

Heretical Sects as Victims of Hermeneutics: A Study on the Metamorphosis of Religious Practices in the Indonesian Islamic Preaching Institute (LDII)

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Abstract

One of the da'wah organizations that continues to grow with a large number of followers spread across several regions in Indonesia is the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute/*Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia* (LDII). LDII's religious stance in recent years has sparked mass rejection from the public, as it is perceived to have deviated from Islamic teachings. This article serves as the central theme of a study aimed at describing and examining the existence of LDII and its quite controversial religious practices. The data collection methods used in this research include observation, interviews, and library research. The findings of this study indicate that LDII, as one of the religious sects in Indonesia, has fallen into deviations in its religious practices due to misunderstandings in comprehending and interpreting true religious messages, resulting from the misuse of the hermeneutic method.

Keywords: *Heresy, LDII, Hermeneutics.*



A. INTRODUCTION

Hermeneutics as an interpretative method is now being adopted and utilized to complement or even replace the classical methods of Quranic exegesis, which are now considered outdated in keeping with the times (Husaini & Al-Baghdadi, 2007). Several contemporary Islamic scholars and thinkers have welcomed the introduction of hermeneutics (Rohmanu, 2019). However, it is not always realized that the hermeneutic method used to interpret and understand the Quranic message can, over time, produce interpretations that diverge from the original intended meaning of the verses. One example of such an error is seen in the interpretation by Nurhasan Ubaidah, the founder of the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute/*Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia* (LDII), of QS. Al-Isra': 71, which led to the creation of the manqul doctrine within LDII teachings.

The manqul doctrine asserts that Quranic verses, Hadiths, and all religious teachings are only valid if interpreted, issued, ruled upon, and taught by Nurhasan Ubaidah. Consequently, all LDII members are prohibited from accepting interpretations that do not originate from Nurhasan Ubaidah, as these are considered incorrect and heretical (LPPI, 2008). This manqul doctrine has fostered an exclusivist attitude among LDII members, who view their own group as the only correct one and deem other groups to be wrong, often going so far as to label other groups as infidels and even considering them impure (Shodiq, 2004). As a result of

this attitude, disharmony and conflict have arisen within communities, leading to the perception of LDII as a heretical and deviant religious sect. Consequently, LDII has had to undergo several metamorphoses and name changes to protect itself as a sect perceived as deviant. These transformations include names such as Darul Hadis, Islam Jam'ah, LEMKARI, and finally, LDII (Dodi, 2017a).

In light of the numerous debates and public rejections concerning LDII's doctrine and its controversial religious practices, it is intriguing to conduct an in-depth study on LDII's hermeneutics in interpreting QS. Al-Isra': 71, which forms the basis of LDII's belief structure. The premise of this paper is that LDII is a victim of the erroneous application of the hermeneutic method, leading to its classification as a heretical religious sect. Therefore, based on the belief that LDII possesses a pattern of thought prone to deviation, this paper will delve into the metamorphosis of LDII's religious practices. This will be elaborated upon in several sub-discussions, including the irony of Nurhasan Ubaidah's interpretation of QS. Al-Isra': 71, the dilemma of LDII's religious practice metamorphosis in camouflaging its deviations, and a description of the views of several exegetes (outside LDII) on QS. Al-Isra': 71 as a comparison to Nurhasan Ubaidah's interpretation, which is considered a result of the hermeneutic method's interpretative pattern.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute (LDII), is a community da'wah organization in the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. LDII has a vision and mission to improve the quality of civilization, life, honor and dignity of life in society, nation and state and participate in the development of Indonesian people as a whole, based on faith and devotion to God Almighty in order to realize a democratic and civil society. social justice based on Pancasila, which is approved by Allah.

LDII is an independent, official and legal organization following the provisions of Law no. 8 of 1985 concerning social organizations. In teaching, LDII uses traditional recitation methods, namely teachers who come from several well-known Islamic boarding school alumni, such as: Gontor Islamic Boarding School in Ponorogo, Tebu Ireng in Jombang, Kebarongan in Banyuwangi, Langitan in Tuban, etc. They studied together or deliberated for some time before delivering lessons from the Koran and Hadith to the regular recitation congregation or to the students and female students in the LDII boarding schools.

LDII also often holds Al-Qur'an and Hadith recitations with quite high activity routines. Starting from the PAC (Village/Kelurahan) level, PC (District) level, and has a cayenne pepper development program (preschool to elementary school age) that is coordinated throughout all LDII mosques. Apart from that, there are also general recitations, special recitations for teenagers and young people, recitations specifically for mothers, and even recitations specifically for seniors/seniors which are either closed or open in nature.

C. METHOD

This research tries to reveal the religious practices of LDII and their efforts to metamorphose and change names in order to survive as a recognized religious group in Indonesia. To find out, this article uses a qualitative descriptive method in the type of library research. The technical data collection is obtained through primary data which refers to citing data from relevant books, documents and journal articles. Apart from that, secondary data sources are also still a consideration in order to strengthen primary data through searching documents related to LDII.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Irony of Nurhasan Ubaidah's Interpretation of QS. Al-Isra': 71

Emile Durkheim divides the study of religion into two aspects: beliefs and practices (Durkheim, 2017). Beliefs refer to sacred oral or written texts that serve as references for adherents, such as the Qur'an and Hadith in Islam (Effendi, 2005). Practices, on the other hand, encompass behaviors that are directly or indirectly derived from these sacred texts (M. Q. Shihab, 2018). In the implementation of religious life, these beliefs are interpreted by adherents according to their individual understandings. Consequently, it is not uncommon for different groups to interpret the same texts differently, leading to diverse forms of religious practice (Wijaya, 2018).

Although differences in interpretation and understanding among various groups are normal, in some cases, the religious views promoted by the LDII (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia) group have drawn attention and rejection from parts of society, due to some teachings being considered deviant and unsettling. One such deviation includes Nurhasan Ubaidah's claim about the necessity of "manqul" with all its consequences (LPPI, 2008). The manqul system mandates that all LDII members must unconditionally accept knowledge transfer exclusively from within the LDII community and prohibits them from accepting interpretations from outside the LDII circle, as these are considered incorrect and heretical (Setiawan et al., 2008).

Upon closer observation, there are several bases for the mandatory nature of manqu among LDII members. One of these is derived from Nurhasan Ubaidah's interpretation of Surah Al-Isra, verse 71 (QS. Al-Isra': 71).

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظَلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا

The verse means: "On the Day when We will call every people with their leader..." [QS. Al-Isra': 71] (LPMQ, 2017)

According to Amin Djamaluddin from the Institute for Islamic Research and Studies (LPPI), Nurhasan Ubaidah interpreted this verse to mean that on the Day of Judgment, every individual will be called by Allah alongside their imam, who will testify to their deeds in this world. Consequently, if a person does not have an imam, there will be no one to testify to their deeds on the Day of Judgment, rendering their worldly acts of worship meaningless and leading them to be cast into Hell. Therefore, everyone must appoint and pledge allegiance to an imam who will testify to their deeds in this world (Setiawan et al., 2008). Additionally, each person is

required to obey their imam to be witnessed as righteous and enter Paradise. Obedience to the imam is equated with obedience to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, and opposing the imam is seen as opposing Allah and His Messenger, resulting in being judged as infidels (LPPI, 2008). This interpretation is based on the verse,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

The verse means: "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..." [QS. An-Nisa': 59] (LPMQ, 2017)

If we examine the *asbâb al-nuzul* (context of revelation) of the above verse, the obedience mentioned refers to obedience in all matters that contain goodness. Therefore, if a command does not contain goodness, even if it comes from the Prophet Muhammad, it is not obligatory to obey it. However, Nurhasan Ubaidah, in interpreting this verse, stated that the imam holds a position equal to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, thus must be fully obeyed. Furthermore, the imam referred to by Nurhasan Ubaidah is unequivocally himself, who is regarded as the legitimate imam that has been pledged allegiance to. Consequently, anything from Nurhasan Ubaidah is always considered correct and must be obeyed, even if it is wrong. This is where the doctrine of *manqul* began to form, which then sparked debates and rejection from the community, as it was seen as a method that shackles the mind and leads its followers to an exclusive attitude in perceiving the truth (Setiawan et al., 2008).

In essence, the practice of *manqul* has actually existed in the tradition of classical scholars. *Manqul*, derived from the Arabic word "*naqala*," which means "to transfer" (Yunus, 1990), implies that *manqul* knowledge is knowledge transferred from teacher to student. This method is known in the study of *hadith*. In *hadith* studies, *manqul* means learning *hadith* from a teacher who has a chain of transmission (*isnad*) that traces back to the Prophet Muhammad (al-Qardhawi, 2007). In the study of *tafsir* (Quranic exegesis), the term *tafsir bil ma'tsur* is known, which means interpreting a verse of the Quran with another verse of the Quran, interpreting the Quran with *hadith*, or interpreting the Quran with the fatwas of the *Sahabah* (companions) and *Tabi'in* (followers) (al-Qattan, 2002).

However, issues arise when *manqul* leads someone to believe that the knowledge taught by their teacher alone is correct, while others are considered incorrect. This perception has led to criticisms of the LDII's religious practices as erroneous and deviant. For instance, consider the simple example of the principle of seeking knowledge. According to Nurhasan Ubaidah's teachings, seeking knowledge is obligatory. However, this obligation is *manqul*, meaning it is obligatory according to Nurhasan Ubaidah and the teachers he appoints. Learning or studying outside of this community is prohibited (*haram*) and invalid. The reasoning behind this is that all religious knowledge must be *manqul-musnad-muttashil* (directly transmitted with a continuous chain of authority) back to the

Prophet Muhammad, and only Nurhasan Ubaidah is seen as having such a direct and continuous chain (LPPI, 2008).

This raises a question regarding the valid proof of Nurhasan Ubaidah's direct and continuous chain (manqul-musnad-muttashil) back to the Prophet Muhammad. Thus far, there is no evidence of an unbroken chain (sanad) connecting Nurhasan Ubaidah to the Prophet Muhammad. The only assertion comes from the acknowledgment that Nurhasan Ubaidah has been recognized as having such a chain through his teachers, as mentioned on pages 124-125 of Kitabus Sholah published by LDII, as explained by H.M.C. Shodiq in his book "Akar Kesesatan LDII" (Shodiq, 2004). However, mere acknowledgment alone is insufficient to establish something as true or false. If such acknowledgment were sufficient proof, many individuals could easily claim to have a direct and continuous chain to the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, it is not as straightforward as stating one has a manqul-musnad-muttashil connection without valid evidence to support it.

Additionally, the limited mastery of auxiliary sciences (ilmu alat) among LDII members indirectly affects the effectiveness of the manqul method (Setiawan et al., 2008). Teddy Suratmadji, a daily board member of DPP LDII, acknowledges this limitation. He states that the lack of a requirement to understand auxiliary sciences when studying religious texts in LDII is intended to facilitate participation for laypeople who also wish to attend the study sessions (Setiawan et al., 2008). However, despite the intention to simplify the process, some view this as LDII's political strategy to indoctrinate their teachings among uninformed members. This is evidenced by one of the hadiths taught by LDII, which is used as a basis for validating a person's religiosity.

لَا إِسْلَامَ إِلَّا بِالْجَمَاعَةِ وَلَا جَمَاعَةٌ إِلَّا بِالْإِمَارَةِ وَلَا إِمَارَةٌ إِلَّا بِالْبَيْعَةِ وَلَا بَيْعَةٌ إِلَّا بِالطَّاعَةِ

"Indeed, there is no Islam except with the congregation. There is no congregation except with a leader. There is no leader except with a pledge of allegiance. And there is no pledge of allegiance except with obedience."

When the above hadith is compared to the original wording in the Sunan Ad-Darimi, Volume 1, page 79 (Ad-Darimi, 2016), differences are found. The wording of the hadith in Sunan Ad-Darimi does not contain the term "bai'at" (pledge of allegiance), let alone a pledge directed towards Nurhasan Ubaidah. The addition of the term "bai'at" in the LDII version of the hadith alters and expands its original wording. This addition changes the content and meaning of the hadith, causing it to be flawed in its matan (text) and rendering it dho'if (weak) (Nasir, 2008). Therefore, it cannot be used as a basis for worship or, even more so, as a basis for creed (al-Razi, 2010). Especially not for validating the legitimacy of one's own group's Islam and deeming the Islam of other groups invalid.

At first glance, this issue may seem simple, but from a creed perspective, such actions can lead to deviant beliefs. Therefore, LDII, as a religious group considered deviant, must be approached with caution. Due to its controversial religious practices, there is a concern that its presence could cause unrest within society, potentially leading to social chaos.

2. The Metamorphosis of LDII's Deviation Camouflage

LDII is one of the Islamic organizations that has long been considered a source of concern for society, leading to some labeling it as heretical. In various regions, this has often resulted in conflicts due to societal disharmony stemming from LDII's teachings, which are deemed deviant. LDII's exclusive stance and frequent condemnation of other groups outside its congregation have led it to be categorized as a deviant sect based on the 10 criteria of deviant sects issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) (Sumbulah, 2014). This categorization is primarily because the religious understanding promoted by LDII is still perceived as teaching the doctrines of Darul Hadis or Islam Jama'ah, which was banned by the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia in 1971 (SK Jaksa Agung RI No. Kep-08/D.A/10/1971 dated October 29, 1971) (Dodi, 2017b). Despite being considered a frequent source of conflict, LDII has managed to persist to this day.

Throughout its journey, the dynamics of the LDII community in maintaining its existence since its establishment have involved several transformations or name changes to escape being labeled a deviant religious sect. LDII, which has historical roots in Darul Hadis founded in 1951 by Nurhasan Ubaidah, underwent its first major transformation after the organization was banned and dissolved in 1968, renaming itself to Islam Jama'ah (IJ) in 1971. However, shortly thereafter, the Attorney General issued a decision, letter number Kep. 08/D.4/W.1971, declaring the dissolution of Islam Jama'ah throughout Indonesia due to its perceived threat to public order (Dodi, 2017b).

Immediately following the issuance of the Attorney General's decision, on January 1, 1972, Islam Jama'ah changed its name to the Indonesian Employees Association, commonly known as LEMKARI. Due to the continued perception that their teachings were deviant and troubling to society, LEMKARI was again dissolved after the issuance of SK No. 618 in 1988. In 1990, LEMKARI reemerged as the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Institute (LDII), a name under which it has managed to persist until today (Ulfah, 2017). These name changes were intended to shed the negative image of LEMKARI in the eyes of the public, despite the organization now operating under the name LDII.

However, despite the name change to LDII, the organization is still frequently associated with Islam Jama'ah. This association persisted with the establishment of the Burengan Islamic Boarding School in Kediri, managed by Drs. Nurhasyim, who placed Nurhasan Ubaidah as a key religious teacher. During this period, many doctrinal errors in Islamic teachings were reported (Setiawan et al., 2008), perpetuating the negative stigma against LDII.

Faced with a society and a state that continue to regard its teachings as deviant, LDII was compelled to adopt adaptive strategies to ensure its survival. One such strategy was the campaign for a "New Paradigm of LDII." This new concept was translated into a more open attitude towards external parties. LDII endeavored to abandon practices that contributed to its deviance. They sought an audience with the central MUI to socialize what they termed as the new paradigm, emphasizing

that LDII no longer based its teachings on Islam Jama'ah, although some teachings remained similar.

The efforts by LDII to promote a new paradigm have been viewed by some as a strategic move to elevate their social recognition from a fringe group to one aligned with orthodox religious institutions. However, recent events have cast doubt on the credibility of LDII's new paradigm introduced in 2005. Instances such as the excommunication of former LDII members and the mass attack on a student discussion at the University Ibn Khaldun Mosque in Bogor on June 15, 2013, have raised significant questions about the authenticity of LDII's proclaimed new paradigm (Jaiz, 2013).

The excommunication of former LDII members and the mass attack at UIKA Mosque seem to have backfired on LDII. These incidents have brought into question the validity of their new paradigm. If indeed the new paradigm was being practiced sincerely, such occurrences of excommunication would not have taken place. Teddy Suratmadji stated that LDII's New Paradigm in practice is now based on authentic hadith, which states, "Whoever accuses his brother of disbelief, then it is as if he has accused him of it, if he is not as he said." (An-Naisaburi, 2013)

The tragedy of the disbandment has led LDII Paradigma Baru to once again be doubted and associated with Islam Jama'ah. Regarding the connection between LDII and Islam Jama'ah, LDII officials themselves have acknowledged that there is indeed a relationship between LDII and Islam Jama'ah, which later transformed into LEMKARI. This relationship includes the fact that individuals who were previously part of Islam Jama'ah were later accommodated within LEMKARI. After LEMKARI ceased to exist, these individuals then became affiliated with LDII. Based on the chronological relay of membership mergers, it can be understood that LDII teachings still retain certain nuances of Islam Jama'ah's teachings, even though not entirely transferred.

However, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has not yet issued a specific fatwa regarding the dissolution of LDII, which allows the LDII name to persist and continue to be prevalent in various locations. According to data from LDII's official website, as of 2019, LDII had nearly 15 million members scattered across approximately 4,500 villages in various regions of Indonesia. Nevertheless, if reports emerge indicating that LDII is once again adopting teachings that deviate in principle and returning to practicing Islam Jama'ah teachings, then MUI's fatwa concerning Islam Jama'ah's misguidance would also apply to LDII.

3. LDII, A Hermeneutical Sect that Has Been Labeled as Deviant

One of the significant scholarly challenges in Islamic studies today is the introduction of hermeneutics into the field of Quranic exegesis. Originally used to interpret the Bible, hermeneutics is now being applied to interpret and understand the messages of the Quran (Alhana, 2014). This issue has garnered considerable attention among Muslim scholars, particularly those involved in Quranic studies, as

it involves linking hermeneutics as a methodology for interpreting the Bible with the Quran, considered the absolute word of Allah, to be critically examined.

Hermeneutics, in essence, is not fundamentally different from traditional Islamic exegesis (Muzayyin, 2015). However, Nasarudin Baidan explains that hermeneutics does not adhere to procedural interpretation, distinguishing it from 'Ulum al-Quran, which emphasizes authenticity and transmission procedures (Reflita, 2016). In hermeneutics, interpretation becomes entirely the prerogative of the interpreter in uncovering the meaning of a verse, often disconnected from the intention and purpose inherent in the verse (Imaroh, 2016). This approach widens the scope for anyone, anywhere, and at any time to engage in reading and interpreting texts, in this case, Quranic verses. Consequently, it leads to diverse interpretations where a single text may lack stable and firm meanings, potentially resulting in interpretations diverging significantly from the intended meaning of the verse and its Creator, Allah (Imaroh, 2016).

Thus, any error in the application of hermeneutical methods can have fatal consequences in misinterpreting the true religious message. Moreover, it can lead to deviations in true Islamic creed. One example of such misinterpretation can be seen in Nurhasan Ubaidah's interpretation of QS. Al-Isra': 71, which later resulted in doctrinal formulations within LDII teachings. Nurhasan Ubaidah's interpretation is considered to stem from a hermeneutical pattern, although he himself never claimed to use hermeneutics in interpreting the Quran. Upon closer examination, however, it becomes evident that Nurhasan Ubaidah tended towards hermeneutical methods in his interpretations.

In his interpretations, Nurhasan Ubaidah treated the verses as if they were lifeless, a practice that does not adhere to proper exegesis principles. He did not position the verses as objects that must be interpreted accurately according to exegesis rules. In other words, Nurhasan Ubaidah interpreted Quranic verses based on his subjective desires, disregarding the validity of the object. In this context, Nurhasan Ubaidah fell into a hermeneutical mindset that emphasizes the death of the text and the author, ultimately leading to doctrinal deviations that fostered an exclusivist stance within LDII towards truth (Imaroh, 2016).

Nurhasan Ubaidah's misinterpretation of QS. Al-Isra': 71 came to light when his interpretation was compared with interpretations found in reliable tafsir books, which are widely referenced by scholars and the Muslim community. The differences arise from LDII's approach in interpreting and understanding the term إمامهم (their leader) in QS. Al-Isra': 71. Nurhasan Ubaidah translated إمامهم as an imam or leader of a group, a position he attributed to himself, thereby asserting his decisions as authoritative and obligatory to follow.

This interpretation starkly contrasts with interpretations by other expert commentators in their tafsir works. For instance, in Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Isma'il bin Umar bin Kathir explains that إمامهم in QS. Al-Isra': 71 refers to Allah drawing every community towards their respective leaders. Among the various opinions among scholars regarding the meaning of leader in this verse, Ibn Kathir follows the views

of Mujahid and Qatadah, who argue that the leader referred to in the verse is "their Prophet" (Ibn Katsir & Hakim, 2017), aligning with Allah's words,

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

It means: "Every community has a messenger. Then when their messenger comes, judgment is passed between them in justice, and they are not wronged." [QS. Yunus: 47] (LPMQ, 2017)

In Tafsir Al-Misbah, M. Quraish Shihab similarly interprets إمامهم (their leader) in QS. Al-Isra': 71, deriving it from the word أَمَّ (um), meaning to emulate or follow. Thus, an imâm is one who is emulated. According to this interpretation, on the Day of Judgment, each person will be called alongside the leader they emulated. Quraish Shihab illustrates this by stating that individuals will be summoned as "O followers of Prophet Noah," gathering followers with the Prophet they emulated (M. Q. S. Shihab, 2017).

However, the interpretation differs in Tafsir At-Tabari. Written by Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Jarir at-Tabari, this tafsir explains that إمامهم in QS. Al-Isra': 71 does not only refer to leaders who are the prophets of each community. This understanding stems from hadiths and statements from companions interpreting إمامهم as the record of human deeds (At-Tabari, 2014). This interpretation follows the continuation of the verse's context, which discusses the retrieval of the book of deeds on the Day of Judgment. The righteousness or wrongdoing of a person's life in the Hereafter greatly depends on their recorded deeds. Therefore, the term "leader" in QS. Al-Isra': 71 is interpreted as the record of deeds that leads and determines the fate of individuals in the next life.

Like at-Tabari's interpretation is Ahmad Musthofa al-Maraghi's interpretation in his book Tafsir Al-Maraghi. He also interprets the term إمامهم as the book of deeds (Al-Maraghi, 2015). This is further supported by the statement of Allah,

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَرَهُمْ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ

It means: "Indeed, We revive the dead and We record what they have put forth and the traces they leave behind. And all things We have enumerated in a clear register (Lauh Mahfuzh)." [Quran, Surah Yasin: 12] (LPMQ, 2017)

From several interpretations of Surah Al-Isra': 71, one conclusion can be drawn: the majority of scholars of exegesis interpret the term إمامهم as referring to either prophets or the book of deeds. This interpretation is also found in other exegeses not detailed in this paper, such as in Tafsir Al-Azhar by (HAMKA, 2015) and Tafsir Al-Baidhowi by (al-Baydlawi, 2018). None of these exegetes assert that the leader mentioned refers to a personal leader dedicated to a specific group, as Nurhasan Ubaidah interprets.

From this, it can be understood that even though the same authentic evidence is used as a guide, it does not mean that the practice and results of the interpretation will be the same. This is greatly influenced by the method of interpreting the evidence. As seen in the interpretation of QS. Al-Isra': 71, although both interpretations are based on ijtihad, the outcomes of using classical tafsir methods and hermeneutics are vastly different. Tafsir, even though its explanations are based

on *ijtihad* and reasoning, still adheres to the principles of interpretation and the Arabic language. Since the Quran was revealed in Arabic, understanding it certainly requires adequate proficiency in the essential linguistic sciences and other linguistic rules to comprehensively trace the precise meaning of the Quranic verses.

E. CONCLUSIONS

In its religious practices, the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute (LDII) has fallen into deviations caused by misunderstandings in comprehending and interpreting the true religious messages. It is concluded that LDII's interpretations of the Quranic and Hadith texts are based on the personal interests of the group, particularly those of the interpreter, Nurhasan Ubaidah.

This error originated from the hegemony exercised by LDII clerics over religious teachings, interpreting them according to their personal interests. Additionally, the condition of LDII's congregation, who lack proficiency in the Arabic language and essential religious sciences, leads them to blindly follow the imam without understanding the true meaning. Through political strategies, the imam imposes the "manqul" policy, which mandates that all LDII congregants accept only interpretations from within LDII and reject external interpretations and knowledge transfer, labeling them as wrong, heretical, and not transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Even though LDII is now promoting its 'new paradigm' and expressing a more open attitude towards outsiders, there remains the possibility that this 'new paradigm' is a new political strategy by LDII to cover up its deviant stance as a religious sect that has fallen victim to the misapplication of hermeneutics, specifically in interpreting QS. Al-Isra': 71. Therefore, LDII, as a religious group deemed deviant, should still be approached with caution. Its controversial religious practices could potentially cause unrest in the community, possibly leading to social chaos.

Therefore, as a precautionary measure, one should not merely accept or follow without knowing whether what is being followed is right or wrong (blind imitation). Instead, it is crucial to understand linguistic principles and essential religious sciences, enabling one to evaluate whether a particular religious argument is valid for practice and to avoid misinterpretations of religious messages that could lead to deviation.

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