Uli al-Abṣār's Concept Tafsir *Fī Dhilāl al-Qur'ān*: Sayyid Quțb's Point of View

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Abstract. The meaning of *uli al-abşār* in the Qur'an is generally the same. The context of the verse also does not make a significant difference. The interpretation of *uli al-abşār* leads to people with vision and the ability to think. Sayyid Qutb, on the other hand, holds a different viewpoint. These differences cannot be separated from his intellectual journey and the character of his interpretation, $F\bar{i}$ *Dhilāl al-Qur'ān*. His interpretation demonstrates that the heart plays an important role in drawing lessons from Allah's stories and verses. This paper will explain the concept of uli al-abşār from Sayyid Qutb's interpretation. This study concludes that *uli al-abşār* has four concepts: first, *uli al-abşār* is not only associated with the zahir eye; second, *uli al-abşār* is a person who consistently reads written verses and kauniyah; third, *uli al-abşār* is the nature of the prophets; and fourth, *uli al-abşār* is associated with good deeds.

Keyword: Fī Dhilāl al-Qur'ān, Sayyid Qutb, Uli al-abṣār.

1 Introduction

The evolution of Islamic studies, particularly the Qur'an, is a topic that is always worth debating. The various aspects can be used to predict the life of the discussion. Furthermore, when it comes to the Qur'an, it is rich in perspective and space. The main object in the study of the Qur'an and its interpretation remains the Qur'anic text, both internally and externally (around it). When delving into the content of the verse, it is impossible to avoid studying language and the significance of the words used in the Qur'an. Even in the modern era's movement of methods, styles, and even the trend of interpretation, the study of the Qur'an's language must be carried out first to avoid confusion when interpreting the verses of the Qur'an.

It is undeniable that the Qur'an is based on Arabic, which was the main topic at the time and still has its specialties to this day. Not only that, but the Qur'an's language has specifications that are far different from Arabic in general; each word/sentence used by the Qur'an has it's secret and uniqueness so that in it provides *dilalah*—instructions—to anyone who reads with knowledge and taste because *dilālah al-lafz* will not be found without these two elements. Linguistics can be useful, but emotion is more important (Shihab 2015: 337-338) [1].

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), one of the early twentieth-century commentators, used a linguistic (literary) approach in his *magnum opus*, though it was not dominant. One characteristic of his interpretation method that stands out is the use of rhyming literary phrases, *nagham*, to approach the reading of the Qur'an [2]. However, the *haraki* style or *adab ijtima'i* are dominated his commentary. With this pattern, word development and meaning construction

are very flexible by focusing on social society as a solution to problems that exist in society and improving the condition of *jahiliyyah*'s modern.

The Qur'an speaks and uses specific terms, with significant differences in each sentence. The terms '*ibād al-raḥmān*, *ulu al-albāb*, *aṣḥāb al-yamīn*, *aṣḥāb al-shimāl*, and so on are among them. One of the terms in the Qur'an is *uli al-abṣār*. Although it appears only four times in the Qur'an, the term shares significant characteristics with terms that are considered close together, such as *uli al-albāb*. Simply put, *uli al-abṣār* means "people who think or have opinions," but the meaning is ambiguous because it is assumed to be the same as *ulu al-albāb*. As a result, it is necessary to appropriately reveal the meaning and concept of *uli al-abṣār*, particularly with the approach used by Sayyid Qutb in Tafsir *Fī Dhilāl al-Qur'ān* to provide solutions and bring up aspects of guidance to improve the situation of today's society.

2 Methodology

The type of research in this study is qualitative, which is research that is a descriptionanalysis based on the data that has been collected. In the perspective of data sources, this study is included in library research, which is a form of research that uses and examines various books, books, articles, and other literature, especially works that discuss the study of the text of the Qur'an, especially $F\bar{t}$ Dhilāl al-Qur'ān. The data sources used in this study include two: *first*, the primary source, which is a book, document, or book that is the main source in this research. In this regard, the author uses Sayyid Qutb's tafsir book *Tafsīr* $F\bar{t}$ Dhilāl al-Qur'ān; because the object of study in this study is the word *uli al-abṣār* in the book. *Second*, primary sources, that is articles, books, and books as supporters in this study, in between *Nuzhat al-A'yunal-Nawāzir fi 'Ilmi al-Wujūh wa al-Nazāir* by Ibn Jauzi, *al-Mufradātfī Garīb Qur'an* by al-Rāgibal-Ashfahanī, and works related to research.

After the author determines the type of research and data source, data collection will be carried out with six techniques; *first*, determine the issues discussed, in this case the term *uli al-abşār; second*, look for the verses contained in the Qur'an *al-abşār* using the book *al-Mu'jamal-Mufahras Li al-Fāz Qur'an al-Karīm; third*, collect and obtain the verses and their translations; *fourth*, explore the verses ranging from context, relationships before and after verses, to *asbāb al-nuzūl*; *fifth*, choosing the book of tafsir that discusses *lafaz uli al-abşār*, namely *Tafsīr Fī Dhilāl al-Qur'ān; sixth*, adds understanding related to *uli al-abşār* through dictionary. Then, the data is analyzed with a language approach and content analysis of Sayyid Qutb's perspective.

The content analysis approach is used to analyze existing data by revealing things related to the problem and purpose of the research, namely by studying and analyzing the contents of the verses contained in *lafaz uli al-abşār*. As for giving birth to concepts and exploring meaning, the author uses a language approach combined with the interpretation approach of Sayyid Qutb, so that it will be seen the significance of the meaning and concepts contained in it.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Sayyid Qutb's brief biography

On October 9, 1906, in the Mushah area of Asyut City, Egypt, Sayyid Qutb Ibrahim Husain Syadzili, a great scholar candidate whose full name was Sayyid Qutb Ibrāhīm Husayn Shādhilī, was born [3]. His talent has been evident since the age of ten when he memorized the Qur'an. He moved to Cairo in 1920, at the age of 14, to live with his uncle, Ahmad Husayn 'Uthmān. His uncle works as a journalist. His profession had a significant impact on Sayyid Qutb, particularly in terms of developing a relationship with a writer. This relationship had a significant impact on Sayyid Qutb, particularly his thoughts. Furthermore, the meeting with the writer inspired him to become a politician by joining the al-Wafd Party led by 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqad [4], [5]. He was allowed to study at Dār al-'Ulūm in 1929, and he completed his studies in 1933, earning a bachelor's degree in literature as well as a diploma in education [3], [5].

After finishing his studies in 1933, Sayyid Qutb's thoughts became more structured. Since graduating from college until 1951, his life appeared ordinary, while his writings demonstrated high and clean literary values, rather than wallowing in moral depravity as most writers of the time did. In the end, his writings lean more toward Islam [6]. Sayyid Qutb's books *Taşwīr al-Fann fī al-Qur'ān* and *Mashāhid al-Qiyāmah fī al-Qur'ān* demonstrate his commitment to Islam.

Sayyid Qutb had the opportunity to study in the United States as an observer of culture and education in 1948 [6]. Qutb did not study there on his initiative; rather, he was sent there by the government at the time to study the system in America. It wasn't that there was no special mission for the government at the time to send Qutb to the United States. The government's initial assumption at the time, so that Qutb's thoughts returned to being secular and not at odds with the government, did not continue to campaign for Islamic law as a state system.

After leaving America, Qutb became increasingly convinced that Islam, rather than a materialistic Western system, would provide peace and tranquillity. It appears that Qutb's perspective at the time was inextricably linked to his experience in the United States. Qutb not only witnessed the internals of Islam while in Egypt, but he also communicated with people and immersed himself in the socio-cultural milieu of the West while in the United States. His experience allowed him to see the situation in its entirety, including how and what problems existed in society at the time. As a result, the nuances of $da'aw\bar{n} harak\bar{i}$ (religious movement) and *adab al-ijtimā* ' \bar{i} can be found in subsequent lectures and writings, including interpretations.

Qutb saw al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn as the right place for him at the time in his journey towards the vision of Islam. Since then, Qutb has been a key figure in the Islamic movement al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn [6]. Qutb's impact on Egyptian society cannot be overstated. Before the Egyptian revolution in 1952, Qutb's popularity among Egyptians grew even stronger. Muḥammad Najib [3], the Revolutionary Council's supreme leader, referred to him as the Originator of the Revolution, the Leader of its Leaders, and the Chief of its Leaders [5]. Because there was no significant difference in views between Qutb and the Revolutionary Council at the time, seeing this statement indicates that his relationship with the Revolutionary Council is very good, with no friction. This relationship, however, did not last long; the next time the good relationship cracked, it was due to differing perspectives on the state system. Qutb wants Egypt to become a country based on Islamic law, whereas Naseer favors secularism [5].

The schism was exacerbated when Naseer agreed to a treaty with Britain, prompting al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn activists to express their dissatisfaction with the government and urge it to cancel the agreement. The government reacted to this incident by arresting several activists who were perceived as rebels and did not agree with the government. The government then put pressure on al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn after one of its members, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Laṭīf, failed to assassinate Naseer [5]. Following the rejection of al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn, the government banned the organization and all of its partners. As a result of the ban, many people were imprisoned and even sentenced to death, including Sayyid Qutb. On August 29, 1966, the sentence was carried out.

3.2 Characteristics of Tafsir Fī Dhilāl al-Qur'ān

Qutb's thought evolved from pre-Islamic to Islamist, as evidenced by works such as his commentary book, $F\bar{\imath}$ Dhilāl al-Qur'ān. Pre-Islamism is the period in which Qutb positioned the Qur'an as a literary book, focusing solely on its beauty. Qutb is still the artistic beauty of the Qur'an in the first edition of $F\bar{\imath}$ Dhilāl al-Qur'ān, as he was in previous pre-Islamist works [7]. Qutb's Islamist period began after he returned from America and ended when he was executed. The period was identified by the method to the flow that Qutb used in interpreting the Qur'an; it is not surprising that the terms *jahiliyyah*, divine *manhaj*, and *taṣawwur* emerged from this process.

In addition to the association Qutb felt while in America, the characteristics of his interpretation were formed when Qutb experienced the pleasures of living under the shadow of the Qur'an, which was the greatest blessing. Only the person experiencing the pleasure will be aware of it [8]. It turned out that with these blessings, which elevated him to the highest level, Qutb could see clearly without the high, including seeing ignorant people. Not only that, but Qutb senses Allah's essence and existence through His creatures, whether humans in particular or the universe globally. More broadly, Qutb discusses how human mobility and the global system are inextricably linked to Allah's will.

It's worth noting the firmness with which the phrase "I live under the auspices of the Qur'an" is stated. Qutb used poetry as a medium to see and examine society's *jahiliyyah* at the time. As a result, the characteristic of Qutb's interpretation is as a solution to various societal problems. Even if we delve deeper into the interpretation's beauty, we will discover another pattern, namely the *tarbawī* (education) style. Another aspect of the interpretation is the pattern. When Qutb interprets the lafaz *uli al-abṣār*, he comes across one of them.

3.3 The Ulama's interpretation of the Uli al-Abşār verse

The term *uli al-abşār* appears in the Qur'an four times: QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 13, QS. Al-Nūr [24]: 44, QS. Ṣhād [38]: 45, and QS. Al-Ḥashr [59]: 2.

"Already there has been for you a sign in the two armies which met - one fighting in the cause of Allah and another of disbelievers. They saw them [to be] twice their [own] number by [their] eyesight. But Allah supports with His victory whom He wills. Indeed in that is a lesson for those of vision". QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 13

"Allah alternates the night and the day. Indeed in that is a lesson for those who have vision". QS. Al-Nūr [24]: 44

"And remember Our servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - those of strength and [religious] vision". QS. Shād [38]: 45

"It is He who expelled the ones who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think they would leave, and they thought that their fortresses would protect them from Allah; but [the decree of] Allah came upon them from where they had not expected, and He cast terror into their hearts [so] they destroyed their houses by their [own] hands and the hands of the believers. So take warning, O people of vision". QS. Al-Hashr [59]: 2

The approaches and tendencies used by the commentators are used to interpret these verses. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī associates *uli al-abṣār* with people who know, reason (*lub*, *'aql*), or vision (*'ayana* and *baṣīrah*); al-Alūsī and Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalūsī interpret it as "who knows," while Ibn Kasir interprets the essence as "people who have the vision." However, the interpretation is straightforward and conceals a secret. As a result, bringing up the commentators' interpretations of ulul absar is critical, especially to see the significant difference with what Sayyid Qutb constructed.

For example, in QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 13, the Jews believe they will not lose the war against the believers and believe they are better than the Quraysh; the Jews even claim to know more about war than the Quraysh. According to them, the victory attained by Rasulullah and the believers during the Battle of Badr was not the result of Allah's assistance, but rather of the Messenger of Allah deceiving himself due to the ignorance of the Quraysh, who were not good fighters. To respond to that accusation, the QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 12-13 was revealed as an affirmation from Allah that the victory achieved by the Messenger of Allah and his followers was with Allah's help.

In his commentary, al-Zuhaylī constructs the verse as a description of the disbelievers' condition and the reasons for their disbelief [9]. Furthermore, the verse contains threats to unbelievers. After the threat was directed at the polytheists of Mecca, Allah indicated to them—the polytheists—that at one time two groups faced each other, one group outwardly possessed sufficient strength, both in terms of the number of soldiers or the equipment of war, but they refused against Allah Swt. Meanwhile, the other groups are physically far inferior to them both in terms of war equipment and the number of soldiers—but they believe in Allah. In his commentary, al-Rāzī emphasizes that scholars of commentary agree that the two groups are the Messenger of Allah — and his companions — and the polytheists [10].

The two groups squared off at the Battle of Badr, which the Muslims won. This victory is inextricably linked to Allah's assistance. In his commentary on how Allah has aided Muslims, Al-Rāzī claims that the word ra' (see) in the verse contains the meanings of $z\bar{a}n$ and $husb\bar{a}n$ "suspect/presumption" due to a strong fear. Terrified people will think that a small amount is excessive [10]. Thus, for al-Rāzī, the opinion of some scholars regarding the participation of angels in the Battle of Badr must be criticized, because the word 'al-Fi'atayni'—two groups—indicates the story between polytheists and Muslims, which does not include angels [10]. However, for Abū Tayyib, the assistance took the form of special power for the desired person, even if there was no 'adiyah (usual/customary) cause [11].

The two viewpoints presented above will give rise to a comprehensive view of the type of assistance mentioned in the verse, namely, that Allah has great fear in the Mushriks, while Muslims gain enormous courage and strength. No wonder the verse uses ra'a/ru'yah, which indicates that if anyone sees an object and is afraid, the object is considered bigger and stronger, even if this is not the case. Those who see the object with a high sense of courage and optimism, on the other hand, perceive it to be smaller.

Meanwhile, QS. Al-Nūr [24]: 44 discusses the signs of Allah's existence and monotheism. The verse also emphasizes that the wealth of the universe, as well as the beauty of its location, whether on earth or in the sky, are inextricably linked to Allah's rules and supervision. According to al-Zuḥaylī, the term *uli al-abṣār* means "reasonable person" [9]. By alinterpretation Zuhayli's of al-Marāghī [12]. Even al- Marāghī asserted this verse is a piece of evidence that Allah is the Regulator and the time Controller, there is no one resembling Him. However, most people don't realize and learn from this truth. For instance, they don't have an eye for a time, instead reproach time when suffered hard circumstances. Such is a form of ignorant that God is the time Controller. One of the evidence of time alternation is the regularity of the day and night alternation.

"The son of Adam hurt Me by censuring time, even though I am the (regulator of) time, time is in My hands and I flip over the day and night. (H. R Bukhari and Muslim)

In contrast to the previous two verses, the word al-abar is juxtaposed with lafaz *al-'aydi* in QS. Ṣād [38]: 45. The verse is about God's command to humans to take lessons and learn from the Prophets' stories. Lafaz *al-'ayd* literally means 'hand,' but in the verse it is interpreted as 'strength.'. [13] According to al-Zamakhsharī, the word means 'charity' [14]. In terms of the lafaz *uli al-abṣār*, the two scholars agree: 'thinking.' As with the previous three letters, *uli al-abṣār* in QS. Al-Ḥashr [59]: 2 is interpreted as "the one who thinks," so that humans can learn from the thought process.

3.4 Sayyid Qutb's perspective on Uli al-abşār's concept

The design, idea, or understanding of an object that relates to reality directly or indirectly is frequently defined as a concept. So, in this discussion, the word 'concept' is closely related to the basic reason of the Qur'an in the four verses, why to use the term *uli al-abşār*; the relationship between the use of terms and facts and reality; so that the significance, characteristics, and characteristics of people who belong to Sayyid Qutb's *uli al-abşār* perspective will be known.

The evolution of Sayyid Qutb's thought from before he was imprisoned until after had ramifications for the evolution of his interpretation style. Before his arrest, Sayyid Qutb had an *adab al-ijtimā* 'ī nuance; after his interpretation was re-edited, and after Sayyid Qutb spent more time in prison, his appreciation of the Qur'an, Islam, life, and struggle developed. This affects his interpretation style; he incorporates a struggle ($da' aw\bar{n} harak\bar{n}$) and a $tarbaw\bar{n}$ style [15]. This fact should serve as a starting point for studying and studying verses in the Qur'an. The phrase *uli al-abşār* is included in the sentence.

As mentioned in the previous point, the phrase *uli al-abşār* appears four times in the Qur'an. In general, *uli al-abşār* is used for two major themes in the four verses scattered throughout the surahs: first, speaking the verse of kauniyah (the universe), as in QS. Al-Nūr [24]: 44; second, related to the story, as in QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 13, QS. Ṣād [38]: 45, and QS. Al-Hashr [59]: 2. Although these themes are universally mentioned, the goal ultimately boils down to the functioning of the five senses, particularly the sense of sight, and how to change human attitudes. Sayyid Qutb emphasizes these two points in his interpretation.

Furthermore, Sayyid Qutb offers a more general interpretation of the meaning of the *uli al-abşār* 'eye.' Not only for the outer eyes but also for the universe's stories and events, there must be an inner eye (heart) to obtain that learning or wisdom. This is based on his interpretation of QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 13. According to Qutb, the vision will be guarded by the heart, and if it is not, the phenomenon will pass like the change of day and night [8]. In the letter, Qutb only mentions the supporting factors for *uli al-abşār* to be even more optimal, as well as the consequences when there are no supporting factors, namely, no benefits and lessons, which is analogous to the day and night cycle.

Then, beginning with the second segment of *uli al-abṣār* (QS. Al-Nūr [24]: 44), Qutb delves into the cause of a person's inability to learn from universal phenomena or stories. In addition, Qutb offers a solution to allow one's heart to function optimally while reading about this phenomenon. The cause of a person's inability to read natural phenomena, particularly the

alternation of day and night, is either a lack of time to read nature or a lack of capacity to read it. Qutb's solutions include an emphasis on the Qur'an's function; that the Qur'an will always inform about the universe's system. At the same time, individual *tadabur* can be suppressed and human nature can be understood. Because, in essence, there is a beautiful, charming, and good compatibility between human nature and the nature of the universe. "Indeed, we have created man in the best possible form," Allah says (Surah al-Tīn [95]: 4). Thus, human characters such as uli al-abṣār frequently interact with the Qur'an and read themselves, so that they do not directly lead to the beauty of the universe's system.

Meanwhile, lafaz *uli al-abşār* is juxtaposed with *uli al-'aydi* in QS. Şād [38]: 45. In this verse, Allah mentions these characteristics in Prophet Ibrāhīm, Ishāq, and Ya'qūb. Allah attributes them to '*uli al-'aydi wa uli al-abşār*' as an explanation for their constant good deeds, views, and thoughts. According to Qutb, the pronunciation of '*uli al-'aydi wa uli al-abşār*' is kinayah [8]. Thus, a person who does not do well is as if he lacks hands (ability), and one who does not think with the right mind is as if he lacks reason and perspective. The concept of uli al-abşār can be derived from this interpretation. People with vision have characteristics such as being able to do good deeds and think positively. As a result, the prophets have the highest level of *uli al-abşār*.

The meaning of *uli al-abṣār* is not explained in detail here, as it is elsewhere. Qutb, on the other hand, is more likely to agree with his interpretation. Qutb explicitly mentions in this last segment that the heart is ready to take advice and is open to receiving lessons [8].

4 Conclusion

The interpretation of *uli al-abşār* in the Qur'an differs insignificantly. The interpreter interprets the sentence by having a vision and thinking about it. While Qutb interprets the sentence differently. Where he emphasizes the importance of the heart in capturing lessons from the phenomenon of stories and events in the universe. The concept of *uli al-abşār* was born from Qutb's perspective; first, *uli al-abşār* is not only associated with the zahir eye; second, *uli al-abşār* is a person who consistently reads written verses and kauniyah; third, *uli al-abşār* is the nature of the prophets; and fourth, *uli al-abşār* is associated with good deeds.

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