

## RATIONAL-SECULAR ELEMENTS IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VERSE OF

### KHAMAR BY SAID AL-ASYMAWY: AD-DAKHIL FI AL-TAFSIR STUDY

Mochammad Novendri S,<sup>1</sup> Triyani,<sup>2</sup> Siti Salma Safitri<sup>3</sup>, Veni Juniati<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

e-mail: [mochammadnovendrispt@gmail.com](mailto:mochammadnovendrispt@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [threeyani71@gmail.com](mailto:threeyani71@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>,

[safitrisitisalma4@gmail.com](mailto:safitrisitisalma4@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>, [venijuniati24@gmail.com](mailto:venijuniati24@gmail.com)<sup>4</sup>

#### Abstract

*This study aims to identify and analyze the rational-secular elements in the interpretation of the verses on khamr (intoxicants) by Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawy and to evaluate their methodological and theological implications within the framework of ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir studies. In his works, Al-Asymawy interprets the prohibition of khamr using a contextual and rational approach that tends to separate as a moral-transcendental value from fiqh as a product of human reasoning. He emphasizes that the prohibition of khamr is gradual and not absolute in legal terms, but rather related to socio-moral conditions of society. This interpretation reflects a secular rationale, namely the infusion of modern secular reasoning into Qur'anic exegesis, such as the rationalization of Islamic legal rulings, rejection of the authority of ijma' and solitary hadiths, and interpretations based on Western modernist values. This research employs a qualitative approach using descriptive-analytical and critical-comparative methods, based on Al-Asymawy's works and classical tafsir literature. The findings show that Al-Asymawy's interpretation contains elements of ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir, as it introduces external (secular) views that are inconsistent with the sound methodological principles of Qur'anic interpretation in the Islamic tradition. While relevant in the context of contemporary ijtihad, this approach also raises concerns about the deconstruction of textual authority and the erosion of methodological boundaries in Qur'anic exegesis.*

**Keywords:** Al-Asymawy, khamr, rationalism-secularism

#### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis unsur rasional-sekular dalam penafsiran ayat-ayat khamar oleh Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawy, serta mengevaluasi implikasi metodologis dan teologisnya dalam kerangka kajian *ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir*. Dalam karya-karyanya, Al-Asymawy menafsirkan larangan khamar dengan pendekatan kontekstual dan rasional yang cenderung memisahkan antara syari'ah sebagai nilai moral-transendental dan fiqh sebagai produk pemikiran manusia. Ia menekankan bahwa larangan khamar

bersifat bertahap dan tidak mutlak secara hukum melainkan terkait dengan kondisi sosial-moral masyarakat. Penafsiran ini mencerminkan secular rationale, yakni masuknya lgika pemikiran modern secular ke dalam tafsir Al-Qur'an seperti rasionalisasi hukum syar'i, penolakan terhadap otoritas ijma' dan hadits ahad, serta interpretasi berbasis nilai-nilai modernism Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif-analitis dan kritis-komparatif, berdasarkan karya Al-Asymawy dan literatur tafsir klasik. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa penafsiran Al-Asymawy mengandung unsur-unsur *ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir* karena memasukkan pandangan luar (sekuler) yang tidak sejalan dengan metodologi tafsir yang shahih dalam tradisi Islam. Meskipun relevan dalam konteks ijtihad kontemporer pendekatan ini juga menimbulkan kekhawatiran terhadap dekonstruksi otoritas teks dan batasan metodologis dalam tafsir Al-Qur'an.

**Kata kunci:** Al-Asymawy, khamar, rasionalisme-sekularisme.

## INTRODUCTION

Tafsir, or Qur'anic interpretation, serves as a crucial medium through which Muslims seek to understand the teachings of the Qur'an. It is widely consulted by both laypeople and academics in their quest to find guidance on various aspects of life. However, since tafsir is ultimately a human intellectual product, it is susceptible to error both in terms of understanding the divine message and in its written articulation. As a human effort, tafsir is not immune to flaws or distortions (Muhammad Ulinnuha, 2017).

One such distortion is the infiltration of unauthentic or invalid ideas into Qur'anic interpretation, a

phenomenon referred to as *ad-dakhil* (infiltration). According to 'Abd al-Wahhab Fayed, the issue of infiltration is not exclusive to the modern era—it has been present since the classical period, developing alongside the spread and expansion of Islam into diverse cultural and intellectual terrains (Nurusshoumi, 2021).

Within the realm of modern liberal thought, one of the most influential and controversial figures is Muhammad Sa'id al-Asymawy. A seasoned legal expert, Al-Asymawy possessed exceptional rhetorical and analytical skills, which he skillfully employed to advance his liberal ideas. As a result, his arguments often

appear coherent, persuasive, and intellectually appealing.

Among his most debated contributions is his interpretation of Qur'anic verses concerning *khamr* (intoxicants). Classical scholars generally agree that the Qur'an prohibited *khamr* in a gradual manner, culminating in Surah al-Ma'idah [5]: 90, where *khamr* is explicitly referred to as "an abomination from the work of Satan" (*rijsun min 'amali al-shaytan*) (Mahmud, 2020). However, Al-Asymawy offered a more rationalist and socio-secular reading of these verses. He questioned the absolute theological prohibition of *khamr*, arguing instead that its prohibition should be contextualized in light of social, health-related, and moral concerns specific to certain societies, rather than viewed as a universal and immutable religious ruling. This approach sparked intense debate, as it was seen by many as opening the door for external ideological influences—potentially at odds with the foundational objectives (*maqashid al-shari'ah*) of Islamic law—to shape Qur'anic interpretation.

Although numerous studies have explored Al-Asymawy's thought in the context of Islamic law and contextual

interpretation, there remains a lack of focused research on how rational-secular elements—understood as a form of *ad-dakhil fi at-tafsir*—influence his interpretation of the Qur'anic verses on *khamr* (intoxicants). Furthermore, there is limited in-depth analysis that situates his interpretation within the epistemological framework of Qur'anic exegesis and critically assesses its impact on the methodological integrity of Qur'anic interpretation.

Considering the importance of safeguarding the purity of tafsir from external influences that may dilute or distort the divine message, such inquiries are essential. As Nasr (2006) emphasizes, the Qur'an must be interpreted within its sacred context, free from the imposition of secular ideologies that undermine its metaphysical and spiritual core. They are particularly urgent in an era where ideological and philosophical paradigms often challenge traditional interpretive boundaries (Nasr, 2006).

In light of this, the present study aims to identify and analyze the rational-secular elements in Sa'id Al-Asymawy's interpretation of the *khamr* verses. It will also explore the methodological and

theological implications of his approach, and evaluate whether his interpretations remain within the legitimate framework of tafsir or whether they blur the boundary between interpretation and ideological imposition.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

There are several previous studies that are relevant to friends in this research, including; first, an article entitled "Revisiting the prohibition of khamr and maysir in the Qur'an: an examination of surah al-Ma'idah [5]: 90-91". This article argues that the prohibition of khamr (alcoholic beverages) and all forms of gambling is not merely binding, but rather a 'binding prohibition.' This statement is reinforced by several inherent and pretense constraints on the prohibited acts, including respect for time, avoidance of negative impacts such as health, economic, social relations, and religious impacts, as well as an antidote to attitudes of condescension and mutual criticism (Rustriningsih, 2024).

Second: article entitled "Portrait of ideology of m said ashmawi's thought on ahkam verses with contextual method". This article examines how Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawy's ideology and way of

thinking influenced his interpretation of the legal verses (ayat ahkam) in the Qur'an, using a contextual approach (Saladin, 2018a).

Three: the article entitled "Analisis Pemikiran Muhammad Said Al-Asymawi Tentang Hukum Memakai Hijab". This article focuses its research by analyzing Muhammad Said Al-Assymawy's critical views on the obligation to wear the hijab in Islam, and dismantling the legal arguments he uses to conclude that the hijab is not absolutely mandatory (Muarifah Rahmi, 2023).

The three studies above have differences with the theme in this study, because in this study the author focuses his study on how Al-Ashmawi interprets the prohibition of alcohol.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing upon both primary and secondary sources. Data collection is conducted through the documentation of literature relevant to the research theme. This includes gathering data in the form of textual excerpts, argumentative frameworks, and interpretive methodologies from Al-Asymawy's works, and comparing them

with other normative and authoritative tafsir literature.

Data analysis is carried out using descriptive-analytical and critical-comparative methods. Descriptively, the study outlines the content of Al-Asymawy's thought as reflected in his interpretation of the verses on *khamr*. Subsequently, a critical analysis is applied to examine the secular and rationalistic elements embedded in his interpretive approach.

## DISCUSSION

### A. Definition of Ad-Dakhil Fi Tafsir

Ad-dakhil is defined as a scientific discussion in the field of interpreting the Qur'an, namely by utilizing narratives that have no basis or whose truth cannot be trusted (Riyadi, 2022)

Ad-Dakhil in tafsir is a form of interpretation of the Qur'an that is based on an invalid narration, or an authentic narration that does not meet the requirements to be used as a basis, as well as an interpretation that

uses reason incorrectly. This kind of interpretation cannot be used as a basis because it deviates from the correct scientific principles and is contrary to Islamic teachings, so it has the potential to mislead the understanding of the contents of the Qur'an (Niat, 2020a)

### B. Factors Causing the Inclusion of Ad-Dakhil Elements in Tafsir

The presence of *ad-dakhil* elements in Tafsir is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. The following are some of the main contributors (Nurusshoumi, 2021).

#### a. Political and Power Factors

Political conflicts since the end of the caliphate of Uthman bin 'Affan and the beginning of the reign of Ali bin Abi Thalib gave birth to various sects that were hostile to each other. To strengthen the legitimacy of their group, they spread false hadith and subjective and sectarian

interpretations of the Qur'an.

Interpretation was used as a political tool, not a medium for seeking divine truth.

b. Factors of Hatred of Islam

Groups hostile to Islam seek to undermine the teachings from within by spreading false narratives without authoritative basis. The goal is to create confusion of understanding among Muslims and weaken internal unity through misleading interpretations.

c. Factors of Group Fanaticism

Fanaticism towards a particular school of thought or sect encourages the emergence of interpretations that are not objective. The interpreters of this group tend to interpret verses to support the views and figures of their group, so that interpretation becomes a means of justifying sect teachings, not a neutral understanding of revelation.

d. Factors of School Differences

Differences in views (ikhtilaf) are natural as long as they do not touch on the realm of basic beliefs. However, some sects use the Qur'an to justify their teachings excessively. An example is the Ahmadiyah Qadyan, who interpret the verse of Q.S. An-Nisa' [4]:69 to justify the claim of Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood. This kind of interpretation is considered a form of ad-dakhil because it ignores scientific objectivity and the universal spirit of the Qur'anic text.

e. Ignorance Factor (Jahalah)

Lack of religious knowledge, even with good intentions, can result in invalid interpretations. Some preachers or interpreters spread invalid narrations, which turn out to come from individuals who deliberately create false hadiths in order to encourage people to love the Qur'an. This kind of narration is even used by

famous interpreters such as al-Zamakhshari, even though it cannot be accounted for in terms of sanad, and is classified as ad-dakhil in interpretation (Nurusshoumi, 2021)

### **C. Classical Interpretation of the Khamar Verses QS. Al-Baqarah: 219**

In al-Munir's interpretation, Wahbah al-Zuhaili shows that Allah uses a gradual approach in forbidding alcohol. Although it is acknowledged to have some benefits, such as financial gain or feelings of pleasure, the sin and damage it causes are greater and more dangerous. Among its impacts are the emergence of hostility, social rifts, and negligence in carrying out worship. This verse, according to al-Zuhaili, is an important foundation towards an absolute prohibition (Al-Zuhaili, 2016).

In the tafsir al-Qurtubi explains that wine covers the mind. is the most explicit statement regarding the

prohibition of wine. He emphasized that khamr is a vile act (رجس) from Satan, which has the potential to cause hostility, quarrels, and prevent people from praying and reciting remembrance of Allah, therefore khamr must be avoided by believers. The commandment to stay away" (اجتنبوه) indicates a very strong prohibition, more than just not doing it, namely completely avoiding all forms of interaction with wine (Al-Qurthubi, 2013).

### **QS. An-Nisa: 43**

In the interpretation of al-Munir, this verse does not prohibit the consumption of alcohol completely, but prohibits praying while drunk, because being drunk will eliminate awareness and the ability to understand and present the heart in prayer. According to him, this prohibition is a gradual education, because at that time

alcoholic beverages were still commonly consumed among Arab society, including some of the companions. Allah began with a restriction on the time of consumption, namely not being allowed to drink alcohol close to prayer time, so that the people would get used to leaving it little by little. Wahbah al-Zuhaili also emphasized that the main purpose of this verse is to emphasize the importance of full awareness when performing prayer, because prayer is direct communication between the servant and his Lord. Therefore, all things that can damage awareness, including being drunk, must be avoided (Az-Zuhaili, 2016).

Al-Qurtubi in his commentary explains that Muslims are prohibited from approaching prayer while drunk. In his commentary, he emphasizes that the meaning of drunk here is due to intoxicating drinks, namely khamar,

so that a person is unable to understand or realize the reading of his prayer. This verse gives instructions to Muslims to stay away from khamar at least when performing worship, so that the prayer performed is truly solemn and valid. Al-Qurṭubī also emphasizes that the drunkenness referred to is a condition of loss of consciousness and the ability to understand words, so that prayer cannot be performed perfectly (Al-Qurthubi, 2013).

#### **QS. Al-Ma'idah: 90**

In this verse, Wahbah al-Zuhailī provides an explanation in his very comprehensive tafsir regarding the prohibition of khamar in QS. Al-Mā'idah verse 90. According to him, khamar includes all types of drinks or substances that can intoxicate and cloud the mind, not limited to certain types or materials. The prohibition in



this verse is marked by the word “fajtanibūh” which means “so stay away”, which in Arabic indicates the strongest and most firm form of prohibition. This implies that khamar is not only forbidden to consume, but is also forbidden to be produced, traded, or even approached. Az-Zuhailī also emphasized that khamar is one of the vile acts of Satan that damages morals, triggers hostility, and prevents humans from remembering Allah and performing prayer (Az-Zuhaili, 2016).

In this verse, al-Qurṭubī explains the most unequivocal statement regarding the prohibition of wine. He emphasized that khamr is a vile act (رجس) from Satan, which has the potential to cause hostility, quarrels, and prevent people from praying and reciting remembrance of Allah, therefore khamr must be avoided by believers. The commandment to stay away" (اجتنبوه) indicates a very strong

prohibition, more than just not doing it, namely staying away completely from all forms related to wine (Al-Qurthubi, 2013).

#### **D. Penafsiran Said Al-Asymawy terhadap Ayat-Ayat Khamar**

Muhammad Sa'id al-Ashmawy was an Egyptian judge, intellectual, and scholar, known for his progressive and critical views on the intersection of religion and political power. Born in Cairo in 1932 amidst a dynamic socio-political and religious landscape in the Middle East, he earned his law degree from Cairo University in 1954. He later broadened his legal understanding at Harvard Law School in the late 1970, focusing on comparative law between Western and Islamic systems (Saladin, 2018b).

His career began as an assistant prosecutor in Alexandria and eventually led to his appointment as Chief Justice of Egypt's High State

Security Court in 1981 (Musyafaah, 2008). Despite his official position, Al-Ashmawy boldly expressed dissenting views on Islamic law, particularly its relation to politics and modern society. After retiring in 1993, he actively lectured at various universities and became widely recognized as a progressive intellectual and a vocal critic of Islamist political groups (Saladin, 2018b).

Academically, Al-Ashmawy held teaching roles at Cairo University and institutions abroad, including the American University in Cairo (AUC) and several Western universities (Halim, 2021). His key publications *Ushul Asy-Syari'ah*, *Al-Riba wal Faidah fi al-Islam*, *Al-Islam al-Siyasi*, *Jawhar al-Islam*, *Al-Khilafah al-Islamiyah*, and *Haqiqat al-Hijab wa Hujjiyyat al-Sunnah* (Adib, 2011) championed contextual, rational, and historical readings of Islamic texts,

sparking criticism from conservative scholars who viewed his work as promoting Islamic liberalism and secularism (Saladin, 2018b).

Al-Ashmawy distinguished between *shari'ah* (as divine and absolute) and *fiqh* (as human, contextual, and historical interpretation), opposing the conflation of the two. He argued that sacralizing *fiqh* stifled independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) and obstructed legal reform in Islam (Saladin, 2018b). For him, Islamic law should not be interpreted rigidly through a purely textual lens but rather dynamically via rational, contextual, and historical approaches. He emphasized that much of classical Islamic law arose from specific socio-political conditions, which are not necessarily relevant today. Hence, reinterpretation is vital to align with contemporary needs while preserving

Islam's moral and universal values  
(Mohammad Thoyyib Madani, 2020)

Applying this principle to the verses on *khamr* (intoxicants), Al-Ashmawy saw the prohibition as pedagogical rather than authoritarian. He outlined three stages in the Qur'an's treatment of alcohol: acknowledgment of its harm and benefit (Qur'an 2:219), prohibition of prayer while intoxicated (Qur'an 4:43), and eventual complete prohibition (Qur'an 5:90–91). He interpreted this gradual approach as a rational, step-by-step transformation of societal norms (Al-Asymawi, 1983).

Rejecting a purely literalist stance, Al-Ashmawy asserted that the prohibition must align with the broader aims of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shariah*), particularly protecting intellect (*hifz al-'aql*) and preventing physical and social harm. He advocated for rational and contextual

interpretations that resonate with modern realities rather than echoing traditional views (Mohammad Thoyyib Madani, 2020b).

He also noted that no Qur'anic verse or hadith explicitly mandates a *hudud* punishment for drinking *khamr*. The common punishment of lashing stems from the *ijtihad* of early companions such as Umar and Ali, who themselves disagreed on specifics. Therefore, Al-Ashmawy viewed these punishments as interpretive rather than divine mandates. Instead, he suggested educational and preventive approaches—rehabilitation, public health education, and social policy as more effective means of addressing alcohol abuse (Al-Asymawi, 1983).

Al-Ashmawy also rejected the use of solitary hadith (*hadith ahad*) as grounds for serious legal penalties. He argued that such hadith do not meet

the necessary standard of absolute authenticity (*qat'i*) in either transmission or meaning. Legal rulings with significant consequences must, in his view, be based on incontrovertible evidence (Al-Asymawi, 1983).

Within this framework of thought, Al-Asymawi also rejected the use of hadith ahad (hadith narrated by one narrator at each level of sanad) as the basis for determining laws containing sanctions, such as hudud or Islamic criminal law. He rejected the normative power of hadith ahad in determining serious laws because the hadith is not qath'i in terms of both sanad and matan (Al-Asymawi, 1995).

According to him, the application of severe legal sanctions must be based on evidence that is qath'i al-thubut wa al-dilalah (certain in terms of narration and meaning), not merely the result of hadiths that are not mutawatir (Al-Asymawi, 1996). Furthermore, he

sharply criticized the tendency towards imitation and glorification of the thoughts of classical scholars who closed the door to ijtihad. For him, the stagnation of Islamic law is not due to the lack of Islamic teachings, but rather because of fear and reluctance to inherit the legacy of past thought. Al-Ashmawi invited Muslims to reactualize Islamic law by distinguishing between the core teachings of religion and the results of human interpretation which are always open to criticism (Fluehr-Lobban, 2002)

#### **E. Identifying *Ad-Dakhil* in Al-Ashmawi's Interpretation**

Al-Ashmawi's interpretations, including those concerning *khamr*, reflect influences from secularism, modern rationalism, and socio-political critique. He viewed *fiqh* as a historical product rather than sacred doctrine, advocating a separation between religion and political power and freeing

religion from state control (Al-Asymawi, 1996). In his rational approach, Al-Asymawi also rejects a literal understanding of verses without considering historical and social contexts. He believes that the text of meaning must be drawn back to a higher maqashid sharia, such as hifzhul 'aql (Musyafaah, 2008). Therefore, the prohibition of alcohol is not absolute but rather conditional on its impact on individuals and society. Of course, this paradigm shows the influence of the modern paradigm of thinking that prioritizes rationality and historical experience as a tool for understanding texts.

From a methodological perspective, Al-Ashmawiy's approach can be considered *ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir* the inclusion of external ideologies such as secular legal thought and modern rationalism in Qur'anic interpretation (Al-Qaththan, 2000).

According to Manna' Al-Qaththan, *ad-dakhil* refers to extraneous additions or distortions in Qur'anic interpretation—whether from unauthenticated reports, flawed reasoning, or ideological impositions not rooted in sound scriptural or scholarly consensus.

In assessing Al-Ashmawiy's interpretation, there are two camps of opinion. Some view it as a form of contemporary ijtihad that is valid and relevant, especially in facing the dynamics of a more complex modern society. This view is supported by the approach of maqashid sharia which is the substance and purpose of Islamic law rather than its formal form. However, there are also many who criticize that his interpretation has brought in external ideologies, especially secularism and liberalism. In the study of interpretation, elements such as this are known as *ad-dakhil*, namely external influences on

interpretation that are not based on the principles of valid interpretation. For example, when modern rationality is used to reject legal provisions that have been agreed upon by the consensus of scholars, such as the absolute prohibition of alcohol, then the interpretation is considered to have exceeded the limits of permissible *ijtihad* (Niat, 2020a).

The boundary between *ijtihad* and external infiltration (*ad-dakhil fi tafsir*) can actually be explained through standard scientific criteria. *Tafsir* that is still classified as *ijtihad mu'tabar* must meet the following requirements:

- a. Based on valid evidence, either the Qur'an, *mutawatir* *hadith*, or *ijma'*.
- b. Not contradicting the *maqashid* *sharia* as a whole.
- c. Using the *istinbath* method recognized in *ushul tafsir*.

If an interpretation ignores *ijma'*, rejects the *hadith* that is the *sharia*

evidence and subjects the text to modern principles alone, then it has gone beyond the realm of *ijtihad* and entered into a methodological deviation as explained by Subhi Shalih in *Mabadi' al-Tafsir wa Manahijuh* (Shalih, 1983).

Al-Ashmawi's interpretation has a significant impact in broadening the horizon of understanding Islamic law in general, including in the matter of alcohol. He shifted the focus from mere formal prohibitions to an ethical and functional approach that emphasizes moral values and social welfare. However, this approach also raises concerns about the erosion of established legal boundaries. Because if rational and contextual principles are prioritized over clarity of texts, then *sharia* law will become relative and easily changeable according to the interests of the times. Therefore, it is important to place interpretations such

as Al-Ashmawi's in a careful context, namely as an effort of *ijtihad* that opens up space for discussion but needs to be criticized so as not to deviate from the basic principles of valid interpretation and straight Islamic faith.

Thus, Al-Ashmawi's interpretation of the verses about wine contains several forms of *ad-dakhil fi tafsir*, including:

- a. A sharp separation between sharia and fiqh, thus denying the authority of Islamic law that has been agreed upon
- b. Rejection of the consensus of scholars in determining the law of *khamar* as absolutely haram
- c. Rejection of the *hadith ahad* as a source of criminal law
- d. Rationalization of sharia law which tends to shift the interpretation from texts to social values alone.

Al-Asymawy's approach in interpreting the verses of *khamar* shows the strong influence of the rationalistic and contextual paradigm that has developed in modern thought. He prioritizes the moral and social objectives of the sharia over its formal legal form. Although this approach opens up new space in the discourse of contemporary *ijtihad*, some consider it to have introduced external elements into the interpretation (*ad-dakhil fi tafsir*), such as legal secularism and modern rationalism which are considered to be able to shift the methodological basis of classical interpretation. Therefore, this kind of approach needs to be studied critically so that it remains within the framework of the *maqashid sharia* and the principles of interpretation that can be scientifically justified.

## **ANALYSIS**

The classical interpretation of the verses on alcohol shows a normative-contextual approach that emphasizes that the prohibition of alcohol is a qath'i law. In QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 219, QS. An-Nisa (4): 43 and its peak QS. Al-Ma'idah (5): 90, commentators such as Wahbah Az-Zuhaili and Al-Qurthubi emphasize that the process of prohibiting alcohol was carried out gradually, but ultimately resulted in a total prohibition of all forms of alcohol.

On the other hand, Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawi interprets these verses with a contextual-rational approach starting from the principle that Islamic law has an ethical and social mission, not merely a legal-formal one. He views that the prohibition of alcohol should not be interpreted as a total prohibition of certain substances, but rather as an effort to prevent damage to the mind, morals, and society. The focus is not on the "alcoholic substance" but on the consequences it

causes, namely drunkenness, hostility, and obstruction from worship (Al-Asymawi, 1983). Thus, the classical interpretation emphasizes the text and the law whereas Al-Ashmawi emphasizes the moral and social purpose of the prohibition.

Al-Ashmawi's approach shows that the interpretation of the Qur'an is dynamic and must be able to interact with the ever-changing social reality. He tries to interpret the text by considering the maqashid sharia, namely the goals behind sharia law, such as hifzhul aql and social order. This approach contributes to the development of contemporary tafsir discourse that is more flexible and responsive to the context of the times.

However, this kind of approach raises serious questions about the boundaries between legitimate ijthihad and the infiltration of external elements (ad-dakhil fi tafsir). If the interpretation is built on the basis of secular ideology or Western



rationalism that breaks away from the framework of Islamic epistemology, then the potential for *ad-dakhil fi tafsir* becomes great (Niat, 2020b). Al-Ashmawi, with his secular-reformist paradigm, is often considered to have brought external values into the interpretation, especially in dropping the absolute prohibition of alcohol or reinterpreting the sharia socially.

As explained in the definition of *ad-dakhil*, external elements are categorized as deviant if they originate from inauthentic narrations, mistaken reason, or ideologies that contradict Islamic principles (Ride & Riyadi, 2022). In the context of Al-Asymawy, his interpretation of *khamar* is based on social interpretation and ethical rationalism which can be considered innovation if it remains bound by the *maqashid sharia*. However, if this interpretation makes the Qur'an the object of total secularization, then it enters the realm of theological *ad-dakhil*, namely

when the interpretation no longer aims to understand revelation, but rather subordinates revelation to external assumptions. An example of a case such as the liberal interpretation of QS. Al-Ma'idah (5): 90 which rejects the existence of explicit haram elements and replaces them with contextual logic can be a warning about how interpretation crosses this line.

Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawy is an important figure in the Islamic thought reform movement. He played a role as a plaintiff against the dominance of classical interpretation and traditional *fiqh* which tend to be normative and closed to social change. In the discourse of contemporary interpretation, Al-Asymawy represents a spectrum that places rationality, social context and the principle of justice in interpreting revelation. However, his position is very controversial. He is praised by some academic circles as a critical reformer, but is rejected by the

majority of scholars as a proponent of secular ideology that can endanger the purity of interpretation. So in the framework of the study of *ad-dakhil fi tafsir*, Al-Asymawy can be categorized as a concrete example of a contemporary exegete who is on the border between renewal and infiltration. His work enriches the discourse of interpretation, but also reminds us of the importance of methodology and commitment to the basic principles of Islam so that interpretation does not turn into a deviant ideological interpretation.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that Muhammad Sa'id Al-Asymawy's interpretation of the Qur'anic verses on *khamr* contains strong secular-rational elements that not only deviate from classical tafsir traditions but also represent a clear form of *ad-dakhil fi al-tafsir*—the infiltration of unauthentic external ideas into the interpretive process. His rejection of the absolute theological and legal prohibition of *khamr*, along with his emphasis on socio-moral

aspects grounded in modern secular reasoning, reflects a significant epistemological shift in approaching the Qur'anic text. This approach illustrates the influence of Western liberal paradigms, which risk blurring the line between legitimate exegesis and ideological imposition.

While Al-Asymawy's method may be seen as an attempt at contextual *ijtihad* in response to modern challenges, it raises serious methodological concerns, particularly regarding source validity, the role of *ijma'*, and the authority of *hadith*. Therefore, his interpretation cannot be fully accepted within the bounds of sound tafsir methodology as upheld by the Islamic scholarly tradition. This study affirms the importance of preserving the purity of Qur'anic interpretation from ideological infiltrations, so that the divine message remains intact, objective, and aligned with the higher objectives (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*) of Islamic law.

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