



QUR'ANIC EXEGESIS AND PHILOLOGICAL CRITIQUE: EPISTEMIC RESILIENCE IN THE AGE OF CORPUS CORANICUM

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Abstract

This study examines the epistemic resilience of the Islamic tafsir tradition in responding to the philological and historical critiques advanced by the *Corpus Coranicum* project of the Berlin – Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. By situating the Qur'an within the religious and literary context of Late Antiquity, *Corpus Coranicum* has significantly influenced contemporary Qur'anic studies while generating epistemological tensions with traditional Islamic scholarship. These tensions arise from differing conceptions of the Qur'an: Western philology treats it as a historical text subject to linguistic analysis, whereas tafsir understands it as *kalām Allāh*, the eternal Word of God. Employing qualitative library – based research, this article analyzes selected classical and modern exegetical works through the frameworks of Jan Assmann's cultural memory and Talal Asad's discursive tradition. The findings demonstrate that tafsir is not a static or defensive tradition, but one capable of adaptation, negotiation, and renewal. Three modes of epistemic response are identified—conservative, integrative, and critical – progressive—each reflecting different strategies of engagement with modern scholarship. The study concludes that such epistemic resilience allows tafsir to maintain theological integrity while constructively engaging contemporary philological approaches, contributing to a paradigm of epistemic coexistence in Qur'anic studies.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji ketahanan epistemik tradisi tafsir Islam dalam merespons kritik filologis dan historis yang dikembangkan oleh proyek Corpus Coranicum dari Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Dengan menempatkan Al-Qur'an dalam konteks religius dan sastra Antik Akhir (Late Antiquity), Corpus Coranicum memberikan pengaruh signifikan terhadap studi Al-Qur'an kontemporer, sekaligus memunculkan ketegangan epistemologis dengan tradisi keilmuan Islam. Ketegangan ini bersumber dari perbedaan mendasar dalam memahami Al-Qur'an: filologi Barat memandangnya sebagai teks historis yang terbuka untuk analisis linguistik dan kontekstual, sementara tradisi tafsir memahaminya sebagai *kalām Allāh*, firman Tuhan yang bersifat transenden dan abadi. Melalui penelitian kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan, artikel ini menganalisis karya-karya tafsir klasik dan modern dengan menggunakan kerangka teori memori kultural Jan Assmann dan konsep *discursive tradition* Talal Asad. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tafsir bukanlah tradisi yang statis atau defensif, melainkan memiliki kapasitas adaptasi, negosiasi, dan pembaruan. Tiga pola respons epistemik—konservatif, integratif, dan kritis-progresif—menggambarkan beragam strategi dialog antara hermeneutika keimanan dan kajian akademik modern. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa ketahanan epistemik tersebut memungkinkan tafsir menjaga integritas teologis sekaligus berinteraksi secara konstruktif dengan pendekatan filologis kontemporer.



INTRODUCTION

This article departs from that framework to analyze how the tradition of Qur'anic exegesis demonstrates epistemic resilience in the face of philological critiques such as those advanced by the Corpus Coranicum. Through an analytical – critical approach, the article argues that the debate is not merely a clash of epistemologies but rather an opportunity for the emergence of a more open Qur'anic epistemology that does not relinquish its normative authority. Accordingly, the relationship between the exegetical tradition and the Corpus Coranicum can be understood within the horizon of emerging futures in Qur'anic studies: a future born out of the critical dialogue between faith and philology. In the past two decades, Qur'anic studies have seen substantial transformation, particularly through philological initiatives such as the Corpus Coranicum. Launched in 2007, this project seeks to examine the Qur'anic text by situating it within the literary and religious landscape of the Late Antique Near East. Its scope goes beyond variant readings (*qira'at*) to include textual parallels between the Qur'an and earlier Jewish and Christian writings. This approach signifies a methodological shift from classical Orientalist investigations to a more systematic form of comparative philology (Neuwirth, 2019).

For many Muslim scholars, the Corpus Coranicum project has provoked significant epistemological unease. The core of this tension lies in the fundamental disparity between the methodological premises of Western philology and the epistemic architecture that undergirds *Islamic tafsir*. In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the Qur'an is regarded as *kalam* Allah divine speech that is absolute, perfect, and transcendent, unbound by historical contingency. Consequently, *tafsir* is not conceived merely as a linguistic or textual exercise; rather, it constitutes a hermeneutical endeavor anchored in prophetic authority, *sanad* (chains of transmission), and the consensus (*ijma'*) of scholars developed over centuries. These interpretive principles ensure that meaning is derived through a sacred epistemology that integrates revelation, tradition, and reason in a coherent theological framework. In contrast, the Corpus Coranicum adopts a historical – philological lens, treating the Qur'an as a text situated within the literary, cultural, and religious environment of seventh – century Arabia (Rahman, 2009). From this perspective, the Qur'anic discourse becomes a historical artifact to be examined in relation to its Near Eastern context, linguistic antecedents, and intertextual parallels. For many within the Islamic scholarly community, such an approach risks displacing the Qur'an's transcendent dimension and reconfiguring divine revelation into a product of historical processes. The resulting friction, therefore, is not merely methodological but epistemological reflecting two distinct conceptions of what it means to know and interpret a sacred text.

The encounter between these epistemic frameworks generates a pivotal research question: how can the Islamic exegetical tradition preserve its epistemic coherence and integrity when confronted with the critical apparatus of modern philology? Moreover, can this engagement be reimagined as a constructive dialogue rather than a zero – sum confrontation? This inquiry becomes increasingly significant as contemporary Qur'anic studies move into broader interdisciplinary spaces that draw on linguistics, history, anthropology, and comparative theology. Current scholarship vividly illustrates this divide. Scholars associated with the Corpus Coranicum project such as Nicolai Sinai and his collaborators contend that historical and comparative philology provide valuable tools for uncovering the Qur'an's intertextual networks and its embeddedness within the late antique milieu. They argue that such an approach deepens textual understanding by situating revelation within its historical and linguistic continuum (Sinai, 2014). Conversely, many Muslim scholars caution that these methods, when detached from the Qur'an's

theological premises, risk fragmenting its divine unity and undermining its status as *kalam Allah*. Thus, the central intellectual challenge lies in negotiating between two distinct modes of reading: one grounded in faith-based hermeneutics, the other in historical-critical inquiry and exploring whether these can coexist in a mutually illuminating framework.

By contrast, Muslim scholars such as Mustansir Mir and Abdullah Saeed argue that modern philological approaches often neglect the Qur'an's theological and spiritual dimensions elements that lie at the very heart of the classical *tafsir* tradition. For these scholars, the Qur'an is not merely a linguistic or historical artifact but a living revelation whose meaning unfolds through a sacred hermeneutical process grounded in faith, tradition, and moral vision. Additional critiques emphasize that privileging philological expertise over traditional scholarship risks displacing the interpretive authority historically maintained by Muslim scholars, thereby eroding the epistemic balance between transmitted knowledge (*naql*) and rational inquiry (*'aql*) that characterizes Islamic intellectual life. Yet, this tension need not be seen solely as a site of conflict. Drawing on Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory, traditions endure not through static preservation but through dynamic adaptation to new intellectual and social contexts (Assmann & Livingstone, 2006). Similarly, Talal Asad's conception of Islam as a "discursive tradition" underscores that religious meaning is continually renegotiated through interactions among norms, authorities, and interpretive communities. From this perspective, the encounter between *tafsir* and modern philology may, paradoxically, illuminate the adaptive vitality of the Qur'anic interpretive heritage (Asad, 1993). Rather than signaling decline, such engagement can be read as evidence of the tradition's capacity to reinterpret itself in dialogue with evolving epistemic paradigms while remaining anchored in its foundational theological commitments.

This study is positioned within that broader theoretical and methodological landscape. It pursues two interrelated aims. First, it seeks to examine how the Qur'anic exegetical tradition manifests epistemic resilience when confronted with modern philological critiques, particularly those advanced by the Corpus Coranicum project. Through this lens, the research explores the internal resources of the Islamic interpretive tradition: its hermeneutical principles, theological foundations, and methods of validation that enable it to respond to external critical paradigms without forfeiting its own epistemological coherence. Second, the study argues that the apparent tension between faith-based hermeneutics and philological inquiry need not be understood as an epistemic impasse. Instead, this tension can serve as a generative locus for developing a more dialogical and forward-looking Qur'anic epistemology. By reframing the encounter between revelation-centered interpretation and historical-critical analysis as a site of intellectual negotiation rather than opposition, this research contends that Islamic scholarship can engage modern academic methodologies in a way that is both critically discerning and constructively integrative. In doing so, it envisions a framework where theological commitment and academic inquiry coexist in mutual illumination rather than mutual exclusion.

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library-based approach, grounded in a critical historical framework (Devi Prasad, 2019). This framework enables the research to trace the development of the Islamic exegetical tradition over time while interpreting its contemporary encounters with modern philological criticism, particularly as represented by the Corpus Coranicum project. The data for this study were selected purposively, focusing on texts that possess direct relevance to the epistemological

encounter between *tafsir* and philology.(Giddens, 2023) The primary data consist of classical exegeses such as *al-Ṭabarī's Jami' al-Bayan* and al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshaf*, alongside modern exegetical works such as *Tafsir al-Manar* by Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍa, as well as official documents and publications issued by the *Corpus Coranicum* team at the Berlin Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Secondary materials include contemporary scholarly analyses on the evolution of Qur'anic studies from both Western philological and modern Muslim intellectual perspectives.

Data collection was conducted through systematic identification, retrieval, and close reading of these primary and secondary sources, ensuring that each text contributes substantively to the central research problem (Gadamer, 2013). The analytical process integrates several complementary techniques. Content analysis is used to trace recurring themes, arguments, and interpretive patterns within the selected texts. Hermeneutical interpretation is employed to uncover the layers of meaning embedded in the exegetical tradition and to elucidate how these meanings shape the tradition's responses to external critique. Discourse analysis is applied to examine how authority, legitimacy, and epistemic power are constructed in the interaction between the Islamic exegetical tradition and Western philological criticism, particularly where arguments present themselves as neutral or purely academic (Fairclough, 1992).

This study's methodological orientation is grounded in a tripartite theoretical framework that integrates Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory, Talal Asad's notion of discursive tradition, and Anthony Giddens' theory of reflexive modernity (Assmann & Livingstone, 2006). Assmann's idea of cultural memory highlights how religious and intellectual traditions preserve continuity not through rigid repetition, but through adaptive rearticulation in response to changing historical and epistemic contexts. In this sense, the endurance of a tradition depends on its ability to reinterpret foundational meanings while maintaining a coherent sense of identity (Asad, 1993).

Talal Asad's theory of the discursive tradition further complements this view by conceptualizing Islam as an evolving discursive field in which norms, authority, and interpretation are continually negotiated rather than fixed. Religious knowledge, therefore, emerges through dynamic processes of engagement that sustain both textual fidelity and interpretive creativity. Anthony Giddens' notion of reflexive modernity adds a sociological dimension, suggesting that in modern contexts, tradition must continually reflect upon itself to remain viable amid competing epistemologies. Taken together, these theoretical perspectives form the analytical lens through which this study examines how the Islamic exegetical tradition sustains continuity while critically negotiating its future in the face of modern philological challenges, particularly those posed by the *Corpus Coranicum* project. This framework enables a nuanced understanding of tradition as both resilient and self-renewing within conditions of epistemic plurality.

THE RESILIENCE OF THE ISLAMIC TAFSIR TRADITION IN RESPONDING TO PHILOLOGICAL CRITICISM

The Islamic *tafsir* tradition demonstrates a profound degree of epistemological resilience when confronted with the intellectual and methodological challenges posed by modern scholarship, including the philological critiques that emerged from the legacy of German Orientalism and are exemplified in the *Corpus Coranicum* project. This resilience manifests on two interconnected levels. First, it is reflected in the enduring continuity of classical exegetical methods *tafsir bi al-ma'thūr* (interpretation based on transmitted reports) and *tafsir bi al-ra'y* (interpretation through reasoned judgment) which continue

to serve as the epistemic backbone of Qur'anic interpretation (W. Saleh, 2004). These modes provide a framework through which meaning is derived from both revelation and reason, preserving the coherence between divine authority and scholarly interpretation. Second, the *tafsīr* tradition exhibits a notable integrative capacity: the ability to engage with and selectively incorporate new intellectual currents, including modern linguistic, historical, and hermeneutical approaches, without compromising its theological and normative foundations. Rather than a passive inheritance, *tafsīr* represents a dynamic intellectual tradition capable of renewal through dialogue. Its resilience thus lies not in resistance to change, but in the capacity to negotiate it maintaining fidelity to its sacred epistemology while remaining responsive to evolving academic paradigms and critical discourses that seek to recontextualize the Qur'an within broader historical and literary frameworks.

Rather than collapsing, the *tafsīr* tradition has shaped a 'space of adaptation' that enables critical dialogue between heritage and modernity. This resembles what Talal Asad terms a 'discursive tradition' not static, but living through reproduction and reinterpretation (Asad, 1993). Thus, the resilience of *tafsīr* is not merely a matter of endurance, but a form of creative transformation that sustains the continuity of the Qur'an's authority amid the currents of criticism

Qur'anic studies in the West have undergone significant transformations since the mid – twentieth century. Whereas classical Orientalist scholarship primarily emphasized issues of authenticity, sources, and historical criticism of the Qur'an, a new generation of scholars has sought to employ more nuanced philological and literary approaches. Angelika Neuwirth, for example, views the Qur'an not merely as a religious document but also as a literary text that reflects the dynamics of the early Muslim community (Neuwirth, 2019). Neuwirth rejects the older view that regards the Qur'an as merely an imitation or adaptation of the Judeo – Christian tradition, and instead emphasizes that the Qur'anic text demonstrates its originality through a dialogical engagement with the earlier scriptural traditions (Neuwirth, 2014).

In this context, the *Corpus Coranicum* project was launched by the Berlin – Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities in 2007. The project integrates two main dimensions: first, the compilation of documentation on Qur'anic textual variants (including early manuscripts, *qira'at*, and orthography) and second, a comparative analysis of the Qur'an with contemporaneous texts, particularly Jewish and Christian literature. Indeed, some Muslim critics equate this approach with an attempt to secularize the Qur'an by reducing it to history and language.

The tradition of Qur'anic exegesis in Islam has been rooted since the generation of the Prophet's Companions and developed into an established discipline by the 2nd/3rd century AH. In the classical view, *tafsīr* was not merely a linguistic analysis but also a normative authority that mediated between revelation and the lived reality of the community. Al – Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH), in his *Jamī' al-Bayan*, emphasized the significance of *isnad*, consensus, and Arabic linguistic analysis as the foundation of exegetical authority (Abu Ja'far, 7780). Thus, *tafsīr* has never stood merely as an individual intellectual activity, but rather as the product of a scholarly and religious community grounded in faith.

Over time, Islamic exegesis has displayed methodological diversity: from *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*, which emphasizes authentic reports, to *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, which employs rational *ijtihād*, as well as *tafsīr isyārī*, which highlights spiritual and esoteric dimensions (W. Saleh, 2004). These methodological differences, in fact, reveal the epistemic flexibility of

tafsīr, wherein each generation seeks to interpret the Qur'an in accordance with the challenges of its own time.

In the modern era, contextual exegesis has emerged, such as that proposed by Fazlur Rahman through his "double movement" theory, which entails reading the Qur'anic text within the historical context of revelation while simultaneously extracting universal moral principles for contemporary application (Voll, 1983). In greater detail, this approach underscores that the Qur'an must be read as a living text that continuously engages in dialogue with present-day socio-political challenges (Saeed, 2005). Thus, the epistemology of Islamic exegesis exhibits a strong character of resilience: it is able to respond to the transformations of time without losing its theological foundations. This very resilience enables the tradition of Islamic exegesis to remain relevant even when confronted with modern philological criticism.

To understand the tension between the Corpus Coranicum and Islamic exegesis, it is necessary to employ a theoretical framework that explains how tradition endures amid change. Jan Assmann, through the concept of cultural memory, emphasizes that tradition persists not only through the conservation of the past but also through the reconstruction of meaning in order to remain relevant to the community (Assmann & Livingstone, 2006). Tradition is not a static museum, but rather a cultural memory that is continuously reactivated within new contexts.

Within this framework, Islamic exegesis can be understood as a system of collective memory of the Muslim community that is constantly renewed. Each generation of exegetes does not merely repeat the classical interpretations but also undertakes adjustments and reinterpretations in accordance with the social, political, and intellectual challenges of its time. Meanwhile, Talal Asad offers the perspective of discursive tradition, namely that Islam endures through discursive practices that negotiate texts, authority, and social practices (Asad, 1993). According to Asad, tradition is not a static entity but rather an ongoing process of interaction between sacred texts, community, and authority. Thus, the debate between Islamic exegesis and the Corpus Coranicum can be read as part of this discursive dynamic, rather than merely a methodological conflict.

This study finds that the Islamic *tafsīr* tradition is not passive in the face of modern philological criticism but rather demonstrates a dynamic pattern of resilience. This resilience is manifested in three main tendencies: first, the preservation of classical authority by emphasizing the continuity of *sanad* and the disciplines of *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*; second, the selective adaptation of philological approaches, such as in the study of *qiraʾat* variants or the historical reconstruction of the *muṣḥaf* (Sinai, 2014); and third, the opening of dialogical space with modern critical methodologies, particularly within global academic discourse (Neuwirth, 2003). These findings indicate the existence of layered responses that interact with one another within the body of the Islamic *tafsīr* tradition.

THE DYNAMICS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN PHILOLOGY AND *ʿULŪM AL-QURʾĀN*

Modern philological criticism, particularly as practiced by Corpus Coranicum, seeks to situate the Qur'an within a network of seventh-century interreligious texts, thereby emphasizing its historicity rather than its divinity (Neuwirth, 2014). It is at this point that the epistemological tension with Islamic *tafsīr* arises. Yet rather than closing off space, many Muslim scholars position this criticism as an opportunity for reflection. The Islamic *tafsīr* tradition has been able to cultivate two dialogical attitudes: first, selective critique, namely accepting the methodological benefits of philology such as manuscript studies

and variant readings without necessarily submitting to its theological conclusions; and second, an apologetic – constructive response, which upholds the normative view of revelation while demonstrating that the plurality of readings does not undermine the authority of the text.

Viewed through this lens, the dialogue between philology and tafsīr is neither unilateral nor merely defensive. Instead, it represents a form of intellectual negotiation in which both traditions test their assumptions. Philology challenges tafsīr to articulate the historical conditions of revelation with greater methodological precision, while tafsīr challenges philology to recognize that textual meaning cannot be reduced to historical contingencies alone. This reciprocal pressure generates what might be called a productive epistemic tension one that expands the conceptual horizons of Qur'anic studies without dissolving the boundaries of either approach. The value of this dialogue lies precisely in its friction: it exposes tacit biases, refines methodological claims, and demonstrates that the authority of tafsīr is not simply inherited from the past but continues to assert itself through active engagement with modern scholarly paradigms.

From the interaction between the tafsir tradition and philological criticism, three main models of response can be identified. The Resistance Model rejecting philological approaches entirely on ideological or theological grounds. This model asserts the position of the Qur'an as transcendent revelation that is not subject to historical criticism (Reynolds, 2010).

The Critical Appropriation Model adopts philological techniques (such as textual criticism, paleography, and intertextual studies) while still maintaining the Islamic theological framework (Sinai, 2014). The Integrative Model is progressive, seeking to combine the hermeneutics of classical tafsīr with philological findings in order to enrich meaning, while nevertheless preserving the horizon of faith (W. A. Saleh, 2010). These three models demonstrate that the tafsīr tradition is not monolithic but polyphonic. Thus, the resilience of the tafsīr tradition is not merely about withstanding criticism, but about evolving into a mosaic of approaches that reflect the intellectual flexibility of Islam.

The literature shows that the tension between Western philological approaches and the Islamic exegetical tradition is inescapable. On the one hand, the Corpus Coranicum offers textual analysis that enriches the historical understanding of the Qur'an. On the other hand, Islamic exegesis affirms that the authority of the Qur'an cannot be reduced to philology, as it is closely tied to faith and prophetic authority.

Nevertheless, some scholars have attempted to find a middle ground. Gabriel Said Reynolds, for instance, emphasizes the importance of reading the Qur'an within the context of its biblical subtext without disregarding Islam's theological claims (Reynolds, 2010). He refers to this approach as intertextual reading, which opens the possibility of dialogue between the Western philological tradition and Islamic exegesis. Furthermore, Mustansir Mir emphasizes that Islamic exegesis possesses an adaptive capacity, enabling it to engage with Western approaches without losing its authority. This means that the resilience of exegesis is not merely a matter of resistance, but also the capacity to absorb new methodological elements in order to enrich its corpus.

The findings indicate that the interaction between Western philology and 'ulūm al-Qur'an unfolds in a complex pattern. On the one hand, modern philology challenges the fundamental assumptions of 'ulūm al-Qur'an, such as the concept of the 'Uthmanic muṣḥaf as standardized and final (Wansbrough & Rippin, 1977). On the other hand, Muslim scholars and academics have demonstrated the ability to utilize philological tools to strengthen internal studies, for instance in textual criticism, paleography, or the

chronology of revelation. Thus, the study shows that this interaction is not merely confrontational, but also entails selective methodological assimilation (W. A. Saleh, 2010).

RESILIENCE MODELS FOR THE FUTURE OF QUR'ANIC STUDIES

The resilience of the tafsīr tradition offers a significant contribution to the future of Qur'anic studies. First, it demonstrates that tafsīr can endure as a living epistemological framework even when confronted with global academic challenges. Second, it affirms that the study of the Qur'an cannot be separated from the dynamics of the community that gives it life (Rippin, 2005).

Furthermore, the ability of the tafsīr tradition to engage in dialogue with philological criticism opens the possibility for the emergence of a new paradigm in Qur'anic studies namely, epistemic coexistence. In this paradigm, modern criticism and the tafsīr tradition do not negate one another but instead expand each other's horizons of understanding. In this way, the Islamic tafsīr tradition is not only resilient but also contributes intellectually to contemporary humanities.

The literature review above indicates that the relationship between the Corpus Coranicum and Islamic exegesis is not merely confrontational, but also presents an opportunity to envision a more dialogical future for Qur'anic studies. On one hand, the Corpus Coranicum can expand the horizons of Qur'anic scholarship by providing textual and historical parallels. On the other hand, Islamic exegesis, with its epistemic resilience, can offer normative and spiritual perspectives that are indispensable.

By employing the frameworks of cultural memory (Assmann) and discursive tradition (Asad), this tension can be understood as a dynamic of tradition resilience: how Islamic exegesis endures while simultaneously transforming in response to modern epistemological challenges. Thus, rather than being seen as a threat, the Corpus Coranicum can be regarded as an opportunity for reconstructing Qur'anic epistemology in a more open, critical, and globally relevant manner.

Another finding of this study is the emergence of resilience models that can be mapped into three forms: the conservative model, which rejects the authority of modern philology and continues to adhere to the epistemology of classical tafsīr (Rippin, 2022); the integrative model, which seeks to combine philological approaches with the tafsīr tradition without compromising the fundamental principles of faith (Neuwirth, 2014); and the critical – progressive model, which treats philological criticism as a dialogical partner for developing new horizons in Qur'anic studies (Reynolds, 2010). These three models represent the ways in which the Islamic tafsīr tradition negotiates with the challenges of modern philology, while at the same time opening up possibilities for the future development of Qur'anic studies at the global level (Pink, 2010).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Islamic tafsīr tradition demonstrates a profound degree of epistemological resilience in responding to the intellectual and methodological challenges posed by modern philological criticism, particularly those represented by the Corpus Coranicum project. Far from being a rigid or defensive system, the tafsīr tradition emerges as a dynamic and adaptive intellectual enterprise that negotiates continuously between the preservation of normative continuity and the pursuit of methodological innovation. Through the retention of classical interpretive structures such as *sanad*, *ijmā'*, and *ulūm al-Qur'ān*, alongside the selective engagement with philological tools and textual

criticism, tafsīr has succeeded in transforming what might initially appear as epistemic disruption into a catalyst for intellectual and spiritual renewal. The findings of this research indicate that within the Islamic exegetical tradition there exists not a monolithic response but a spectrum of interpretive strategies from conservative resistance to critical appropriation and integrative synthesis. These diverse models together reveal the polyphonic nature of Islamic hermeneutics and its ability to sustain dialogue between revelation and reason. By maintaining the Qur'an's theological authority while engaging with modern academic discourse, the tafsīr tradition reinforces its position as a living epistemic framework that bridges the sacred and the scholarly. Theoretically, this study enriches the understanding of tafsīr as a form of cultural and discursive resilience, contributing to the broader conversation on how religious traditions negotiate modernity without forfeiting authenticity.

From a practical standpoint, the study underscores the ongoing relevance of tafsīr as a dialogical model for contemporary Qur'anic studies, interfaith discourse, and Islamic higher education. Its adaptive capacity offers a methodological paradigm that can integrate critical historical approaches without undermining the ontological foundations of revelation. This integrative vision has implications for curriculum design in Islamic studies, encouraging scholars to engage with philological and historical methodologies critically, yet within the epistemic boundaries of Islamic theology. Moreover, the concept of "epistemic coexistence" proposed in this study provides a valuable framework for the future of Qur'anic scholarship one that does not view philology and faith as oppositional but as mutually enriching epistemologies. Policy-wise, this framework can inspire academic institutions and research bodies to foster collaborative initiatives between traditional Islamic scholarship and modern critical approaches, ensuring that both contribute constructively to the development of global Qur'anic studies. Future research should further explore how this epistemic resilience operates in specific interpretive traditions, such as regional commentaries, modern reformist exegesis, or digital tafsīr studies, in order to deepen our understanding of how Islamic hermeneutics continues to evolve in the contemporary intellectual landscape. In essence, this study reaffirms that the vitality of the tafsīr tradition lies not merely in its historical endurance but in its continuous capacity to reinterpret, renew, and engage critically with emerging paradigms thus positioning it as a generative force within the evolving humanities and as a cornerstone for a more dialogical and inclusive future of Qur'anic scholarship.

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