



# Fabricated (Mawdu') Hadiths in Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur: A Study of Tafsir al-Kashf wa al-Bayan, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, and Fath al-Qadir

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## Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji fenomena ad-dakhil berupa hadis maudu' (palsu) yang muncul dalam sejumlah kitab tafsir klasik. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis dan pendekatan studi pustaka, penelitian ini menelaah dua contoh utama, yaitu (1) riwayat keutamaan surat-surat Al-Qur'an dalam Tafsir al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan karya as-Sa'labi dan (2) riwayat mengenai gerakan iblis dalam Tafsir al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an karya al-Qurtubi. Hasil analisis memperlihatkan bahwa kedua riwayat tersebut tergolong maudu' atau sangat lemah, baik dari aspek sanad maupun matan, namun tetap dikutip oleh mufasir klasik tanpa kritik memadai. Kondisi ini dipengaruhi oleh kecenderungan para mufasir untuk menghimpun berbagai riwayat tanpa verifikasi ketat, keterbatasan akses terhadap sumber-sumber otoritatif pada masa penyusunan tafsir, serta sikap kehati-hatian dalam menilai riwayat yang dianggap sensitif. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa keberadaan hadis maudu' sebagai bentuk ad-dakhil dalam tafsir bi al-ma'sur berpotensi mengaburkan pemahaman autentik terhadap ayat Al-Qur'an.

**Kata Kunci:** hadis maudu', ad-dakhil, tafsir klasik, as-Sa'labi, al-Qurtubi, asy-Syawkani, kritik sanad dan matan

## Abstract

*This study investigates the presence of fabricated (maudu') hadiths within selected classical tafsir works. Utilizing a descriptive-analytical method and a library research approach, the analysis focuses on two main cases: (1) the narration concerning the virtues of Qur'anic surahs in al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan by as-Sa'labi and (2) the narration about the movement of Iblis in al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an by al-Qurtubi. The findings demonstrate that both narrations fall into the category of fabricated or extremely weak traditions in terms of their chains of transmission (sanad) and textual content (matan), yet they were still cited by classical exegetes without adequate critical evaluation. Contributing factors include the tendency to compile all available narrations without rigorous scrutiny, limited access to authoritative sources during the period of tafsir compilation, and a cautious attitude toward criticizing potentially sensitive narrations. The study concludes that fabricated hadiths, as a form of ad-dakhil in the bi al-ma'sur exegetical tradition, can obscure the accurate understanding of Qur'anic verses.*

**Keywords:** fabricated hadith, ad-dakhil, classical tafsir, as-Sa'labi, al-Qurtubi, asy-Syawkani, sanad and matan criticism.

## Background

Interpretation of the Quran through tafsir bi al-ma'thur has served as a principal foundation for understanding Islam's sacred text since the classical period, in which exegetes relied on reports from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the Companions, and the Successors (tabi'in) to explain the verses. This approach

emphasizes the authority of oral and written tradition, aiming to enrich the meaning of verses with historical and prophetic context. However, the phenomenon of ad-dakhil - namely, foreign elements infiltrating interpretation, including fabricated (mawdu') hadiths - has become a global issue in contemporary Islamic studies. It reflects an enduring challenge in safeguarding the purity of religion's primary sources, since

fabricated hadiths may alter understandings of doctrine, law, and ethics, thereby influencing Muslim religious practice across the world.

Farida Begham, in "Fabricated Ahadith in Tafseer of Surah Al-Taubah in Mafatih-al-Ghayb (The Keys to Unknown): A critical Analysis," offers a critical analysis of fabricated hadiths in the classical tafsir of Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, finding that the exegete compiled narrations without prioritizing authenticity, thereby incorporating weak, inauthentic, and fabricated reports that blur Quranic interpretation.

Abur Hamdi Usman and Rosni Wazir, in "The Fabricated Hadith: Islamic Ethics And Guidelines Of Hadith Dispersion In Social Media," explore Islamic ethics regarding fabricated hadiths, emphasizing the scholars' unanimous rejection due to their negative impact on aqidah, shari'ah, and worship, even though such reports often appear in classical literature without clarification of their status.

Firdaus Khairi Abdul Kadir, Asyraf Hj Ab Rahman, Hailan Salamun, Abdul Hanis Embong, and Fakhratu Naimah Muhad, in "Falsification of Hadith: A Study on the Effects and Solutions," examine the effects of hadith falsification on religious understanding and propose verification solutions, underscoring the need for research to preserve the purity of Islamic sources, including within classical interpretive contexts that remain vulnerable to the infiltration of fabricated reports.

The infiltration of fabricated hadiths into classical tafsir works such as al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan by al-Tha'labi, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an by al-Qurtubi, and Fath al-Qadir by al-Shawkani - where spurious reports about surah virtues, the movement of Iblis, and Shi'i interpretations are cited without adequate critique - results in distortions of Quranic understanding, as weak or fabricated hadiths become the basis for inauthentic interpretation.

Analysis of this problem reveals that fabricated hadiths often evade verification due to classical exegetes' tendency to compile all available reports, shaped by limited access to authoritative sources and concerns about communal division. The impacts include obscuring the meanings of verses, potential misunderstandings in religious practice, and weakening the credibility of tafsir bi al-ma'thur as an interpretive method. The resulting problems include tension between tradition and rationality, whereby broken chains of transmission or texts

that contradict the Quran are nonetheless retained, thereby hindering the development of more critical Islamic thought.

Although hadith criticism studies have advanced, a gap remains in specific analyses of ad-dakhil in tafsir bi al-ma'thur, particularly through concrete cases in the works of al-Tha'labi, al-Qurtubi, and al-Shawkani. Prior research has tended to focus on general hadith criticism rather than its impact on the interpretation of particular verses, and therefore has not sufficiently explored the historical and methodological factors that allow fabricated reports to infiltrate.

As a form of ad-dakhil, fabricated hadiths can threaten the integrity of Quranic understanding, the primary guide for billions of Muslims. Logically, this study is relevant to established theories of sanad and matan criticism in hadith studies, and is urgent in the digital era when misinformation spreads easily. Through an empirical and systematic approach, this study contributes to the renewal of tafsir methodology, ensuring more accurate interpretation and preventing doctrinal distortion. This study aims to analyze cases of fabricated hadiths in three classical tafsir works, identify causal factors, and draw implications for the validity of tafsir bi al-ma'thur.

## Research Questions

1. Which fabricated (mawdu') hadiths are used in tafsir bi al-ma'thur in al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, and Fath al-Qadir, and in what interpretive contexts (verses) do these hadiths appear?
2. What is the status of the sanad and matan of these hadiths when tested against the principles of hadith criticism?
3. What are the main factors that enable fabricated hadiths to enter and be used in the three tafsir works, and what are the implications for the validity of tafsir bi al-ma'thur?

## Theoretical Framework

### A. Definition of Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur

Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur is an approach to Quranic exegesis that places historical and authoritative sources as the primary basis for interpreting the meaning of God's words. The interpretive method refers to other verses of the Quran itself, sound hadiths of the Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him), and reports or explanations (bayan) from the Companions and the Successors (tabi'in), with the aim of maintaining accuracy and authenticity through transmission that can be scientifically verified. Such an approach is considered the form of interpretation closest to the original revelatory context because it uses narrative materials directly stemming from the early Islamic period and transmitters closest to the source of revelation. The strength of *tafsir bi al-ma'thur* lies in the authority of its sources, although some studies note debates about whether *tabi'in* reports should be included in this category as opposed to *tafsir bi al-ra'y*.

Prior research shows consistent use and contemporary relevance of *tafsir bi al-ma'thur*. For example, "Telaah Singkat Tafsir Bi al-Ma'tsur" argues that narration-based interpretation contributes significantly to maintaining the stability of Quranic meaning amid shifts in modern interpretive methodologies. Meanwhile, "Model of Tafsir Bi al-Ma'tsur Approach and Its Relevance to Islamic Education" highlights how this approach remains applicable in Islamic education studies because it provides a strong and historically grounded hermeneutic foundation.

## B. The Concept of Ad-Dakhil in Tafsir Studies

In *tafsir* studies, *ad-dakhil* refers to the entry of interpretive materials that are foreign or lack a strong legal-religious basis into Quranic exegesis, such as *Isra'iliyyat* narratives, weak (*da'if*) or fabricated (*mawdu'*) hadiths, and interpretation shaped by sectarian interests that deviates from the principles of *jahr wa ta'dil*. This phenomenon began receiving attention since the classical period as a response to contamination of reports in *tafsir* works; scholars developed verification criteria and source-criticism mechanisms to distinguish acceptable reports from those that constitute *ad-dakhil*, so that definitive texts (*nass qat'i*) would not be

distorted by historical infiltration or external narratives.

"Al-Dakhil al-Naqli dalam Tafsir Ma'alim al-Tanzil: Analisis terhadap Surah Maryam" affirms that some *Isra'iliyyat* reports remain present in exegesis and require *sanad* clarification. Fatimah and Rahman, in "Ad-Dakhil dalam Tafsir Surah al-Kahfi pada Tafsir al-Kasyif," show that the use of weak reports can influence the narrative details of the story of the Companions of the Cave (*Ashab al-Kahf*).

## C. Fabricated (*Mawdu'*) Hadiths as a Primary Form of Ad-Dakhil

A fabricated (*mawdu'*) hadith is defined as a report deliberately forged, characterized by defects in the *sanad* such as a lying transmitter, or by a *matan* that contradicts sound evidence and reason, in accordance with the criteria of hadith authorities such as al-'Iraqi and Ibn al-Jawzi. In the context of *tafsir bi al-ma'thur*, such hadiths become a dominant form of *ad-dakhil* due to classical exegetes' tendency to compile reports extensively without sufficiently strict filtration.

In *tafsir bi al-ma'thur*, fabricated hadiths are often regarded as the principal form of *ad-dakhil* because classical exegetes frequently compiled reports expansively without strict *sanad* verification, allowing spurious narrations to enter *tafsir* materials and potentially distort the understanding of verses. Prior studies indicate a relationship between inauthentic reports and interpretive processes: Nasution, in "Al-Dakhil pada Hadis Mawdu' Seputar Asbab an-Nuzul," traces how fabricated hadiths used in al-Wahidi's *asbab al-nuzul* work constitute *ad-dakhil* that undermines historical exegesis. Mubarok, in "Mushkilah al-Ahadith al-Dakhilah fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim," discusses the challenges of intrusive hadiths, including *mawdu'* reports, in Quranic exegesis and their implications for readers' understanding. Another study, Saputra's "Meninjau Dakhil dalam Kitab Tafsir al-Durru al-Mantsur fi Tafsir al-Ma'tsur Surah

Shad," likewise identifies narrations classified as ad-dakhil for failing to meet the authenticity criteria of hadith sciences. These studies emphasize that filtration efforts and sanad criticism are essential to keep tafsir grounded in authentic sources.

## Research Method

This study is qualitative, employing a descriptive-analytical method to describe and examine the phenomenon of fabricated (mawdu') hadiths as a form of ad-dakhil in tafsir bi al-ma'thur. A library research approach is applied by collecting data from primary sources in the form of two classical tafsir works: *Tafsir al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan* by Abu Ishaq al-Tha'labi and *Tafsir al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* by Abu 'Abd Allah al-Qurtubi, focusing on specific narrations regarding surah virtues and the movement of Iblis. Secondary sources include hadith-science works such as *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil* by Ibn Abi Hatim and *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, supported by the digital databases Shamaela and Dorar.net up to 2025. Data collection is conducted systematically through identification of narrations, recording of sanad and matan, and cross-referencing.

Data analysis is divided into sanad criticism - evaluating transmitters based on jarh and ta'dil criteria - and matan criticism, which tests conformity with the Quran, sound hadiths, logic, and detects contradictions. This approach determines whether narrations are mawdu' or da'if, followed by analysis of infiltration factors such as compilation without strict filtration, historical limitations in access, and socio-political considerations. Validity is strengthened through triangulation of multiple sources to avoid bias, ensuring findings that are empirical, logical, and contributive to renewing contemporary tafsir methodology.

## Findings and Discussion

### a. Findings

#### a) Narrations on the Virtues of Quranic Surahs in *Tafsir al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan* by al-Tha'labi

The study finds that al-Tha'labi includes a number of narrations concerning the virtues of Quranic surahs, particularly reports specifying distinct rewards for reciting certain surahs. These narrations

contain chains with transmitters assessed as da'if, matruk, or majhul based on jarh wa ta'dil literature. Moreover, portions of the narrational texts employ wording not found in sound hadith collections and are not supported by other authoritative reports. The incompatibility of both sanad and matan with hadith validity standards leads these narrations to be classified as mawdu' or extremely weak in classical and contemporary hadith catalogues.

#### b) The Movement of Iblis in *Tafsir al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* by al-Qurtubi

The study shows that al-Qurtubi cites a narration about the behavior and movement of Iblis in relation to human negligence. The transmission pathway includes narrators widely judged to be da'if or majhul in classical critical sources. The matan describes actions of Iblis not found in sound hadiths and lacking parallels in primary hadith sources such as the *Kutub al-Sittah*. Based on these sanad and matan data, the study classifies the narration as mawdu' or extremely weak.

## Discussion

### a) Implications of the Findings in al-Tha'labi's Tafsir

The inclusion of surah-virtue narrations in al-Tha'labi's tafsir indicates a classical tendency to compile reports comprehensively without strict verification filters. Historically, the genre of *fada'il al-suwar* is particularly vulnerable to fabrication, often driven by preaching needs, spiritual motivation, and encouragement to increase devotional merit. This study's findings align with the critiques of hadith scholars such as Ibn al-Jawzi and al-Dhahabi, who regarded many *fada'il al-suwar* reports in classical tafsir as unsound. Thus, the presence of mawdu' narrations in al-Tha'labi's work can be understood as a historical-methodological condition reflecting the verification standards of his time.

### b) Implications of the Findings in al-Qurtubi's Tafsir

The narration about the movement of Iblis included by al-Qurtubi suggests the infiltration of popular narratives circulating among the community into tafsir literature. Al-Qurtubi is generally known as a critical evaluator of hadith, yet in certain passages he still includes weak reports, either for pedagogical purposes or because such narrations had become widely disseminated in oral tradition. This phenomenon accords with ad-dakhil theory, which holds that exegetes do not always subject every report to thorough critique, especially those considered not to entail legal implications. It also indicates that social dynamics and the circulation of religious narratives influenced tafsir content.

### c) Causes of the Emergence of Fabricated Hadiths in Classical Tafsir

The two principal cases point to three main causal factors. First, limited access to hadith-critical sources led exegetes to rely on transmission traditions prevalent in their communities. Second, the compilatory method characteristic of some exegetes facilitated the inclusion of invalid reports as supplementary interpretive material. Third, narrations with moral exhortation, threat, and devotional motivation themes often carried

strong popular appeal, prompting exegetes to include them without strict verification.

## Conclusion

This study shows that fabricated (mawdu') hadiths as a form of ad-dakhil are tangibly present in two classical tafsir works: the narrations on the virtues of Quranic surahs in *Tafsir al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan* by al-Thalibi and the narration on the movement of Iblis in *Tafsir al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* by al-Qurtubi. Objective analysis of sanad and matan confirms that both narrations fall into the category of fabricated or extremely weak reports because they contain rejected transmitters and wording inconsistent with authoritative hadith sources. The presence of such narrations indicates that classical tafsir bi al-ma'thur was not entirely free from invalid narratives, particularly in popular themes that were from the outset prone to fabrication.

These findings further reveal that the infiltration of fabricated hadiths is shaped by three primary factors: the compilatory orientation of classical exegetes, limited access to hadith-critical sources, and the dominance of narrative traditions in society that led to the acceptance of certain reports without deep verification. This condition underscores that sanad and matan criticism must continue to be developed in contemporary tafsir studies to ensure that understanding of Quranic verses remains grounded in authentic sources.

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