



# Epistemology of Legal Interpretation: History, Limitations, and Deviations

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines *hukmi* interpretation as one approach to interpreting the Qur'an, focusing on its treatment of verses on Islamic law. Through a descriptive-analytical approach based on literature studies, this research traces the history of the emergence, epistemological characteristics, and methodological dynamics of *hukmi* interpretation from the time of the Prophet to the period of classical interpretation codification and its development in the modern era. The findings show that *hukmi* interpretation emerged in the context of sectarian debates and *taqlid* practices that influenced the methodological consistency of interpretation, with frequent mixing of the *bayani* and *istinbati* approaches. Socio-political factors and sectarian fanaticism also contributed to methodological deviations that influenced the understanding of law in *hukmi* interpretation. This research contributes to the understanding of the construction of legal knowledge in the tradition of interpretation, highlighting the importance of contextual and epistemological approaches for the development of a more objective and critical contemporary Islamic legal interpretation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic law and a fundamental reference for all Muslims in their daily lives. As a guidebook, the Qur'an not only provides moral and spiritual guidance, but also establishes normative foundations for the development of shari'ah law, which covers various aspects of human activity. It is in this context that a style of interpretation known as *tafsir hukmī* has developed, which focuses specifically on verses related to legal provisions. This type of interpretation was born out of the efforts of scholars to understand and explain the laws of the Qur'an through a structured and methodological approach. The *mufassir* integrated the principles of interpretation with the rules of *fiqh* and *usul al-fiqh*, so that the resulting interpretation was not only textual but also considered context, legal objectives, and practical implications. Through this process, *hukmi* interpretation becomes an important bridge connecting revelation with social reality, while ensuring that the teachings of the Qur'an remain relevant in addressing legal issues that arise throughout the ages. Thus, this form of interpretation plays a major role in the formation and development of Islamic law in a sustainable manner (Mustaqim, 2015). The Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic law and a fundamental reference for all Muslims in their daily lives. As a

guidebook, the Qur'an not only provides moral and spiritual guidance, but also establishes normative foundations that form the basis for the development of *shari'ah* law, which covers various aspects of human activity. It is in this context that a style of interpretation known as *tafsir hukmī* developed, which focuses specifically on verses related to legal provisions. This type of interpretation emerged from scholars' efforts to understand and explain the laws of the Qur'an through a structured, methodological approach. The *mufassir* integrated the principles of interpretation with the rules of *fiqh* and *usul fiqh*, so that the resulting interpretation was not only textual, but also took into account the context, legal objectives, and practical implications. Through this process, *hukmi* interpretation serves as an important bridge between revelation and social reality, ensuring that the teachings of the Qur'an remain relevant in addressing legal issues that arise throughout the ages. Thus, this form of interpretation plays a major role in the formation and development of Islamic law in a sustainable manner (Suma, 2002).

Historically, the development of legal interpretation has shown significant dynamics from the era of the *Salaf* scholars to the classical period. During this phase, the interpretation of legal verses became more mature and structured, marked by the emergence of various major works that became the main references in Islamic legal studies. Among these important contributions are *Ahkam al-Qur'an* by al-Jassas and *Al-Jami'li Ahkam al-Qur'an* by al-Qurtubi. These two works not only present a systematic explanation of legal verses, but also reveal a strong epistemological character in the tradition of legal interpretation. In these works, it is clear that classical *mufassir* combine the basic principles of *qawaid tafsir*, *usul fiqh*, and *ushul tafsir* into their methods of legal reasoning. The integration of these three aspects makes legal interpretation not merely textual, but also an in-depth analysis that considers context, *shari'* rules, and a rigorous methodological framework. Thus, legal interpretation from this period not only gave rise to a comprehensive understanding of legal verses, but also formed a methodological foundation that greatly influenced the development of Islamic legal science in subsequent generations.

Despite its significant contribution to the development of Islamic law, the interpretation of legal verses does not always employ a consistent methodology. In various works of interpretation, there is often a mixture of the *bayani* approach, which focuses on linguistic studies, and the *istinbati* approach, which is oriented towards drawing legal conclusions. This unstructured combination often blurs the line between linguistic description and legal construction. This phenomenon indicates that the process of legal interpretation is influenced by the *fiqh* school of thought, the socio-political conditions at the time of the interpretation's compilation, and the orientation of the *mufassir's* thinking. As a result, the tendency to favor a particular school of thought sometimes leads to the interpretation of verses being directed to support legal views that are already established in the tradition of that school. This raises epistemological issues that warrant deeper study, particularly regarding how methodological inconsistencies and deviations can arise within the tradition of classical legal interpretation. Considering these problems, this study attempts to review the various challenges faced in the interpretation of legal verses in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of legal interpretation methodology in the history of Islamic thought (Rofiqoh, 2020).

Several previous studies have discussed legal interpretation in general. For example, the article "Revisiting the Interpretation of Quranic Law: Unraveling the Interpretation of Quranic Law and Its Historical Evolution" by Sandi Nugraha and Badruzzaman M. Yunus traces the history of the emergence of legal patterns in the interpretation of the Quran and defines the scope of the term legal interpretation with a descriptive historical approach, showing that legal interpretation is one of the styles of Quranic interpretation that uses legal theories and approaches that have various interpretations in Islamic *Fiqh* (Nugraha & Yunus, 2023). In addition, the article "The Existence of Legal Interpretation Patterns in Al-Qur'an Interpretation" by Rohmatullah and Al-Ghifari explains in detail the characteristics of legal interpretation from historical, scope, and academic debate perspectives to reinforce the view that legal interpretation is not a new phenomenon (Rohmatullah & Al-Ghifari, 2023). In addition, the article "Tafsir *Hukmi* (Interpretation Patterns in the Qur'an)" by Fauzan Hizbullah & Rasyidul Fikri discusses the application of Islamic law in a modern context (Hizbullah & Fikri, 2025). In addition, the article "A Social Approach to Understanding *Hukmi* Interpretation: A Bridge Between Text and Context" by Ahmad Ajik, Ani Zulaiha, and Isma Imadussalam explains how *hukmi* interpretation has been applied by scholars from the time of the Prophet to the development of legal schools, as well as the challenges faced in dealing with contemporary legal issues (Mubarak et al., 2025). In addition, an article written by Sigit Abdulloh and Yusman Gunara entitled "The Development and Acceptance of *Hukmi* Interpretation Among Scholars" reveals the diversity of approaches to *hukmi* interpretation in various Islamic schools of

thought, highlights the complexity of Sharia law interpretation, explains the history of the emergence of legal patterns in the world of Quranic interpretation, the boundaries of the terms discussed, debates among scholars, and examples of legal interpretation books (Abdulloh & Gunara, 2024).

Previous studies have generally emphasized the role of legal interpretation in the development of Islamic jurisprudence, without delving deeply into the epistemological dimensions that explain the mechanisms of legal methods behind the interpretation process. This gap indicates the need for a new approach that not only highlights the normative function of interpretation, but also examines how legal knowledge is constructed and justified by interpreters. Based on this need, this study presents an update by focusing on the epistemological aspects of legal interpretation. The study focuses on the concept of *hukmi*, namely how legal knowledge is constructed within the framework of classical interpretation, and the extent to which the orientation of the *madhhab* and the socio-political context at that time shaped the methodology of interpretation. This study also highlights the phenomenon of methodological deviations that arise in the practice of legal interpretation, including inconsistencies between linguistic approaches and normative legal derivations. Thus, this study not only broadens the understanding of the contribution of legal interpretation to fiqh, but also reveals the internal dynamics in its epistemological process. This analysis is expected to provide deeper insights into the interaction between historical context, schools of thought, and methodology in the tradition of classical Islamic legal interpretation, as well as offering a reflective foundation for the development of contemporary Islamic legal studies.

This study aims to trace the meaning and history of the emergence of legal interpretation, as well as the limitations of legal interpretation as an important form of interpretation in the Islamic scientific tradition. In addition, this study aims to explain why legal interpretation emerged and dominated during the Golden Age of Islam. This study describes the distinctive features and epistemological characteristics of legal interpretation. Furthermore, this study analyzes various forms of methodological deviations that occur in legal interpretation. Through this approach, it is hoped that this study can make a new contribution to understanding the epistemological dynamics of legal interpretation and its relevance to the development of contemporary Islamic interpretation and law. This study uses a library research method or literature study because the research data as a whole is sourced from available texts and several scientific documents. Therefore, the data sources used are secondary and taken from several literatures relevant to the research theme. These sources include academic study books, journal articles, and other scientific works that can support this research, including: a book by Fahmi Ahmad Jawwas entitled *Formulasi Metode Tafsir Ahkam* (Formulation of the Ahkam Interpretation Method) in 2023, then research by Muhammad Fauzan and M. Rasyidul Fikri in 2025, Ahmad Ajik Nur Fata, et al. in 2025, Acep Ihsan Rohmatullah and Faishal al-Ghifari in 2023, Sandi Nugraha and Badruzzaman M Yunus in 2023, and Sandi Nugraha and Muhammad Hafidz Basyiruddin in 2022. From the above studies, based on the research conducted by the researchers, the discussion is limited to definitions, brief history, and methodology. Therefore, the scientific originality of this research is to further explain the discussion of why legal interpretation emerged during the golden age and reveal some of its deviations.

This study applies a descriptive-analytical data analysis method. The descriptive approach is used to collect and present various data relevant to the focus of the study, namely legal interpretation. Meanwhile, the analytical approach serves to select, sort, and evaluate specific information related to the practice and theory of legal interpretation. The research process continued with the grouping of data based on specific themes, thereby facilitating in-depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources. This analysis was aimed at identifying and understanding several important aspects, including the definition of legal interpretation, the characteristics of the methods used, its historical development, and various methodological deviations that arise in the practice of interpretation. With these steps, the research can systematically compile data and findings so that each aspect can be comprehensively understood. The results of the analysis are then integrated to produce a more complete understanding of the epistemological construction of legal interpretation. This approach allows researchers to draw conclusions that not only describe the phenomenon descriptively, but also provide analytical insights into the mechanisms, principles, and challenges that arise in the process of legal interpretation, so that readers obtain a complete picture of the epistemological dynamics of legal interpretation in the classical tradition.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### • Epistemology, History of Emergence, Characteristics, and Deviations in the Interpretation of *Hukmi*

The epistemology of legal interpretation is a branch of theory that emphasizes the study of knowledge surrounding legal interpretation, including the sources, structure, and methods used in understanding legal texts. In the context of philosophy, epistemology is often referred to as the theory of knowledge, which is the study of the nature, scope, and formation of knowledge. Harun Nasution, quoted by Fahmi, explains that epistemology is the science that discusses the meaning of knowledge and the process of forming knowledge itself, thereby providing a conceptual basis for understanding how humans acquire and validate knowledge. Legal interpretation epistemology is a branch of theory that emphasizes the study of knowledge surrounding legal interpretation, including the sources, structure, and methods used in understanding legal texts. In the context of philosophy, epistemology is often referred to as the theory of knowledge, which is the study of the nature, scope, and formation of knowledge. Harun Nasution, quoted by Fahmi, explains that epistemology is the science that discusses the meaning of knowledge and the process of forming knowledge itself, thereby providing a conceptual basis for understanding how humans acquire and validate knowledge (Jawwas, 2023).

Etymologically, the term law contains the meaning of a decision or command that regulates behavior. Terminologically, legal principles refer to Allah's normative commands, addressed to individuals who have obligations (*mukallaf*), and covering both commands and prohibitions. Thus, the epistemology of legal interpretation not only examines the knowledge mechanisms underlying interpretation, but also considers how law as a normative guideline is understood, interpreted, and applied. This approach allows for a more systematic, critical, and methodological study of legal interpretation, as it considers the relationship between the sources of law, the structure of interpretation, and the normative principles that underlie the formation of Islamic law (Arifuddin et al., 2023). Therefore, according to Nuruddin 'Itr, as quoted by Fahmi in his book, the definition of tafsir *hukmi* is an interpretation of the Qur'an that emphasizes legal verses and how to extract or *istinbat* laws from those verses.

Ahmad Husain and Muh Ilham Usman stated that according to *fiqh* and *usul fiqh* experts, legal interpretation is often understood as an effort to uncover the meaning of the Qur'anic text. In this context, tafsir is seen as an explanation of the verses of the Qur'an that are required by *shari'ah* and are directly related to human behavior. However, *fiqh* experts emphasize that there has been no new authoritative interpretation since the death of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Therefore, interpretations made by the Companions and subsequent generations still refer to the interpretations made by the Prophet and their *ijtihad* on the Qur'an and Sunnah (Iqbal, 2016). In general, *fiqh* scholars use several methods in interpreting the Qur'an. These methods include verse-by-verse interpretation, interpretation based on hadith or Sunnah, the use of *Kulliyah Fiqhiyyah* or universal rules found in the Qur'an and Sunnah, and the application of '*aqliyyah* principles through *ijtihad*. However, the way these methods are applied varies among Islamic legal scholars, resulting in variations in the interpretation and understanding of Qur'anic verses. These differences reflect the methodological dynamics that have influenced the interpretation of Islamic law historically and contemporarily (Alawiyah, 2024).

The limitations in legal interpretation emphasize that this study specifically focuses on verses of the Qur'an that contain laws or *shari'ah* regulations. This limited approach distinguishes legal interpretation from other types of Qur'anic interpretation, which usually discuss verses as a whole or in sequence. Thus, the study of legal interpretation does not aim to interpret the entire text of the Qur'an linearly or thematically, but rather focuses on verses that are directly related to the formation of law and guidelines for human behavior. This approach allows for a more in-depth analysis of legal aspects, normative principles, and the application of *shari'ah* provisions in real life, making legal interpretation an important instrument in understanding and applying Islamic rules in a contextual and targeted manner (Saleh et al., 2024). This approach allows research to explore the meaning, principles, and application of the law in greater depth, without being distracted by non-legal aspects of interpretation, such as historical narratives, stories, or moral and ethical themes found in other verses. By limiting the scope to legal verses, research can emphasize methodological and epistemological analysis related to the process of legal interpretation, including the mechanisms of *ijtihad*, the influence of *madhhab*, and the dynamics of applying legal principles in a socio-political context. Therefore, this focus helps to produce a sharper and more systematic understanding of legal interpretation, enabling researchers to assess the structure, characteristics, and variations of legal interpretation among classical

and contemporary mufassir, without straying into non-legal aspects that may confuse the purpose of the study (Mubarak dkk., 2025).

Tafsir al-Qurtubi highlights the importance of analyzing pronunciation, language structure, and linguistic context related to legal verses in the Qur'an. This approach emphasizes that legal interpretation is not limited to understanding the literal meaning of verses, but also takes into account linguistic aspects that can influence legal interpretation. Therefore, the understanding of legal provisions often differs between one interpreter and another, as each assesses the linguistic context, sentence structure, and legal implications based on their own perspective and method of interpretation. This variation reflects the complexity of legal interpretation, in which linguistic factors are one of the important elements that determine the outcome of interpretation, while also showing that legal interpretation is dynamic and contextual, adapting to the conditions and needs of different communities (Duwila et al., 2024). Differences in legal understanding are also influenced by ongoing changes and developments in human life, which give rise to new legal challenges and issues. Dynamic social, economic, and political factors require the application of law to be adapted to contemporary conditions. In this situation, legal interpretation plays a strategic role, as it is an important means of interpreting and adapting the principles of *shari'ah* to real issues that arise in society. Thus, legal interpretation not only functions as a normative explanation, but also as an adaptive instrument that allows Islamic law to remain relevant and applicable. This role emphasizes the importance of a contextual approach in legal interpretation, so that Sharia provisions can be effectively applied in an ever-changing and complex social life, and are able to respond to the needs of society in a fair and proportional manner (Jafar et al., 2025). Thus, legal interpretation not only serves as a normative explanation, but also as an adaptive mechanism that allows Islamic law to remain relevant amid changes in human life. The existence of legal interpretation, as practiced by al-Qurtubi, is very significant because it provides guidelines for the contextual, systematic, and *shari'ah*-based application of law.

- **History of the Emergence of Tafsir *Hukmi***

Based on the views of Ahmadi Husain and Muh. Ilham Usman, legal interpretation has actually been present since the beginning of the tradition of interpreting the Qur'an. The presence of legal interpretation shows that the normative and regulatory aspects of the Qur'an have been a major concern of interpreters since the early days of interpretation. In other words, legal interpretation is not a phenomenon that emerged later, but rather an integral part of the history of interpretation itself. This confirms that from the period of the Prophet Muhammad *Salla Allahu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* (SAW) to the generations of the Companions and *tabi'in*, efforts to understand verses containing laws have always been an important focus in the study of interpretation (Sari et al., 2025). From the outset, exegetes have attempted to interpret legal verses by considering the social and cultural context and living conditions of the community at that time. Legal interpretation also serves to bridge the understanding between the principles of *shari'ah* and everyday practices, so that the law can be applied in a relevant and contextual manner. Therefore, legal interpretation is not only descriptive, but also normative and applicable. The existence of legal interpretation from the beginning confirms its strategic role in guiding people to understand, implement, and adapt the laws of the Qur'an to the dynamics of human life from generation to generation (Mubarak et al., 2025).

The interpretive style that emphasizes legal aspects has existed since the time of the Companions and has had a significant influence on the way they interpreted the Qur'an. This can be seen in important figures such as Umar ibn Khattab, Ibn Mas'ud, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and other Companions who emphasized the legal understanding of the sacred text. According to Abdullah Abu al-Su'ud Badr, this phenomenon was very natural because the conditions of society at that time demanded a systematic movement to interpret the Qur'an with a *fiqh* approach (Hidayat, 2020). During the era of the Companions and *Tabi'in*, the term *fiqh* encompassed all understanding derived from the Qur'an and hadith, including aspects of *faith*, morals, and daily practices. Thus, *fiqh* was not limited to formal legal rules, but also included a comprehensive understanding of the principles that govern human life. *Fiqh* scholars at that time were often called *qurra'*, individuals who not only memorized the Qur'an, but also understood and mastered the laws contained therein. They became the main source in the formation of Islamic law, integrating sacred texts with social practices, so that legal interpretations developed organically and were relevant to the needs of society at that time (Nurlina et al., 2024).

Husain al-Zahabi, in his work *al-Tafsir wa al-Mufasssirun*, explains that the development of *hukmi* tafsir can be divided into three main stages (Adz-Dzahabi, 2021). The first stage covers the period from the time of the Prophet Muhammad *Salla Allahu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* (SAW) to the emergence of various schools of *fiqh*.

During this period, legal interpretation was more direct, following the guidance and practices of the Prophet, so that the interpretation of legal verses was carried out by considering the context of the revelation and the situation of society at that time (Abdulloh & Gunara, 2024). The second stage occurred simultaneously with the emergence of *fiqh* schools of thought. In this phase, legal interpretation began to be influenced by differences in the *fiqh* approaches applied by scholars, so that legal interpretation was no longer singular, but began to show variations in accordance with the methodological principles of each school of thought (Hizbullah & Fikri, 2025). The third stage emerged after the rise of sectarian fanaticism, where legal interpretations were sometimes influenced by allegiance to a particular sect. This meant that legal interpretations were not always objective, as the tendency to adapt legal verses to the views of the sect in question could influence the results of the interpretation. This division into three periods provides an overview of the evolution of legal interpretation, from an approach that directly follows revelation to complex interpretations that are sometimes influenced by sectarian factors in the *fiqh* tradition (Adz-Dzahabi, 2021).

The Qur'an contains various verses related to law, both in the realm of worship, *muamalah*, and other aspects of life. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Muslims gained an understanding of these legal verses directly from him. The Prophet explained their meaning and application by referring to the Arabic context used at that time, so that the understanding of the law was practical and contextual. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad became the main source for his companions in understanding and implementing the legal provisions contained in the Qur'an. After the Prophet's death, the companions faced new challenges in establishing Sharia law, especially for issues that were not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an or Sunnah. In this situation, the companions performed *ijtihad* to interpret the verses of law by considering the meaning, context, and purpose of the law. This process of *ijtihad* enabled them to establish laws that were relevant to the needs of society at that time (Djamil, 2023). If there is a clear argument from the Prophet Muhammad, legal decisions are based on that argument. However, if no explicit guidance is found, the companions return to using *ijtihad* by referring to the general principles found in the Qur'an and Sunnah, then determining the law through their own reasoning. With this approach, the companions succeeded in adapting *shari'ah* law to evolving social conditions, while maintaining consistency between the text of revelation and its application in practice. This method reflects the dynamics of legal interpretation in the early period of Islam, where the understanding of law was adaptive but still based on the principles of revelation.

Friends sometimes show differences in understanding a particular verse of law. These differences can be caused by variations in understanding the wording of the verse, the context of the events behind the revelation of the verse, or differences in the reasoning process to determine the most appropriate meaning. One famous example is the difference of opinion between Umar ibn al-Khattab and Ali ibn Abi Talib regarding the waiting period for a pregnant woman whose husband has died. Umar ibn al-Khattab argued that the waiting period should be calculated as the longer of two possibilities, namely childbirth or four months and ten days. Meanwhile, Ali ibn Abi Talib argued that the waiting period ends at the time of delivery, even if four months and ten days have not been reached. This difference arose because there were two verses that seemed to have different implications. Umar ibn al-Khattab tried to reconcile the two verses and set a longer waiting period, while Ali ibn Abi Talib chose to refer to the verse that specifically discussed pregnancy. Although their methods of interpretation differed, both had the same goal, which was to find the most accurate legal truth. This openness to the truth also shows that the Companions were ready to admit if their opinions were wrong and accept more accurate arguments. This approach emphasizes the scientific principle in legal interpretation: even though there are differences, the search for correct understanding remains the top priority (Junaedi, 2018). During the emergence of Islamic jurisprudence schools of thought, many important events occurred among Muslims that had never happened before and required legal consideration. Scholars at that time engaged in *ijtihad* based on the Qur'an, Sunnah, and other sources of law. They sometimes had differences of opinion due to differing interpretations of the evidence. However, there was no fanaticism among the schools of thought; on the contrary, all agreed to uphold the truth and engage in *istinbat* (legal reasoning) to determine the most valid legal rulings. For example, when Imam al-Shafi'i said, "If the *hadith* is authentic, then that is my school of thought," Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal replied, "Do not imitate my opinion, the opinion of Malik, al-Shafi'i, or al-Awza'i, but take from the source, which is the *hadith*." This is one example of how the earlier imams respected and valued differences of opinion (Adz-Dzahabi, 2021).

After the emergence of Islamic schools of thought, the next generation faced the phenomenon of imitation and fanaticism towards certain ideas. This fanaticism tended to reject other opinions, limit freedom of thought, and hinder constructive criticism. The situation became more complex when followers of a school

of thought decided to stop the practice of *ijtihad*, so that legal truth was only viewed through the perspective of their own imam. They relied on opinions that had been passed down from generation to generation and sought to assert the superiority of their school of thought while rejecting other schools. Studies of legal interpretation throughout history show that most differences in interpretation among exegetes, whether they follow a school of thought or not, arise from the way they understand legal verses. Several generations of exegetes chose to remain neutral, not siding with any particular school of thought, so their views were more flexible. Exegetes who belong to a school of thought tend to interpret legal verses based on their own *fiqh* framework, while independent exegetes emphasize a more free and open understanding, making their interpretations more objective. Thus, differences in interpretation are not only influenced by methodology, but also by ideological orientation and attachment to a particular school of thought, which has shaped the variety of interpretations of Islamic law throughout history (Mubarok et al., 2025).

- **Reasons for the emergence of Tafsir *Hukmi* in the Golden Age**

During the golden age of Islamic civilization, there was intense debate among scholars regarding differences in opinion among various schools of *fiqh*. With the emergence of major schools such as Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali, the tradition of *ijtihad* gradually shifted towards a more rigid practice of *taqlid*, in which followers of a school tended to imitate the opinions of their imams without conducting independent legal reasoning. This situation gave rise to intellectual competition among scholars, who sought to produce interpretations of the Qur'an that affirmed and strengthened the position of their respective schools of thought. In this context, *hukmi* tafsir emerged as a form of interpretation that emphasized normative legal aspects. This interpretation highlights verses that contain sharia rules and provisions, and emphasizes legal views in accordance with the *fiqh* framework of each school of thought. Thus, *hukmi* interpretation not only became a means of understanding the Qur'an textually, but also served as a strategic tool for each school of thought in maintaining its authority and method of interpretation. This development reflects the close relationship between the dynamics of madhhabs, the practice of *taqlid*, and the evolution of legal interpretation in the Islamic intellectual tradition during that period (Syahidin, 2016).

The phenomenon of sectarian fanaticism has become one of the important factors driving the interpretation of the Qur'an towards a legalistic approach. Exegetes from various schools of thought utilize legalistic interpretation as a means to convey and reinforce arguments of *shari'ah* law in accordance with the perspectives of their respective schools. In this context, legalistic interpretation emerged as a synthesis between the linguistic (*bayani*) approach and the legal derivation (*istinbati*) approach, although there were often inconsistencies in the methods applied. The process of developing legalistic interpretation did not only take place conceptually, but was also influenced by the social and political context of the time. These factors strengthened the position and dominance of certain schools of thought in Muslim society, so that legal interpretation functioned not only as a textual study, but also as an instrument to maintain the intellectual and legal influence of each school of thought. Thus, legalistic interpretation reflects the interaction between interpretive methodology, school orientation, and historical-social conditions, while also showing how Islamic legal interpretation developed in response to normative and political needs in classical Muslim society (Abdulloh & Gunara, 2024).

Legal interpretation during the golden age of Islamic civilization developed as a form of Qur'anic exegesis that was greatly influenced by the dynamics of sectarian debates and the practice of *taqlid*. The tendency to follow a particular school of thought led to monumental, normative works of exegesis with a bureaucratic structure in Islamic law. On the other hand, this phenomenon also presented epistemological challenges, such as sectarian fanaticism and the use of mixed methods between linguistic (*bayani*) and legal derivation (*istinbati*) approaches. These conditions emphasized the importance of contextual and methodological approaches in understanding the development of legal interpretation. An analysis of the history of legal interpretation allows us to trace how various social, political, and intellectual factors shaped the way mufassir interpreted legal verses. In addition, this understanding helps explain the differences in interpretation among mufassir, both those who belong to a school of thought and those who are independent, and shows the relationship between the dynamics of schools of thought, the practice of *taqlid*, and the evolution of interpretation methodology (A. Rahman, 2020). Thus, the study of legal interpretation not only serves to understand the text of the Qur'an, but also as a means of assessing the historical context and epistemological principles that guide the development of Islamic law in the classical scholarly tradition.

- **Characteristics of the Tafsir Book with a Legal Character**

The *fiqh* style of interpretation is an approach to interpreting the Qur'an that focuses on discussing the *fiqh* laws contained in the holy verses. The main purpose of this style of interpretation is to provide solutions to various legal issues faced by humanity, by referring directly to the verses of the Qur'an as the main source. *Fiqh* interpretation emphasizes normative and applicative understanding, so that each legal verse is analyzed to determine its practical implications in everyday life. Through this style of interpretation, the mufassir not only explains the meaning of the text, but also connects it with applicable Islamic legal principles, so that it can be used as a guideline in resolving *fiqh* issues that arise in society. This approach requires integrating linguistic understanding, historical context, and legal objectives to produce an interpretation that is relevant and can be applied in practice. Thus, *fiqh* interpretation becomes an important instrument in the Islamic scholarly tradition, as it serves as a bridge between the text of the Qur'an and the legal practices needed by the ummah, while ensuring that the application of the law remains in accordance with the principles of sharia and the social needs of each generation (Fadillah et al., 2023).

Ahkam verses refer to parts of the Qur'an that contain commands, prohibitions, or specific *fiqh* issues. This type of interpretation emerged in response to new issues related to *fiqh* law in society. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the scope for establishing new laws through consensus among scholars became limited, giving rise to the need for more in-depth legal reasoning. In these circumstances, scholars with expertise, depth of knowledge, and wisdom engaged in *ijtihad* to find laws that were in accordance with the principles of *shari'ah*. This process of *ijtihad* allowed for the interpretation of *ahkam* verses to be not only literal, but also to take into account the social and cultural context and the practical needs of the people at that time. Thus, *ahkam* interpretation served as an important means of establishing *fiqh* law in an adaptive manner, bridging the provisions of the Qur'an with everyday practices. This type of interpretation emphasizes the integration of textual understanding, legal wisdom, and the mufassir's ability to interpret legal verses in a relevant manner, so that Islamic law remains applicable and contextual for the community (Hamidi et al., 2013).

In the development of Qur'anic interpretation, the emergence of Imams such as Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Asy-Syafi'i, and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal became important milestones in the history of legal interpretation. These imams not only established the foundations of their respective *fiqh*, but were also followed by generations of followers who studied the field of interpretation. This influence is clearly seen in their exegetical works, which tend to highlight the legal aspects of the verses of the Qur'an, giving rise to a type of exegesis known as Tafsir *Hukmi*. The main focus of this interpretation is to find *fiqh* laws and guidelines for life from the text of the Qur'an, especially in the areas of worship, *muamalah*, and criminal and civil law. Tafsir *Hukmi* has a number of specific characteristics that distinguish it from other types of interpretation. *First*, it focuses on *ahkam* verses, which are verses that contain sharia legal provisions. These verses are the main focus because of their relevance in solving practical problems faced by the *ummah*. *Second*, the *fiqh* approach applied in this interpretation emphasizes the differences of opinion among the *fiqh* schools of thought, so that *hukmi* interpretation often presents variations in interpretation and the reasons behind certain legal choices. This allows readers to understand how a legal provision can be applied by considering various *fiqh* perspectives. *Third*, *hukmi* tafsir is compiled systematically. Legal verses are discussed in depth, taking into account the context of revelation, language, and practical implications in everyday life. This systematization helps mufassir not only to explain the literal meaning of the text, but also to assess the relevance and application of the law in society. *Fourth*, comparison of schools of thought is one of the main methods in tafsir *hukmi*. Many works of tafsir *hukmi* compare the opinions of scholars from various schools of thought, so that readers obtain a comprehensive picture of diverse legal views (Arif Fitria et al., 2024).

Through this method, *hukmi* interpretation is not only an instrument for understanding the verses of the Qur'an, but also a means of comprehensive legal learning. By presenting differences of opinion, *hukmi* interpretation teaches critical and analytical thinking, while demonstrating how the principles of Islamic law can be applied in various situations in life. These works of interpretation form an important foundation for the tradition of Islamic law, as they serve as a reference for scholars, judges, and the community in understanding and applying *shari'ah* law. In addition, *hukmi* interpretation also reflects the close relationship between the text of the Qur'an, the *fiqh* tradition, and the social dynamics of the time. The approach used emphasizes that Islamic law is not only normative, but also contextual and adaptive. Thus, *hukmi* tafsir plays a strategic role in connecting the principles of revelation with the practical needs of the people, maintaining the relevance of Islamic law from generation to generation. The characteristics of *hukmi* tafsir, its focus on *ahkam* verses, its

*fiqh* approach, its systematic nature, and its comparison of madhhabs, make it one of the most influential forms of tafsir in the Islamic intellectual tradition, as well as a primary reference for a comprehensive and applicable understanding of Islamic law (Saputri et al., 2024).

- **Deviations in Judicial Interpretation**

One form of deviation that has emerged in the interpretation of the Qur'an is fanaticism towards certain schools of thought, which is most evident in the realm of legal interpretation. The emergence of *fiqh* school imams not only provided a methodological framework for interpreting the Qur'an, but also gave rise to significant differences in the fields of theology and law. As a result, conclusions drawn regarding a particular law, whether from a verse of the Qur'an or a hadith, often differ among scholars, depending on the perspective of the school of thought they adhere to. These differences are particularly evident in the discussion of legal chapters, where *fiqh* scholars tend to emphasize interpretations that are in line with the principles of their respective schools of thought. In this context, the topic of *fiqh* became the center of differences and intellectual debates before the emergence of other Islamic disciplines. School fanaticism means that legal interpretations are not always objective, as the tendency to defend the authority of one's school can influence how legal verses are understood and applied. This phenomenon highlights the importance of epistemological awareness in interpreting the Qur'an, so that differences of opinion do not simply become sectarian conflicts, but continue to serve as a means of understanding the broader complexity of Islamic law (Rohmatullah & Al-Ghifari, 2023).

One of the effects of *fiqh* interpretation is the formation of interpretations based on various schools of thought, which continue to develop over time. As a result, a number of scholars interpret verses from the Qur'an by referring to the opinions and religious views of their respective schools of thought. In this process, some scholars place the views of the imams as the main benchmark in understanding the texts of *shari'ah*. They also exert all their intellectual and scientific abilities to strengthen the position of the school of thought they follow. This approach often encourages competition between schools of thought, where followers seek to assert the correctness of their imam's opinion while rejecting or refuting the views of other schools. This phenomenon shows that *fiqh* interpretation is not only academic or theoretical in nature, but is also influenced by loyalty to a particular school of thought. This has an impact on the variation in the understanding of Islamic law, because the interpretations produced often reflect the perspectives of their respective schools of thought. Thus, the division of *fiqh* interpretations into schools of thought emphasizes the importance of methodological and epistemological awareness so that legal interpretations remain relevant, objective, and not solely influenced by sectarian fanaticism (M. T. Rahman, 2016).

The phenomenon of fanaticism towards schools of thought continued after the end of the leadership period of the four great imams of the schools of thought. During this period, legal references were largely based on the opinions of scholars from their respective schools of thought, so that each follower tended to interpret legal texts in accordance with the views of their school of thought. Differences also arose in the practices of worship and *muamalah* among the muqallid, who rigidly followed the opinions of their *madhhab* imams. This fanaticism then gave rise to interpretations of the Qur'an that were oriented towards the madhhab perspective, where understanding tended to support and justify the position of one's own *madhhab*, sometimes even attempting to reject or dismiss opinions from scholars outside that *madhhab*. This attitude is also evident in the practice of interpreting Qur'anic verses, especially those related to law and *fiqh*. Many mufassir who are fanatical about their madhhabs attempt to interpret the Qur'an without contradicting the opinions of their respective madhhab imams, while also trying to adjust their interpretations to be consistent with their views, including in the realms of *al-Tansikh* and *al-Takhshish*. As a result, the resulting interpretations tend to be bound to the perspective of a particular school of thought, so that the interpretation of Islamic law varies based on the orientation of each school of thought. This condition gave rise to works of Qur'anic interpretation that specifically emphasized the views of certain schools of thought. For example, there were books of interpretation that were in line with the principles of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and other schools of thought. Such interpretations not only serve as guidelines for followers of the school of thought, but also reflect how loyalty to the school of thought shapes the methods, focus, and interpretations in understanding legal verses, while also demonstrating the dynamics of interaction between the text of the Qur'an, *fiqh* tradition, and sectarian loyalty in the intellectual history of Islam (M. T. Rahman, 2016).

### 3. CONCLUSION

Looking at the results of the analysis of several literatures that study legal interpretation, it is clear that legal interpretation is a type of interpretation of the Qur'an that focuses on extracting sharia law from legal verses using the *istinbat* method based on the principles of *fiqh* and *usul fiqh*. Historically, *tafsir hukmi* has existed since the time of the companions, namely when *fiqh* experts such as Umar ibn al-Khattab and Ali ibn Abi Talib interpreted verses to establish a law. During the codification of the schools of thought, legal interpretation developed into a separate discipline. This interpretation focuses on legal verses and does not interpret the entire contents of the Qur'an. Based on its development, the legal interpretation style became stronger during the Golden Age of Islam due to several factors, including the emergence of Islamic jurisprudence schools that required the legitimacy of Qur'anic verses. Then, the development of *ijtihad* and the codification of Islamic law led to scholarly fanaticism and increased debate between schools of thought. This is because legal interpretation became a forum for Islamic jurists to affirm the legal basis according to their schools of thought while also addressing the socio-political laws of the time. The characteristics of legal interpretation are its limited object to legal verses such as worship, social interactions, and so on. It then predominantly uses the *istinbat* approach to establish practical law, followed by comparisons between the views of several different schools of thought to demonstrate the breadth of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, the structure of legal interpretation tends to be systematic and analytical, linking verses with *hadith* and the *qawaid* of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, legal interpretation is normative, meaning it seeks to link texts to the application of law in real life. Deviations in legal interpretation arise from fanaticism within the schools of thought and methodological inconsistencies. Many interpreters interpret verses according to their own schools of thought, thus neglecting objective context and evidence. As a result, legal interpretation loses its epistemological independence and becomes a justification for a school of thought rather than a critical search for law.

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