and there are also traces of moth bites resulting in holes in the paper. This manuscript is also stored in the Museum Prabu Geusan Ulun Sumedang (Ekadjati dan Darsa 1999: 240).

In the context of Javanese pesantren, there are at least three categorizations related to the language and script used in writing exegesis works. First, exegeses written in Arabic language and script, such as *tafsir Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥim* by KH. Ahmad Yasin bin Asymuni al-Jarauni, *Tafsīr Ayat Aḥkam* by Abil Fadhol Senori, and others. Second, exegeses written in Indonesian language and Latin script, such as *Tafsīr Maudhu'i al-Muntaha* initiated by KH. Muntaha al-Hafidz. He was a former rector of the University of Quranic Sciences (UNSIQ) in Wonosobo, Central Java, and the supervisor of the Tahfidzul Qur'an al-Asy'ariyah Islamic boarding school. This exegesis was entrusted to the Nine Team consisting of UNSIQ lecturers and ustadz from PPTQ al-Asy'ariyyah. Third, exegeses written in Javanese language and Pegon script, such as *Tafsīr al-Ibrīz li Ma'rifati Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīz* by KH. Bisri Mustofa, *Tafsīr al-Iklīl fi Ma'āni al-Tanzīl* by KH. Misbah Mustofa, and *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'an wa Nuzulihā* by KH. Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli (Baidowi 2020: 477).

Starting from the exegesis work titled *Faiḍ al-Raḥmān fi Tarjamah Kalām Mālik al-Dayyān* by Kiai Shaleh Darat. This exegesis work was part of his initiative to introduce and popularize the teachings of the Quran to the community. Therefore, the exegesis was written in Javanese so that Javanese people who couldn't understand Arabic could easily grasp the messages contained in the Quran. The motivation of Kiai Shaleh Darat in writing the exegesis book using the local language turned out to inspire the later Mufassir's. One of them was KH. Bisri Mustofa. He wrote the exegesis *al-Ibrīz li Ma'rifati Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīz* (1960) in Javanese, as it was the everyday language of the people around him. The emergence of this exegesis work was followed by the appearance of the exegesis book *al-Iklīl fi Ma'āni al-Tanzīl* (1980) written by KH. Misbah Musthafa. In addition to that book, Kiai Misbah also wrote an exegesis work titled *Tāj al-Muslimīn min Kalām Rabb al-Ālamīn* (Fadal 2018: 85–86). Not long after, there emerged exegesis works again using the Javanese language with Pegon script. One of them is *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* (1989) and *Tafsīr al-Furqān* (1993) written by Kiai Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli.

These exegesis works serve as concrete evidence that the tradition of writing exegesis works at that time had solidified the scholarly tradition in

the field of Quranic exegesis. The systematic writing of these exegesis books is presented almost similarly to their predecessor, the *al-Ibriz* exegesis book. In addition to using Javanese, these exegesis books were also written by providing meanings beneath (*gandul*)⁷ the translated verses. This system of providing meanings is accompanied by several formulas to mark the position of words in sentence structures. For example, the subject position is symbolized by the word *utawi* with a sign consisting of the letter *mim* (م), the predicate is symbolized by the word *iku* and marked with the letter *kha* (خ), the doer is symbolized by the word *sopo/opo* marked with the letter *fa* (ف), and also the recipient is symbolized by the word *ing* marked with the connected letters *mim* and *fa* (مف) (Manduri t.t.). These formulas are provided to facilitate readers in understanding the meanings of the Quranic verses.

Biography of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli

Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli was born in Brajan Hamlet, Wonokromo Village, Pleret District, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta on August 25, 1958, and passed away at the age of 45 on November 15, 2003. He was the son of Muhammad Mahalli bin Abdullah Umar and Nyai Hj. Dasimah, daughter of KH. Mukhtarom. On February 23, 1989, he married Nadziroh, daughter of Mushlih, who was the son of KH Mushlih and Nyai Rabi'ah Adawiyah from Rembang, Central Java. Nadziroh's parents were the children of KH. Zuhdi bin KH. Zainal Musthafa. KH Zuhdi Musthafa was the sibling of KH Bisri Musthafa and KH Mishbah Zainal Musthafa (Mustolehudin dkk. 2016: 35).

Regarding his academic journey, Mudjab Mahalli started his education at SD Jejeran II and graduated in 1968. He then continued to PGAN for 4 years in Wonokromo and completed it in 1971. Ahmad Mudjab intended to continue for another 6 years at PGAN in Wonokromo, but he did not complete it, only attending until 1972. His further education was at Pesantren Salafiyah Banjarsari, Tempuran, Magelang for 9 years under the direct leadership of Kiai Muhammad Syuhudi. During his time at this pesantren, he attended Madrasah Aliyah Pesantren Salafiyah Banjarsari Magelang and graduated in 1973. He then continued his education at Ma'had Aliy Pesantren Salafiyah Banjarsari Magelang and graduated in 1978. In short, after completing his education at the pesantren, Mudjab Mahalli visited Mbah Hamid Kajoran Magelang to seek blessings to continue his studies in the Middle East, but Mbah Hamid did not wish for

7 The *gandul* meaning is a system of interpreting Arabic texts by adding translated sentences below the translated vocabulary. These translated sentences are written hanging at a 45-degree angle.

it. Consequently, Mudjab abandoned his intention to go to the Middle East. Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli lived among the religious community of Brajan, marked by the presence of many Islamic boarding schools around Wonokromo Village, Pleret District. For example, Brajan Hamlet, Wonokromo Hamlet, and Jejeran Hamlet were dominated by Islamic boarding school institutions (Mustolehudin dkk. 2016: 35).

The Intellectual Works of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli

According to Imam Fauzi,⁸ throughout his life, he wrote no less than 200 books, including translations, adaptations, and original works. Among the published books, approximately 160 have been issued, 17 book titles are still in manuscript form awaiting publication, and 2 translations of major books have been published. Most of them are in Indonesian, with several titles using Arabic script with Javanese Pegon writing. (Mustolehudin dkk. 2016: 43). Here are some written works by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli, some using *Arabic* script and others using *Latin* script in the Indonesian language:

Table 1. Works by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli in Arabic Language (Amrulloh 2023a: 39-42)

No.	Title	Year	Category
1.	<i>Tanqih al-Qaul li Ma'rifati Faḍā'il al-A'māl</i> , volumes 1, 2, and 3, <i>Arabic-Pegon</i> translation, (original author: Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani).	1990	Ethics and Sufism
2.	Arabic-Pegon translation of <i>Matan al-Ghāyah wa at-Taqrīb</i> by Abi Syuja'al-Ashfahaniy.	-	Jurisprudence
3.	<i>Tafsir al-Mahalliy li Ma'rifati Āyati al-Qurān wa Nuzullihā</i> , volume 1.	1989	Interpretation
4.	<i>al-Furqān li Ma'rifati Ayat al-Qurān</i> , Volumes 1, 2, <i>Arabic-Pegon</i> .	1993	Interpretation
5.	<i>Arabic-Pegon</i> translation of the book <i>Lubāb al-Hadis</i> by Imam Jalaluddin as-Suyuthi.	-	Hadith
6.	<i>Du'a Jawāmi'u al-Kawāmil Nuqilan Ihya 'Ulum ad-Dīn</i> , collection of supplications, Arabic language with <i>Arabic-Pegon</i> explanations.	1993	Ethics and Sufism

⁸ Imam Fauzi is the most senior student who often associates with KH. Mujab. Imam Fauzi, Interview, Yogyakarta, October 15, 2021.

7.	<i>Shalawat li Nayl al-Marām</i> , collection of <i>shalawat</i> prayers, Arabic language with <i>Arabic-Pegon</i> explanations.	1992	Ethics and Sufism
8.	Washoyā al-Abāb li al-Abnā', translation.	-	Ethics and Sufism

Table 2. Works by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli in Indonesian Language (Amrulloh 2023a: 39-42)

No.	Title	Year	Category
1.	<i>Mutiara Hadits Qudsi, Kumpulan Hadis.</i>	1980	Hadith
2.	<i>Do'a -Do'a Mustajab Dalam al-Qur'an dan al-Hadis, Kumpulan Do'a.</i>	1997	Remembrance and Prayer
3.	<i>Menikahlah, Engkau Menjadi Kaya, Buku, Bahasa Indonesia.</i>	2001	Ethics and Sufism
4.	<i>Membangun Akhlak Mulia.</i>	2003.	Ethics and Sufism
5.	<i>Mensucikan Hati dan Teguhkan Jiwa.</i>	2000	Ethics and Sufism
6.	<i>20 Prinsip Islam.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
7.	<i>20 Taushiyah Hasan al-Banna.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
8.	<i>77 Hadis Panduan Shalat Sunat.</i>	1998	Hadith
9.	<i>Adab dan Pendidikan Dalam Syariat Islam.</i>	1984	Ethics and Sufism
10.	<i>Akhlak Tasawuf.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
11.	<i>Al-Gazali Tentang Etika Kehidupan.</i>	1984	Ethics and Sufism
12.	<i>Anakku Pegang Teguh Nasehatku.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
13.	<i>Asbabun Nuzul: Studi Pendalaman al-Qur'an.</i>	2002	<i>Ulumul Qur'an</i>
14.	<i>Asbabun Nuzul Juz 'amma, Terjemahan, Bahasa Indonesia.</i>	-	<i>Ulumul Qur'an</i>
15.	<i>Ayat-Ayat Wanita.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
16.	<i>Bayani: Memahami Makna al-Qur'an.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
17.	<i>Bercak-Bercak Sufi.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
18.	<i>Berdo'a Bershalawat Ala al-Gazali.</i>	1996	Ethics and Sufism
19.	<i>Bermunajat Kepada Allah di Keheningan Malam.</i>	2004	Ethics and Sufism
20.	<i>Bimbingan Mencapai Hidayah.</i>	1989	Education
21.	<i>Hak-Hak Anak Dalam Syariat Islam.</i>	2003	Ethics and Sufism
22.	<i>Cinta Suci Perempuan Sufi, Perjalanan Hidup Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
23.	<i>Dialog Bersama Rasulullah.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
24.	<i>Dialog-Dialog Rasulullah Saw.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism

25.	<i>Doa yang didengar Allah: Doa-Doa Mustajab Lengkap dengan Penjelasan Kisah Kemunculan Beserta Rangkaian Cerita Dalam al-Qur'an dan al-Hadis.</i>	2000	Remembrance and Prayer
26.	<i>al-Kabair: Dosa-Dosa Besar dalam al-Qur'an dan Hadis.</i>	2001	Jurisprudence
27.	<i>Hadis-hadis Ahkam: Riwayat asy-syafi'i, Taharah dan Shalat.</i>	2003	Hadith
28.	<i>Hadis-Hadis Wanita.</i>	-	Hadith
29.	<i>Hubungan Timbal Balik Orang Tua Anak.</i>	1994	Ethics and Sufism
30.	<i>Buku Pintar Para Da'i.</i>	1995	Practical Guide
31.	<i>Insan Kamil dalam Kaca Pandang Rasulullah.</i>	1986	Ethics and Sufism
32.	<i>Ketabahan Kedurhakaan Wanita.</i>	1996	Ethics and Sufism
33.	<i>Kewajiban Timbal Balik Orang Tua-Anak.</i>	2003	Ethics and Sufism
34.	<i>Kisah-Kisah Penuh Hikmah.</i>	2004	Ethics and Sufism
35.	<i>Kisah-Kisah Sufi Teladan.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
36.	<i>Kode Etik Kaum Santri.</i>	1996	Ethics and Sufism
37.	<i>Manajemen Terapi Qalbu.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
38.	<i>Melahirkan Anak Saleh: Kajian Psikologi dan Agama.</i>	1995	Ethics and Sufism
39.	<i>Membangun Akhlaq Mulia: Dalam bingkai al-Qur'an dan as-Sunnah.</i>	2003	Ethics and Sufism
40.	<i>Membangun Pribadi Muslim.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
41.	<i>Membongkar Rahasia Perdukunan Kiyai.</i>	2000	Ethics and Sufism
42.	<i>Memburu Nafsu Setan.</i>	2004	Ethics and Sufism
43.	<i>Mendidik Anak Sejak Din.</i>	2003	Ethics and Sufism
44.	<i>Menelusuri Makna Sabda Nabi dalam Hadis Shahih al-Bukhari.</i>	2001	Hadith
45.	<i>Mengenal Karakteristik Ulama.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
46.	<i>Mengenal Kasidah Burdah.</i>	1996	Ethics and Sufism
47.	<i>Menggapai Sukses Perjuangan Para Da'i.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
48.	<i>Menguak Rahasia Amal Shaleh.</i>	1994	Ethics and Sufism
49.	<i>Menilai Ulama dan Karyanya.</i>	1996	Ethics and Sufism
50.	<i>Menjadi Pewaris Surga Firdaus.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
51.	<i>Mendidik Anak Sejak Dini.</i>	2003	Ethics and Sufism
52.	<i>Menyiasati Pemerksaan.</i>	1994	Ethics and Sufism
53.	<i>Menyingkap Rahasia Amal Shalih.</i>	2004	Ethics and Sufism
54.	<i>Menyongsong Hidup Baru Penuh Barakah.</i>	2001	Ethics and Sufism
55.	<i>Merawat Mahligai Rumah Tangga.</i>	2000	Ethics and Sufism
56.	<i>Muslimah dan Bidadari.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
57.	<i>Muslimah Modern, Dalam Bingkai al-Qur'an dan al-Hadis.</i>	2000	Ethics and Sufism

58.	<i>Mutafaq 'Alaih Bagi Ibadat.</i>	2004	Hadith
59.	<i>Mutafaq 'Alaih Bagi Munahakat dan Muamalat.</i>	2004	Hadith
60.	<i>Biografi Sahabat Nabi SAW.</i>	1984	<i>Sirah</i>
61.	<i>Pembinaan Moral di Mata al-Ghazali.</i>	1984	Ethics and Sufism
62.	<i>Pengobatan Rasulullah.</i>	1994	Ethics and Sufism
63.	<i>Perjalanan Ruhani Kaum Sufi.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
64.	<i>Pesan Buat Ukhti Muslimah, Selamatkan Dirimu dari Tabarruj.</i>	1995	Ethics and Sufism
65.	<i>Pewaris Surga Firdaus.</i>	2000	Ethics and Sufism
66.	<i>Potret Muslimah Modern, Solo: Hazanah Ilmu.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
67.	<i>20 Prinsip Islam: Komentar Terhadap Hasan al-Banna.</i>	1986	Ethics and Sufism
68.	<i>Profil Wanita Muslimah.</i>	2001	Ethics and Sufism
69.	<i>Butir-butir Mutiara Tasawuf: Rahasia Cinta Para kekasih Allah.</i>	2001	Ethics and Sufism
70.	<i>Selamatkan Keluargamu dari Neraka.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
71.	<i>Cinta Suci Perawan Sufi.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
72.	<i>Studi Perbandingan Mazha.</i>	-	Jurisprudence
73.	<i>Sucikan hati Teguhkan Jiwa.</i>	2001	Ethics and Sufism
74.	<i>Taushiyah Hasan al-Banna.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
75.	<i>Tuntunan Tahlil.</i>	-	Practical Guide
76.	<i>Untaian Mutiara Hukum Islam.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism
77.	<i>Wahai Pemuda Menikahlah, Buku, Bahasa Indonesia.</i>	2002	Ethics and Sufism
78.	<i>Wahai Santriku.</i>	-	Ethics and Sufism

Biography of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli and the Localization of the Tafsir al-Maḥalliy

Background of Writing

The commentary authored by KH Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli is titled *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy Li Ma'rifati Ayāti al-Qur'an Wa Nuzulihā*. Before this commentary was published, it was first reviewed and received input from KH Nawawi Abdul Aziz al-Hafidz, Drs. KH Muhammad Yusuf al-Hafidz, KH Abdul Wahhab Hafidz, Drs. KH Ahmad Ghozali Masruri, and KH Muhammad Syuhudi. This commentary is sized 21×15 cm and was published by Koa Kembang Yogyakarta in 1989. At the beginning pages of this commentary, there is a writing dedicating it as a wedding gift to his wife. This is a Quranic commentary that consists of only 1 Juz, starting from Surah al-Fātiḥah to

Surah al-Baqarah (2): 1-141. According to information available, before Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli continued to the next volume, he had already passed away. The existing book is the result of the transcription by Abdul Jalil al-Bayquni.

As stated in its preface, KH Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli's motivation for writing the book *Tafsīr al-Mahalliy* is due to several factors. Firstly, the Quran cannot be understood without considering its commentary. Likewise, the commentary cannot be understood clearly without knowing the *Asbāb an-Nuzūl* of a verse. *Asbāb an-Nuzūl* is a very important reference in interpreting the verses of the Quran. Secondly, at that time there were few Quranic commentaries that discussed *Asbāb an-Nuzūl* of the Quranic verses specifically written in Javanese. Thirdly, there was encouragement from some kiai (Islamic scholars) and the local community to facilitate people in studying and understanding the content of the Quranic verses along with their *Asbāb an-Nuzūl*. Therefore, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli took the initiative to write a Quranic commentary in Javanese that explains the content of the Quranic verses and their *Asbāb an-Nuzūl*.

Al-Qur'an mboten badhe saget dipun pahami tanpo migatosaken tafsiripun. Lan tafsir punika mboten badhe gamblang tanpo mangertos asbabun nuzulipun ayat. Sebab asbabun nuzul puniko minongko bahan (perkawis) ingkang langkung penting kagem tafsiraken setunggaling ayat-ayat al-Qur'an. Kasunyatan dumugi wekdal punika kitab asbabun nuzul ingkang dipun serat kanthi khusus, langkung-langkung kanthi basa jawi, taksth longko sanget. Mila sangking punika kanthi dorongan lan anjuranipun ba'dhu al-masyayikh lan ba'dhu al-ashdiqo', kawula nyempataken wekdal nyerat setunggalipun kitab kang ambeberaken isi kandunganipun ayat-ayat al-Qur'an lan asbabun nuzulipun (Mahalli 1989: 5-6).

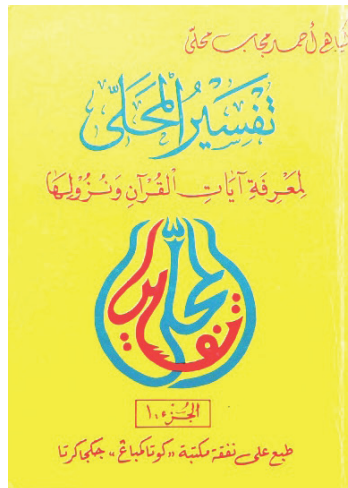


Figure 2. Cover of *Tafsīr al-Mahalliy* by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli
(Photo: Tri Febriandi Amrulloh)

The name of the book *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy Li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'ān Wa Nuzulihā* was given by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli himself. The name *al-Mahalli* is attributed to his father's name, al-Maghfurlah Kiai Muhammad Mahalli. This was done by Mudjab Mahalli as a form of remembrance and gratitude for teaching religious knowledge to him and his siblings. The book *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* has other distinctive features. Mudjab Mahalli divides the explanation of the verses into three parts: using the *gandul* meaning, interpreting each verse globally, and presenting the *Asbāb an-Nuzūl*. Before interpreting the verse, Mudjab Mahalli begins with a *muqaddimah surah* to provide an introduction to the surah being interpreted and explain the contents of the surah being discussed, writing the verse numbers to be interpreted. And at the end of the surah, Mudjab Mahalli provides a *khatimah surah* to explain its relevance to the following surah.

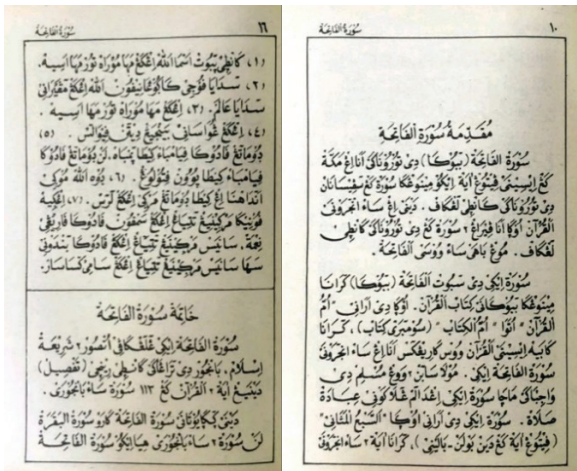


Figure 3. Characteristic of *Tafsīr al-Mahallī*
 (Photo: Tri Febriandi Amrulloh)

Observing the interpretation by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli in the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy*, it can be concluded that the tafsir book falls into the category of *tafsīr bi al-riwāyah* or more precisely *tafsīr bi al-ma'sūr* based on the narration of the reasons for revelation of the verses. The *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* is arranged according to the sequence of the verses in the *Mushaf*, then presents the reasons for revelation in detail, mentions the relevance between the surahs, and explains various other aspects such as the meanings of words, mentions narrations from the hadiths of the Prophet, companions, *Tabi'in*, and others. When interpreting the Quran, Mudjab Mahalli generally uses the method of *ijmāli* (global) interpretation. This is

evident in his explanations without lengthy descriptions or elaborations, making it easy to understand for both the general public and intellectuals. And the language style used is a popular (non-academic) style. Overall, it can be said that the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* written by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli is a tafsīr book that has a strong local nuance. Not only in its appearance using Javanese language and Pegon script, which are characteristic of scholarly works in pesantren in Indonesia, but also in its interpretation, it pays attention to various local aspects that have developed in society, especially in Java.

Local Aspects in the Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy

As previously discussed, the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* is one of the Quranic interpretations that strongly embodies its local nuances. This is evident from the appearance of the book and the diction used in its interpretation.

1. Localization in Appearance

a. Use of Pegon Script

The term *Pegon* originates from the Javanese word *pegon*, which means “*ora lumrah anggone ngucapake*” (not common to pronounce). This is because, physically, the *Pegon* script resembles Arabic writing, but phonetically follows the Javanese writing system, known as *hanacaraka* (Pudjiastuti 2015: 273). As mentioned earlier, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli wrote his interpretation of the Quran in the book *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* using the *Pegon* script. This is similar to other works written or translated by traditional Islamic scholars (Kiai) in Indonesia. The *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* by KH Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli is also written in the Javanese language. In general, this interpretation does not differ significantly from other Javanese-language and *Pegon*-script works. The *Pegon* script is used because it is an intellectual tradition in pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) when writing a work in the local language, especially Javanese. In addition to using Javanese with *Pegon* script, the intellectual tradition in pesantren typically employs the Arabic language in writing their intellectual works.

Today, the tradition of writing in Indonesian is rapidly evolving. This development is inseparable from the progress of the pesantren world itself, and the audience reading these works is becoming more extensive, reaching all elements of society. The use of the *Pegon* script in the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* will undoubtedly facilitate for Muslims who use Javanese in their daily lives, including in understanding the ideas presented by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli. Therefore, it is not surprising that in many mosques or study groups, especially around Brajan Village, exegesis sessions are conducted using this *tafsīr* book. These sessions are often referred to as regular study

circles. For a *santri* (Islamic student), the use of *Pegon* script conventions in this work will undoubtedly assist them in understanding the grammatical structure of the Quran. Such understanding is crucial for a *santri*, considering that in the pesantren tradition, mastery of Arabic texts cannot be separated from their ability to comprehend the language structures within those texts (Baidowi 2015: 44).

b. Using Makna Gandul

In the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy*, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli divides the explanation of Qur'anic verses into three models. The first model, known among pesantrens as *makna gandul*, entails the meaning of each word being suspended beneath each word of the Arabic text, represented in smaller font size (Supriyanto 2016: 291), which in this case is the Quran. This *makna gandul* is written from top to bottom, slightly slanted to the left, using the *Pegon* script and the Javanese language. Each word in the original text is written with its meaning in Javanese, arranged diagonally downward to the left.

The second model involves explanations per verse placed below the translation of the *makna gandul*. This narrative translation is also written using Javanese with the *Pegon* script. The narrative translation resembles typical translations of the Qur'an into Indonesian. The difference lies in the use of Latin letters and Indonesian in general Quran translations, whereas Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli's translation uses Javanese with the *Pegon* script. The use of *makna gandul* indirectly facilitates readers in understanding the precise meaning of each word in the Quranic verses. Thus, besides comprehending the meaning of Quranic verses verse by verse, readers of this book can also understand the meanings of words in the Quran in Javanese. This, of course, aids those who use Javanese as their means of communication.

The third model involves a detailed exposition of the *Asbāb an-Nuzūl* elements. Such an approach undoubtedly assists readers in understanding the context of the revelation of a particular verse.

2. Locality in Communication

Written works serve as one of the mediator individuals use to communicate with others. Communication itself refers to the process of delivering messages from one person to another to inform, change attitudes, opinions, or behaviors, whether directly through speech or indirectly through media, one of which is through written works. When engaging in communication activities, there are elements involved, namely the communicator (sender), message, channel, communicant, feedback, and agreed-upon rules

(protocol). The communicator (sender) is the party sending or delivering the message to another party. The message is the content conveyed by one party to another. The channel is the medium through which the message is conveyed to the communicant. The receiver is the party receiving the message from another party. Feedback is the response from the recipient of the message regarding the content conveyed. Meanwhile, rules (protocol) are the agreed-upon regulations among communication actors on how communication is implemented (Baidowi 2015: 46).

By considering the elements above, it can be said that the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* serves as the channel chosen by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli to convey the messages of the Quran to the Muslim community. Specifically, the community in the Brajan area, who generally use Javanese *Krama* as their daily means of communication. The choice to use Javanese as a communication tool is certainly driven by specific purposes, namely to make the messages conveyed in *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* easier to understand for the local community as the intended audience.

3. Locality in Interpretation

As previously mentioned, the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* was written to assist the community using Javanese as the language of communication in understanding the verses of the Quran as a guide for the Muslim community. For this purpose, on many occasions, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli interpreted the verses of the Quran by incorporating local elements present in Javanese society.

a. Accommodation to Javanese Cultural Addressing

One notable aspect found in the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* is the Mufasir's responsive accommodation to the use of addressing in Javanese culture. In this context, there are at least two terms frequently used by Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli, namely *Pangeran* and *Paduka*. This accommodating attitude demonstrates the sensitivity of the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* to the local cultural context when conveying religious teachings.

- Use of the Term *Pangeran*

Symbolizing respect for the relationship between humans and Allah SWT, Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli expressed in the *Tafsīr al-Maḥalliy* using the form of addressing known as *Pangeran*. Originally, this term was used as a title of address for the children of a king or high-ranking nobleman in the kingdom (Moejanto 1987: 130). That's why Javanese nobles use this title, such as Pangeran Diponegoro (1785-1855) and Pangeran Mangkubumi (1717-1792).

When the term *Pangeran* is used to refer to Allah Swt., it is sometimes understood by the Javanese community as *kirata basa*, meaning a place of shelter or refuge. The use of the term *Pangeran* in the *Tafsir al-Mahalliy* is found in Surah al-Baqarah (2):21.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ^٩

"Hai para manungsa sira padha nyembaho ing *pangeran* ira kang wus nitahake sira lan wong kuna sakdurus ing ira, supoyo siro padha wedi ing Allah".(Mahalli 1989: 41)

(O mankind, worship your Lord, who has created you and those before you, so that you may become righteous.)

- Use of the Term Paduka

Culturally, the term *Paduka*⁹ is not commonly used by the Javanese community in daily communication. However, the term *Paduka* is usually employed by Javanese people when communicating with a king or sultan. This is because the term *Paduka* is fundamentally classified as a form of second-person indirect pronoun (O2) showing respect (Muhsin 2014, 14). In the *Tafsir al-Mahalliy*, the word *Paduka* is specifically used for Allah SWT. It can be found, for instance, in Surah al-Baqarah (2):32.

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

"ature para malaikat: maha suci *paduka*, kawula mboten sami gadah pangertosan kejawi namung ingkang sampun paduka wucalaken dhateng kawula sakyektos paduka punika maha nguningani tuwin maha wicaksana" (Mahalli 1989: 52)

(The Angels said: "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knower, the Wise.").

The use of forms of address, as outlined above, essentially reflects the application of etiquette in communication that is highly emphasized in Javanese culture. Because if someone mentions someone's name without any form of address, especially if the person being named holds a high position, they will be considered impolite. In Javanese culture, such

⁹ In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, the word *paduka* is defined as an honorable form of address to dignitaries such as officials, nobles, kings, and the like. <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/paduka>

individuals are known as *ora ngerti tata krama* (Moejanto 1987: 121). Thus, it can be understood that the use of forms of address is one of the modes used in the *Tafsir al-Mahalliy* to evoke the social discourse of the Quran from the perspective of Javanese culture, based on the principles of harmony and respect (Suseno 2001: 70).

b. Javanese Language Hierarchy

One of the entities of tradition that has been developed and cultivated in the pesantren environment to this day is the tradition of showing respect to *kiai*, *ustadz*, or *ulama'*. This attitude is manifested due to the interaction between *santri* and *ustadz*, especially with *kiai* (Rohman 2019: 67). In terms of language, besides being used as a means of communication among elements of the pesantren, Mudjab Mahalli appears to use and elaborate his interpretation with language stratification that is applicable in the social order of Javanese society. Moreover, in traditional pesantren, especially those located in Java, there is a strong awareness of how to position the language used for communication, as language is one of the media for mutual respect. According to Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo (Poedjosoedarmo 1979: 13–14), the Javanese language has three levels of speech: the *krama*¹⁰ level, the *madya*¹¹ level, and the *ngoko*¹² level.

In this regard, Mudjab Mahalli's interpretation of Qur'anic verses using this local wisdom is also evident. Mudjab Mahalli, who lived in the Javanese pesantren environment, certainly understood well in choosing the appropriate dialect as a form of respect to someone of higher status. For example, when explaining the dialogue between the Prophet and the angels, Mudjab Mahalli uses phrases like *ature para Malaikat*, *Nabi Ibrahim matur*, and soon.

- Communication between the Angels and Allah (al-Baqarah [2]: 32)

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

“ature para malaikat: maha suci paduka, kawula mboten sami gadah pangertosan kejawi namung ingkang sampun paduka wucalaken dhateng kawula sakyektos paduka

10 The level of *krama* language is a level of speech in Javanese that expresses full meaning with courtesy and is used to communicate with someone who has never been known, someone of high rank or position, authoritative, and so forth.

11 The level of *madya* language is the level of speech that lies in between *krama* and *ngoko*.

12 The *ngoko* level of speech reflects a sense of closeness between the first person and the second person. It means that the first person does not have a sense of formality towards the second person. *Ngoko* speech is commonly used to communicate with someone who is familiar, colleagues, or someone of higher status with someone of lower status.

punika maha nguningani tuwin maha wicaksana” (Mahalli 1989: 52)

(The Angels said: “Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knower, the Wise.”).

- Communication between Prophet Ibrahim and Allah Swt. (al-Baqarah [2]: 126)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

“lan nalikane nabi ibrahim matu: duh pengeran kawula, mugu paduka ndadosaken negari ingkang tata tentrem, saha kawula aturi paring rizki dhateng para tetiyang ing ngeriku sawarna ning wuh-wuhan sinten kemawan ingkang sami pitados dhumateng allah dinten akhir (qiyamah). Dawuhe Allah: lan sapa bae kang kafir, ingsun uga bakal maringi kasenenangan sawetara, nuli ingsun bakal meksa ing dheweke marang siksa neraka, yaiku ala-alane papan pangungsen...” (Mahalli 1989: 159–60)

(And [mention] when Abraham said, “My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day.” [Allah] said, “And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and wretched is the destination.”)

- Communication between Prophet Musa and the Children of Israel (al-Baqarah [2]: 68)

قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ ^{قَالَ} إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا فَارِصٌ وَلَا بِكَرٌ ^{قَالَ} عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فافعلوا ما تؤمرون

“wong mau pada matu: duh nabi Musa, kula aturi nyuwunaken ing kitha dhateng pengeran panjenengan, supados Allah paring keterangan dhateng kitha, lembu ingkang kados pundi ingkang kedah kitha sembeleh?Nabi Musa as dawuh:“dawuhe Allah, sapi iku aja kang wus tuwa lan aja kang isih enom, nanging kang ana antarane lara iku. Sira banjur padha nindakne barang kang didawuhake ing sira” (Mahalli 1989: 75).

(The people said, “O Moses, invoke for us your Lord to show us what it is.” [Moses] said, “[Allah] says, ‘It is a cow which is neither old nor virgin, but median between that,’ so do what you are commanded.”).

- Communication between the Believer and the Hypocrite (al-Baqarah [2]: 14)

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ
لَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ

“nalika wong mahu padha ketemu karo wong mukmin padha *ngucap*.”kitha sami pitados”. Ananging sakwuse wong mahu padha mulih ketemu rewang-rewange padha ngucap: saketemene kitha iki kancamu, lan saketemene kitha mung padha geguyon”(Mahalli 1989: 28–29).

(When the man encountered the believers, they said, “We have believed.” But when he returned to his people, they said, “Indeed, we are disassociated from you, and indeed, we see you as liars.”)

- Communication between Prophet Ya'qub and His Offspring (al-Baqarah [2]: 133)

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنِّي
بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَالِاهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَاحِدًا
وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

“(hai tedak turune israil!) apa sira padha nunggoni nalika sedane Nabi Ya'kub, yaiku nalika dheweke *tutur* marang tedak turune: “apa kang bakal padha sira sembah besuk sakpungkurku? Tedak turune padha *matut*: “kitha nyembah dhateng pangeran panjenengan serta pangeranipun para sesepuh panjenengan Nabi Ibrahim, Nabi Ismail, Nabi Ishaq. Inggih punika pangeran ingkang Maha Esa, kitha sami sunarah dhumateng panjenenganipun”. (Mahalli 1989: 28–29).

(O Children of Israel, recall when Nabi Ya'kub was dying; he said to his sons, “What will you worship after me?” They said, “We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Ibrahim, Ismail, and Ishaq—One God—and to Him we submit.”)

As seen in the interpretation of the verses mentioned above, *Tafsir al-Mahallī* appears to use different expressions when interpreting the term *qāla* and some of its derivatives. This is because Mudjab Mahalli understands well how to position the level of language used by the speaker (*mutakalim*) with the addressee (*mukhātab*). Certainly, this becomes a unique differentiation when comparing the term *qāla* used in the Quran. Because the use of *qāla* in the Quran does not distinguish between the parties involved in communication. In simpler terms, the hierarchy or status of the

parties involved in communication is difficult to determine based solely on the use of *qāla*.

This adds a different perspective when *qāla* and its derivatives are presented and understood in *Tafsir al-Maḥallī*. Using the Javanese cultural perspective, what is presented in *Tafsir al-Maḥallī* regarding these words yields various meanings. The diverse meanings used in *Tafsir al-Maḥallī* serve to differentiate the positions and statuses of the parties involved in the communication found in the Quran regarding the relationship between the speaker (*mutakalim*) and the addressee (*mukhātab*). As a result, these differences necessitate the embodiment of Javanese cultural values in terms of communication speech. The use of *qāla* in *Tafsir al-Maḥallī* that refers to Javanese cultural values includes words like *ature*, *tutur*, *matur*, *dhawuh*, and *ngucap*.

Although etymologically words like the above have the same meaning, semantically these words have different meanings from one another. The difference is closely related to the level of finesse of their meanings, and ultimately affects their usage context. In this regard, the use of words with the highest level of finesse is employed for communication with parties of high position or status. Conversely, if words with a lower level of finesse are used, it is for communication with parties of lower position or status.

Conclusion

Thus, several explanations regarding the interpretations of Ahmad Mudjab Mahalli expressed in his work titled *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy Li Ma'rifati Āyāti al-Qur'ān Wa Nuzulihā* have been provided. As a commentary produced and aimed at the Islamic community that uses Javanese as its language of communication, the presence of *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy* is highly urgent. This is because *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy* will assist the Islamic community, especially the laypeople, in understanding the contents of the verses of the Quran and serve as an alternative commentary alongside existing Javanese-language commentary. For academic communities, the existence of the book *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy* also represents its own treasury, as it is one of the commentaries classified as *tafsir bi al-ma'sūr* and utilizes the *ijmāli* (global) method in presenting its commentary. Thus, this clarity aids in understanding the content contained within the verses of the Quran. Furthermore, *Tafsir al-Maḥalliy* is a commentary that is rich in local elements, both in terms of appearance, communication, and interpretation. This is evident in the use of Javanese language, Pegon script, and the varied meanings it employs.

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