



METHODOLOGY AND ISSUES WITHIN *TAFSIR AL-QURAN AL-KARIM* BY ABDUL HALIM HASAN ET AL.: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

BY

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## ABSTRACT

*Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* is a Qur'ānic commentary written in the Malay language by three Sumatran Malay exegetes namely Abdul Halim Hasan, Zainal Arifin Abbas and Abdul Rahim Haitami. Produced at the beginning of the twentieth century, the *tafsīr* is excessively influenced by Muhammad 'Abduh in *al-Manār* and Ṭaṭṭāwī Jawharī in *al-Jawāhir*. This study highlights the figures responsible for this work, and their methodological approach in *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. Focus is also made towards discussion of issues highlighted in the *tafsīr*. The study relies on historical analysis as well as content and comparative analyses resulting in several research findings. The results show that the exegetes were competent individuals for an exegetical work due to their capability in handling Arabic sources and structuring a well-organized discussion of the issues. The study also shows that the methods used by the exegetes in giving service to the *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān did not contradict with other prominent books of *tafsīr*. Discussion of issues is also proven to be in line with the notion of the prominent Muslim scholars as well as experts of the area. Another finding of the study indicates that the *tafsīr* is a 'permissible reasoning *tafsīr*' (*tafsīr bi al-ra'yī al-maḥmūd*) where combination of narrative and reasoning interpretations is apparent in the writing of the commentary. Although the consideration of the contextual circumstances is somehow lacking, the *tafsīr* managed to address the needs of the Malay Muslims in providing ample knowledge for a pure Islamic life.

## ملخص البحث

"تفسير القرآن الكريم" هو كتاب تفسير لكتاب الله باللغة الملايوية ، ألفه ثلاثة مفسرين من جزيرة سومطرة، هم عبد الحليم حسن ، و زين العارفين عباس، و عبد الرحيم الهيتمي. وقد ظهر هذا الكتاب في بدايات القرن العشرين وتأثر بكتب التفسير التي ظهرت في تلك الفترة ، خاصة تفسير المنار للشيخ محمد عبده وتفسير الجواهر للشيخ الطنطاوي حيث كان التأثير بهذين الكتابين كبيرا. وتهدف هذه الدراسة الى إلقاء الضوء على المفسرين الذين ألفوا هذا الكتاب وعلى منهجهم في التفسير . و يركز أيضا بشكل خاص على مناقشة القضايا التي برزت في التفسير. تعتمد الدراسة على عدة مناهج منها المنهج التحليلي التاريخي، والمنهج التحليلي الوصفي، والمنهج التحليلي المقارن مما يؤدي إلى عدة النتائج. والنتيجة تظهر أن المفسرين هم أشخاص ذو أهلية للعمل التفسيري بسبب قدراتهم في التعامل مع المصادر العربية و الترتيب الفائقة لمناقشة القضايا المتعلقة . وتظهر الدراسة أيضا أن الأساليب المستخدمة من قبل المفسرين لا تتعارض مع الكتب البارزة الأخرى من التفاسير. و مناقشة القضايا تثبت كذلك أنه يوافق مع أفكار العلماء المسلمين المرموقين، و الخبراء في هذا المجال. ومن نتائج البحث أنها تقر بأن هذا التفسير هو تفسير بالرأي المحمود حيث إنه جمع بين الهوايات والأراء الإجتهدية الممدوحة. بالرغم من أن هذا التفسير يفقد اعتبار الظروف السياقية، إلا أنها تستطيع أن تلبي احتياجات المسلمين الملايويين في توفير المعرفة الوافرة لحياة إسلامية نقية . أخيرا، مع أن هذا التفسير و مفسروه لم ينالوا شهرة واسعة كما نال "حمكا" و"تفسير الأزهر"، إلا أن قيمته الأكاديمية رائعة بلا شك بوصفه تفسيراً ظهر في مطلع القرن العشرين.

## **APPROVAL PAGE**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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*To my late father who had always dreamed for a learned daughter,*

*To my mother who always believed in me,*

*To my husband who never failed to stand tall next to me no matter*

*what came across us,*

*To Hidayat who never got tired of waiting for mama to study,*

*To Aliyah who had just came into my life,*

*May Allah bless them with imān and sincerity in life,*

*And to all who strived for knowledge, faith and virtuous deeds..*

*I dedicate this humble piece.*

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Qur'ān was revealed as guidance to mankind. It contains clear message of the true way of life. It emphasizes the main purposes of human life which are to worship Allah (swt) and to seek His pleasure in all aspects of life. The Qur'ān encourages the Muslims to learn and understand its message.

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought.<sup>1</sup>

The message of the Qur'ān could only be grasped by understanding the clearly the verses of the Qur'ān. For this reason, attempts on Qur'ānic interpretation have resulted in the emergence of numerous exegetical works in Arabic and many other languages.

In the Malay Archipelago, the importance of Qur'ānic interpretation has been taken seriously. The need for the Malay community to understand the Qur'ān is so intense that the development of exegetical works in the area has become rapid, especially at the break of the twentieth century. The important task of spreading the message of the Qur'ān via Malay language has become the interest of many Muslim scholars especially in Indonesia.

Among those who engaged in the era of Early-Modern (beginning from 1920s) Qur'ānic exegetical writing were A. Hasan<sup>2</sup> who wrote *Tafsir al-Furqan* in 1928,

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 16: 44.

Mahmud Yunus<sup>3</sup> who wrote *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* in 1938, Teungku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy who wrote *Tafsir al-Nur* in 1952<sup>4</sup>, Ahmad Sonhadji Muhammad who wrote *Tafsir Abr al-Athir* in 1960<sup>5</sup>, Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim bin Amrullah (Hamka) who authored *Tafsir al-Azhar*<sup>6</sup> in 1966, and M. Quraish Shihab who authored *Tafsir al-Mishbah*<sup>7</sup> in 1997.

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<sup>2</sup> Ahmad Hasan first published the *tafsir* in 1928 with little success due to a long queue. In 1953, he began the commentary work as proposed by Sa'ad Nabhan, a famous publisher at the time. The second attempt, an entirely different work with renewed style was completed in 1347H/1956M bearing similar title as its predecessor, *Tafsir al-Furqan*. Its first Malaysian print was done by Pustaka Aman Press, Kota Bharu, Kelantan in 1971. Although the *tafsir* was printed in Indonesian language and writing, it has been reprinted seven times since its first publication. Muhammad Nur Lubis, *Data-Data Terbitan Awal Penterjemahan dan Pentafsiran al-Qur'an di Alam Melayu*, (Kuala Lumpur: Al-Hidayah Publishers, 2002), 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> Mahmud Yunus was born in 1899 in Sungayang, Batusangkar, Kabupaten Tanah Datar, Sumatera Barat. He came from a family of knowledgeable as his father and grandfather were all *imām* responsible for teaching Islam in the *surau*. He studied with Muhammad Thaib Umar a *tajdīd* figure before leaving for al-Azhar in 1924. It was during this time that Mahmud Yunus was introduced to reform movement together with Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) and Haji Abdullah Ahmad. He died in 1983 at the age of 83. Among his works which remained on demand are *Kamus Arab Indonesia*, *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Karim*, *Durus al-Lughah al-Arabiyah* and *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*. Abuddin Nata, *Tokoh-Tokoh Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2005), 57-61. Eficandara Masril, Mohd. Nasran Mohamad, Muhammad Adib Samsudin and Anwar Fakhri Omar, "Prof. Dr. H. Mahmud Yunus: Tokoh Mujaddid dari Minangkabau", *Prosiding Nadwah Ulama Nusantara (NUN) IV: Ulama Pemacu Transformasi Negara*, ed. Azmul Fahimi Kamaruzaman, Ezad Azraai Jamsari, Ermy Azziaty Rozali, Farid Mat Zin, Hakim Zainal, Izziah Suryani Mat Resad @ Arshad, Maheram Ahmad, Md Nor Abdullah, Napisah Karimah Ismail and Zamri Arifin, (Bangi: Jabatan Pengajian Arab dan Tamadun Islam, FPI, UKM, 2011), 135-141. Source: <http://www.ukm.my/nun/prosiding%20atas%20talian.htm> (Accessed on: 10/01/2013).

<sup>4</sup> His full name is Teungku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy bin Teugku al-Qadhi Seri Maharaja Mangkubumi Husein bin Masud. He was born in 1904 in Lhokseumawe, North Aceh. His father was a man of great knowledge and a judge. He started learning from his father in his *pesantren* and later he travelled to learn from a few other figures. He studied Arabic from Syekh Muhammad bin Salim al-Kalali, a well-known 'ālim of Hijjāz. He also travelled to Surabaya to learn from Ahmad Soekarti in 1926. *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Majid al-Nur* was written in October 1952 and was first published in 1956 by the Bulan Bintang Publisher, Jakarta. It carries ten volumes with moderate extent. Mazlan Ibrahim, Jawiah Dakir, Mohd. Najib Abdul Kadir, *Pengenalan Tokoh dan Kitab-Kitab Tafsir Melayu Ulama Nusantara*, (Kuala Lumpur: Fakulti Pengajian Islam Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2009), 40.

<sup>5</sup> Sonhadji was born in 1922 in Desa Pengging, Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia. Later, his family moved to Rengat, Singapore and he was mainly brought up there. He received his early education from his father who was a religious teacher. He learned the Qur'an and Arabic calligraphy from his mother. After gaining some qualifications, he continued to study at Madrasah al-Junied in Singapore for six years. When the Japanese invaded Singapore, his education was put to hold. Since then, he was involved in teaching activities especially at Madrasah al-Junied. *Abr al-Athir* initially started as a series of lecture on the Radio of Singapore (SBC). Later, the work was printed under the name *Tafsir al-Qur'an* in Singapore before further improvements were given to the structure and print which resulted in the second print in Kuala Lumpur with its new title, *Tafsir Abr al-Athir*. Zulkifli Yusof, *A Study of Abr al-Athir and Sonhadji's Methodology in Tafsir al-Qur'an*, (Singapore: Ahmad Sonhadji Muhammad, 2002), 161.

<sup>6</sup> Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim bin Amrullah was born in Sungai Batang, Maninjau, West Sumatra Indonesia in the year 1908. His initial education began at home and he learned Qur'anic recital and foundation of Islam from his father and his stepsister, Fatimah. At the age of eight he was sent to a

*Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* is a Malay *tafsir* written in 1937 in North Sumatera by three Malay exegetes namely Abdul Halim Hasan, Zainal Arifin Abbas and Abdul Rahim Haitami. The *tafsir* began its writing in Ramaḍān 1355H at Madrasah Islamiyah al-Arabiyyah next to Masjid Raya, Binjai, Langkat.<sup>8</sup> It was written during the post-colonial era when there was an urge to revive Islamic teaching within the Muslim nation of Indonesia, especially on the understanding of the Qur'ān.<sup>9</sup>

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village school and two years later to Madrasah Sumatra Tawalib. In 1924, he travelled to Java and there he learned from Umar Said Tjokroaminoto, Muhammad Surio Baranoto and Haji Fakhruddin the leader of *Muhammadiyah*. He also learned from his brother-in-law, Ahmad Rashid Sutan Mansur management and secretarial skills. The *tafsir* gained its name on the occasion of Hamka being honoured with Doctorate by al-Azhar University. He started the writing of the *tafsir* in 1958 following his return from Cairo and completed the work while he was in detention (1964-1965). Nur Lubis, 128.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Quraish Shihab was born in Rappang, South Sulawesi, Indonesia in the year 1944. His father was a scholar in Qur'ānic exegesis and also the ex-rector of IAIN Alauddin Ujung Padang South Sulawesi. His father was among the founders of Universitas Muslimin Indonesia Makasar and became its principal between the years 1959-1965. His early education started in Ujung Pandang after which he continued on to secondary school at Malang, East Java. At the same time, he also attended a religious school at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadits al-Faqihyyah under the tutelage of al-Ḥabib Abd al-Qadir bin Ahmad bin Faqih. In 1958, together with his younger brother, he departed for Cairo, Egypt and there he was accepted to second *thanawiyyah* at al-Azhar after which he managed to pursue his Bachelor's Degree in *uṣul al-dīn*. Later, he obtained his Master's Degree in 1969 and completed his Doctorate Degree in 1982 both at al-Azhar University. *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian al-Qur'an* was first published in the year 2000M/1421H by Penerbit Lentera Hati in cooperation with Iman Jama' Islamic Public Library, Jakarta. The *tafsir* consists of fifteen volumes. Mazlan Ibrahim et al., 124-131.

<sup>8</sup> Abdul Halim Hasan et al., *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*, (Medan: Firma Islamiyah, 8<sup>th</sup>edn., 1955), v.1, 12.

<sup>9</sup> The exegetes stated the significant reason for the writing of the *tafsir*. See Abdul Halim Hasan, et al., *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*, (Penang: Persama Press, 1953, v.1, .2. Abdul Halim Hasan et al., (1955) v.1, 7.

The *tafsir* was first published in the form of twenty pages magazine once a month starting from April 1937. Then due to high demand, it was published twice a month. The *tafsir* was reprinted and republished several times by different publishers. Firma Islamiyah Medan published and printed the *tafsir* for five times from 1936 to 1961. While Yayasan Persatuan Amal Bakti had published the book nine times from 1937 to 1960. In Malaysia, Persama Press, Penang had done a single print from 1952 to 1955 in Arabic script (*Jawi*). In 1969, Pustaka Antara Kuala Lumpur published the Roman edition in two volumes only. At the break of World War II, the publication of the commentary faced some technical problems causing the operation to halt. Abdul Halim and his team noted in the preface of the *tafsir* that the supplies of papers from the Europe especially Norway was cut during this time. Following the end of the war, the publication of the *tafsir* resumed with rapidity due to the high demand coming from both countries; Indonesia and Malaysia. Today, the *tafsir* is no longer available in bookstores. It is no longer reprinted or republished in both countries. The exegetes managed to complete the *tafsir* until *Sūrat al-An'ām* verse 38-39. Abdul Halim Hasan et al., (Medan: Firma Islamiyah, 1955), vl.1, 12.

The *tafsīr* is characterized by the thought of religious reformism<sup>10</sup> (*fīkrat al-tajdīd al-dīnī*) influenced by ‘Abduh through *al-Manār*. It referred mostly to *al-Manār* by Rashīd Riḍā and *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* by Ṭantawī Jawharī, and a combination of other books of *tafsīr* both classical and contemporary ones such as *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān* by al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Aẓīm* by Ibn Kathīr, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* by al-Rāzī, *al-Jāmi‘ fī Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* by al-Qurṭūbī and *Anwār al-Tanzīl* by al-Bayḍāwī. Other sources of reference were also utilized with variation of *madhhab* views, Muslims’ and Westerners’ writings in the classical and contemporary eras. The approach in the commentary is towards the implementation of the permissible reasoning interpretation (*tafsīr bi al-ra’yī al-maḥmūd*) with a combination of both narrative (*ma’thūr*) and reasoning (*ma’qūl*) methods of Qur’ānic interpretation.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study falls within the area of Qur’ānic exegetical studies (*tafsīr of the Qur’ān*) with the primary concern of examining the methods adopted by three Malay exegetes namely Abdul Halim Hasan, Zainal Arifin Abbas and Abdul Rahim Haitami. It is obvious from the *tafsīr* that these exegetes have clearly elaborated some issues concerning faith, politics and social that have also become the interest of this study. Additionally, an investigation on the historical background of the *tafsīr* and the writers is expected to arrive at a specific understanding of the nature of the *tafsīr*. It should be highlighted that the study on the issues and methodology of the *tafsīr* is rarely done by others and this has become the main focus of this study. It should be highlighted here that the translation of Qur’ānic verses in the study was done by referring to the version by Mufti Taqī ‘Uthmanī.

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<sup>10</sup> The reformists aimed at purification of Islamic belief and practice from non-Islamic elements caused by *taqlīd*, mysticism, animism etc. For further information, see page 26 of the study.

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What were the historical conditions during the period of writing the *tafsīr* and to what extent did these affect the writing of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*?
2. To what extent had the involvement of the writers of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* in the academic world assisted them in exegetical writings?
3. What was the significance of the writing of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* and to what extent did it address the needs of the Malay Muslims of its time?
4. What were the methods practiced by the exegetes in writing this *tafsīr* and what were the sources of such methodological orientation?
5. How did the exegetes address certain issues concerning the Malay Muslim society and to what extent have time and space factors collaborated in their discussion?

### 1.4 OBJECTIVES

1. To study the historical conditions during the writing of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* in order to understand the impact of past events on the writing of the commentary.
2. To study the historical background of the writers and their intellectual activities as well as their academic outcomes.
3. To examine the background of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* and thus understand its features and significance.

4. To analyze the methods exercised by the exegetes in giving service to the Qur'ānic commentary and to examine and identify the sources of the *tafsīr*.
5. To expose the issues brought by the exegetes and compare them with other sources in order to evaluate the accuracy of the discussion and exposition of views.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study mainly involves library research. This can be explained in detail by the following:

1. Historical Investigation – involves studying the historical background of the *tafsīr* and the writers in order to better understand the implications of such methods adopted by the writers.
2. Content Analysis – involves analyzing the content of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* in order to identify issues discussed and elaborated by writers. An analytical study of these issues is hoped to bring the researcher to a better understanding of the context addressed by the *tafsīr*.
3. Comparative Analysis – involves making comparison of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* with its sources of reference. This is done for a detailed examination of the methods and issues adopted by the exegetes from their sources.

## **1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Detailed search on either *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* or the writers bears limited results. Scarcity of written works on this topic shows that very few studies have been done on

the *tafsīr*. In the event where the *tafsīr* is mentioned, Abdul Halim Hasan is often cited as the main author to the *tafsīr*. A coined term for the three authors – *Tiga Serangkai* – is also cited but with limitation. Mostly, it appears in the writings of the Malay scholars.

Howard M. Federspiel in *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'ān* mentions Abdul Halim Hasan and his work under separate sub-headings when discussing the third-generation commentaries. He categorizes *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* (The Commentary of the Blessed Qur'ān) as part of “attempts of Indonesian Muslim writers to make the teachings of Qur'ān comprehensible to their fellow Indonesians”.<sup>11</sup> Within a chapter, Federspiel discusses and argues in detail about the twentieth century books on *tafsīr*, their authors, genre, methods, intended audiences and sources used. Federspiel's work on Abdul Halim Hasan and *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* is only limited to the section discussed. No further information on the other two writers (Zainal Arifin Abbas and Abdul Rahim Haitami) and the *tafsīr* is made available in this work.

Muhammad Nur Lubis asserts in detail the historical background of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. His book entitled *Data-Data Terbitan Awal Penterjemahan dan Pentafsiran al-Qur'ān di Alam Melayu* presents within five pages a detailed account of the *tafsīr*, its publications in both Indonesia and Malaysia<sup>12</sup>, and a brief insight on methods adopted in writing the *tafsīr*. Initially, Nur Lubis gives a general introduction by stating the names of the writers and series of publications in both Indonesia and Malaysia. He then exposes the contents of introductory pages, among others; *‘ulūm al-*

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<sup>11</sup> Howard M. Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'ān*, (New York: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1994), 43.

<sup>12</sup> He states that his references came from a copy held by Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ugama, Brunei Darussalam. It is a Malaysian publication year 1969 by Pustaka Antara Kuala Lumpur and another copy of his own. From this statement, it is clear that the copy in Brunei is printed and published in Malaysia. Nur Lubis, 37.

*Qur'ān*, content of the Qur'ān, introduction to the science of *tafsīr*, the history of *tafsīr*, the history of the Qur'ān and so forth. The successive headings carry more detail and informative data on the publication. Here, Nur Lubis presents the background of the publication. He includes the time and the location of the first Indonesian publication together with the details of the publisher. He summarises that the incompleteness of the *tafsīr* was due to the break of World War II. Nur Lubis also presents a brief analysis of the methodology of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. Here, he explains methods adopted in the writing of the *tafsīr*. Lastly, he describes one and perhaps the most crucial approach by the exegetes which is their refusal towards expressing self-opinions in order to prevent misleading interpretations of the Qur'ān. The discussion attempted by Nur Lubis on the *tafsīr* is limited due to his neglect of the writers' background. Methodological analysis done was made briefly only to reflect the work done in the *tafsīr*.

Mustaffa Abdullah in his book *Rasyid Rida Pengaruhnya di Malaysia* (Rasyid Rida His Influence in Malaysia), focuses on the implication of Rida's ideology on the Malay authors and this includes *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. In a section, he elaborates his findings on those commentaries (*tafsīr*) under the influence of *Tafsīr al-Manār*. In this regard, he brings to light examples from *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. This is done briefly by the author without mentioning details of the writers and background information of the *tafsīr*.<sup>13</sup>

There is one book that gives a clear and detailed biography of the first writer. *Sejarah Ulama-ulama Terkemuka di Sumatera Utara* (History of Prominent Muslim Scholars of North Sumatera) by Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara provides somewhat complete background information about Abdul Halim Hasan. Listed in this book –

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<sup>13</sup> Mustaffa Abdullah, *Rashīd Rīdā Pengaruhnya di Malaysia*, (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 2009), 203.

which was printed in 1983 – are entries of 42 religious and intellectual figures of North Sumatera since the beginning of the eightieth century until the twentieth century, Abdul Halim Hasan being one of them. Presented within this book are information on his name, place of birth, educational background, his teachers and mentors, specializations, intellectual as well as his academic affiliations, students and the institutions he was involved with during his lifetime. A concise explanation of the coined-term ‘*Tiga Serangkai*’ is also brought-up; a nickname reflecting the trio-authors/writers of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. This eight and a half page writing about Abdul Halim Hasan’s background concludes with information on his death and place of burial. Apparently, only details of Abdul Halim Hasan could be found discussed in this book. No further account of the *tafsīr* and the other two writers is given.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the most concise written work on the *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* could be found in *Pengenalan Tokoh dan Kitab-Kitab Tafsīr Melayu Ulama Nusantara* (Introduction to the Scholars of the Malay Archipelago and Their Books of *Tafsīr*) by Mazlan Ibrahim, Jawiah Dakir and Mohd Najib Abdul Kadir.<sup>15</sup> They initially discuss various books of *tafsīr* found in the region of the Malay Archipelago by presenting biography of the writers or exegetes together with a brief discussion on their methods in *tafsīr*. In this book, details on the publication of *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* are discussed together with brief analyses of selected methods of the *Tafsīr*. These methods are narrative methods (*tafsīr bi al-ma’thūr*), reasoning methods (*tafsīr bi al-ra’yī*), methods dealing with reason of revelation (*sabab al-nuzūl*) and Israelite stories (*isrā’iliyyat*) and method of interpreting legal verse (*āyāt al-aḥkām*). However, the

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<sup>14</sup> Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, *Sejarah Ulama-ulama Terkemuka di Sumatera Utara*, (Sumatera: Institut Agama Islam Negeri Al Jamiah, 1983), 253-260.

<sup>15</sup> Mazlan Ibrahim et al., 215-245.

study on the methods is done very briefly with few examples given and only details of Abdul Halim Hasan were found within this study.

Finally, after more than a year of searching, a topic almost similar to this one is found. A study done at the al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt exposes a pioneering work on *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*. Abdul Qadir Umar Uthman al-Hamidy wrote on *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim li 'Abd al-Halim Hasan wa Akharayn: Dirasah Manhajiyah wa Ta'riban li al-Juz' al-Awwal Minhu*<sup>16</sup> (*Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim by Abdul Halim Hasan and Others: Methodological Study and Arabic Translation of Its First Chapter*). The study focuses on the study of methods in Part One, and translation into Arabic (*ta'rib*) of the first chapter of the *tafsir* in Part Two. In this study, the first part becomes the principal interest. The methodological study is structured into several points such as the relationship between verses and chapters (*tanāsub al-āyāt wa al-suwar*), reasons for revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), abrogation (*nāsikh wa mansūkh*), *mutashābihāt*, Jewish narration (*isrā'iliyyāt*) and so on. The discussion on methodology also covers the study on the references of the *tafsir*, narrative interpretation (*tafsir bi al-ma'thūr*), reasoning interpretation (*tafsir bi al-ra'yī*) and methods dealing with cosmic and legal verses. Nevertheless, the study does not focus on issues discussed in the *tafsir*. Furthermore, certain methodological aspects are left unexamined such as Makkan and Madinan, and thematic interpretation of the *tafsir*. This, together with the study of issues become the main focus of the current study.

## 1.7 CHAPTERIZATION

This dissertation carries six chapters and they could be identified as follow:

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<sup>16</sup> Abdul Qadir Umar Uthman al-Hamidy, "Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim li 'Abd al-Halim Hasan wa Akharayn: Dirasah Manhajiyah wa Ta'riban li al-Juz' al-Awwal Minhu", (Ph.D. thesis, University of al-Azhar, 2006).