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Hermeneutic Reception of Ex-Convict Terrorists on Understanding the Qur'anic Verses of Jihad and Qital

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Abstract

Ex-convict terrorists interpret the Qur'anic verses of jihad and qital as war against infidels, with the view that jihad is an obligation and heaven as the reward. This understanding has theological, political, sociological and psychological implications. In the context of Hans Robert Jauss' reception theory, the two main factors that influence this understanding are internal factors (personal background) and external factors (situation and social interaction). These determine how one understands the verses of jihad and qital in the Qur'an. This conclusion refutes the theory that attributes religion as the cause of violence as proposed by some scholars such as John Louis Esposito, David Rapoport, Robert Scott Appleby, and Bruce Lincoln.

Keywords: Qur'anic Studies, Hermeneutics, Reception, Terrorism

Introduction:

William E. Paden in his purpose and context theory states that the understanding of texts, both literary and religious texts, is influenced by the frame that surrounds them. Purpose includes the interests and expectations of the reader, whether consciously or unconsciously. Context refers to the socio-cultural realities that influence the selection of perspectives and patterns of one understands of the text.¹

In reception theory, Jauss uses *erwartungshorizon* (horizon of expectations) to describe the variation in one's understanding of a text. This diversity leads to different responses to the text. The ex-convict terrorists understanding of the verses of *jihad* and *qital* in the Qur'an is influenced by their *erwartungshorizon*. The reception theory by Iser and Jauss considers the text as an empty space that is intervened by the reader. The understanding of ex-convict terrorists is based on personal factors, taking into account situational factors and social interactions. This influences their decision to commit acts of violence.

Factors behind the Understanding of the Verses of *Jihad* and *Qital* of Ex-convict Terrorists:

In William McDougall's social-psychology theory, purpose and context are interrelated elements in individuals. Behaviour and understanding are influenced by three interrelated factors: situational, social interaction and personal. Understanding and action do not arise without cause, but through interrelated factors. In the context of understanding the verses of *jihad* and *qital* by ex-convict terrorists, there are three background findings that influence, namely situational, social interaction, and personal, which are interrelated with one another.

1. Situational Factors

Ex-convict terrorists such as Sofyan, Omar, Farel, Amir, and Zein experienced changes in understanding and behaviour that were influenced by their social relationships. These changes did not happen instantly and were influenced by situational and personal factors. Situational factors gave them freedom and a sense of security, while personal factors played an important role. The supportive environment and lack of suspicion from their wives gave them freedom of action. Sofyan and the others felt confident and free in their thoughts and behaviour because the situation influenced their impulses to act.²

¹ William E. Paden, *Interpreting the Sacred: Ways of Viewing Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).

² Richard H. Price and Dennis L. Bouffard, "Behavioral Appropriateness and Situational Constraint as Dimensions of Social Behavior," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (1974). 581. See also, Manjul Gupta, "Social Network Behavior Inappropriateness: The Role of

Similarly, other ex-convict terrorists such as Omar Khaeri, Amir Abdillah, Agus Supriyanto, and Zein Efendi feel safe because of the possibility of rejection from all those closest to them. They freely participated in studies of jihad and *qital* verses in their hidden *halaqahs*.

2. *Social Interaction Factors*

Social interaction factors, especially within the family environment, play an important role in changing the understanding of ex-convict terrorists. Sofyan recognised the influence of his father who had a militant background in shaping his negative militant attitude. Social interaction through oral communication and written references, such as books and articles, also influenced their understanding. Books by Abdullah Azzam and Aman Abdurrahman had a significant impact on their understanding. Sofyan was also involved in interactions with people from political parties in Indonesia who introduced him to books on tarbiyah *jihadiyah*. Indirect social interaction through literacy can also shape a person's views, especially if the reference comes from a respected figure. This is in line with Karl Marx's view that knowledge is shaped by the social environment and can only be understood in the context of the social situation.³

Ex-convict terrorists, including Omar, experienced a change in understanding after being involved in the movement. Omar was initially unfamiliar with violence, but joined the group after being involved in religious study activities introduced by his siblings. Stuart Hall's view of audiences selectively choosing and interpreting meaning applies in this case. The sociology of knowledge factor also plays a role in changing the understanding of Qur'anic verses on *jihad* and *qital* by ex-convict terrorists. Certain verses are interpreted textually as a motivation to take action without fear of death and see it as a way to achieve martyrdom. For them, jihad in the form of physical resistance in Indonesia is an individual obligation to liberate Muslims and use acts of terror as a form of resistance against laws that are not in accordance with Islamic law.⁴

Farel, Omar and Sofyan understand that in the Qur'anic verse at al-Taubah [9]:24, jihad transcends any kind of love, including love for family and possessions. They see war as part of da'wah in Islam, referring to prophetic history where Prophet

Individual-Level Espoused National Cultural Values,” *Information Technology and People* (2022).

³ Mark's theory was developed by Karl Mannheim under the term the sociology of knowledge and continued by Jurgen Habermas. See Gorringer Team, *Political Readings of Scripture, the Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*, ed. John Barton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). 69.

⁴ The comparison of the number of *gazwah* and *sariyyah* is not clear from the source, Sofyan was also unable to mention the reference source, let alone the details of the reference source. Ibid.

Muhammad was involved in many wars. They take inspiration from the Prophet and believe the verses of jihad to be a motivator not to be tempted by the world. In terms of seeking sustenance, they consider robbery as a solution to make ends meet, but only if the goal is basic needs and not excessive accumulation of wealth. This is confirmed by Sofyan by quoting two traditions "and I made your sustenance under the shadow of the sword,"⁵ and "let you strive, verily jihad is part of the gates of Paradise and with it Allah will purify you from sorrow and grief."⁶

Ex-convict terrorists, such as Sofyan, experienced a change in their understanding of jihad. They see jihad not only as a call to war, but also as a way to earn a living and resolve psychological problems. The belief in a better afterlife and the view of death make them less worried about the risks in terrorist acts. They understand Qur'anic verses in the context of their past experiences and interpret them as a transaction with Allah. This change in understanding is influenced by interaction with the surrounding environment and different literature. In addition, social, political and group loyalty factors also play a role in their understanding. Social and political contexts influence the understanding of sacred texts and the reader's role in understanding them.⁷

Karl Mannheim⁸ argued that through the sociology of knowledge we can clearly understand the role of empirical relationships between intellectual, structural, and historical perspectives. Karl Mannheim, as an intellectual, advocated universal relativism or relationalism. Mannheim argued that social factors influence the beliefs and reasoning of individuals and societal groups. This can be seen from the beliefs shown by Sofyan, Omar, Amir, Farel, and Zein, which increase with their reading and understanding. They became more confident to take more

⁵ This Hadith is from Ibn 'Umar, who was categorised by Imam Bukhari as a *dha'if* (weak) Hadith, which can be read in several sources such as Hady al-Sari, *Fath al-Bari, al-Dhu'afa' al-Kabir*. See Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani, *Fath Al-Bari*, Vol. I. (Cairo: Maktabah al-Guraba' al-'Asariyyah, 1996). 166. See also Abu Ja'far Muhammad al-'Uqaili Al-Maliki, *Al-Dhu'Afa' Al-Kabir*, v. I. (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-Ilmiyyah, 1984). 329.

⁶ This Hadith, which originated from 'Ubadah ibn Samit, is categorised by al-Bani as a *sahih ligairihi* (valid because of the presence of other sources) and claimed by al-Damiyati that the sanad of this Hadith is *jayyid* (good). See Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim (Tahqiq) Al-Damiyati, Sharaf al-Din, *Al-Matjar Al-Rabih Fi Sawab Al-'Amal Al-Salih*, (Cairo: Dar al-Bayan al-'Arabiyy, 2006).

⁷ Gorrington Team, *Political Readings of Scripture, the Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*. 70.

⁸ E. Doyle McCarthy, "THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE," https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303088215_Sociology_of_Knowledge_2000_article, last modified 2000, accessed July 19, 2022. See also Hamka Hamka, "Sosiologi Pengetahuan: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Karl Mannheim," *Scolae: Journal of Pedagogy* 3, no. 1 (2020): 76–84.

radical actions without fear of the risks that might occur. For these ex-convict terrorists, the benefits they get from their movement are far more promising than the pleasures of the world.⁹

Thus, Mannheim argued that no reading of a text, including a sacred religious text, is independent of the influence of the factors that influence it. Even Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd claims that the source text (the Qur'ān) and its tafsir are the same. The theories of *al-muntaj al-thaqafi* (cultural product) and *muntij li al-thaqafah* (cultural producer) support this view, emphasising that the Qur'ān was born and exists in the context of a community, influenced by interaction with the culture in that community.¹⁰

3. *Personal Factors*

Although situational factors and social interactions have the potential to influence ex-convict terrorists understanding and changes in their understanding of *jihad* and *qital* verses, the influence of personal factors is also very important. This can be seen in the explanation of ex-terrorist, such as Sofyan, who despite interacting within the Indonesian Police environment, personal factors still play a role in determining his attitude and understanding of the Qur'anic text. However, it should be noted that these personal factors are also influenced by social interactions and situations. Personal factors can be categorised into specific motives, attitudes, emotions, beliefs and habits.¹¹

Personal factors, such as beliefs, personal recitation and understanding routines, *ḥalaqah* studies, literature, and videos of the struggle, are highly influential for ex-convict terrorists like Omar. Before joining the action group, they already had a belief in the veracity of the Qur'an as an undeniable source of religious authority. Their motives were also motivated by the promise of theological gains they believed they would gain by deepening and practising the Qur'anic message they understood. These personal factors are intertwined with the previous factors that have been discussed.

In addition to theological motives, there are also political motives that are born out of distrust of the government and its policies that are impartial and do not apply Islamic law which they understand as the only guideline that must be obeyed and applied in the life of the state and society, which then from this understanding they claim as *tagut* that deserves to be fought, which they

⁹ Muhyar Fanani, *Metode Studi Islam: Aplikasi Sosiologi Pengetahuan Sebagai Cara Pandang* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008). 36.

¹⁰ Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Maḥmūḥ Al-Naṣṣ: Dirasah Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Thaqafi al-'Arabi, 1996). 82-84.

¹¹ Motives are desires that stem from human desires related to the social conditions they face, known as sociogenic motives.

understand from several verses of the Qur'an, such as in surah al-Baqarah verses 256 and 257, al-Nisa' verse 51 and al-Nahl verse 36 and others.

Jihadi resistance is not only limited to war and killing infidels, but also involves state officials who co-operate with infidels. According to them, this kind of government paves the way for turning the country into a pagan state that applies pagan laws and supports policies that favour the pagan (*ansar al-tagut*).¹²

Distrust of government and negative claims related to politics, as well as readings of religious texts that have a political dimension, have existed since the beginning of Islam. This can be traced from the history of *tahkim* (arbitration) cases in Islam.¹³ The Khawarij, a group that disagreed with Ali's acceptance of arbitration as a settlement of political disputes, influenced their understanding of the Qur'an. The Khawarij, a group that disagreed with Ali's stance in accepting arbitration as a settlement of political disputes, influenced their understanding of the Qur'an. This led to claims of *takfiri* and even the assassination of 'Ali by Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam. The group in favour of 'Ali, on the other hand, interpreted the Qur'an by being influenced by personal factors such as motives, attitudes and a strong belief in the figure.¹⁴ As the interpretation of QS. al-Naml [27]: 16, by the Shi'a Batiniyyah that the text that reads "Sulaiman inherited Daud" also means that Aliy inherited the Prophet Muhammad. "*anna al-'Imam 'Aliyyan waratha al-Nabiy fi 'ilmih*".¹⁵

In the recognition of the ex-convict terrorists, that their understanding for the case in Indonesia is seen as a pagan country is because it does not apply Islamic law as a whole. By basing the argument on the Hadith he recited "*inna fir'aun wa haman wa junudahuma kanu khati'in.*" and "*wa al-ladzina kafaru yuqatiluna fi sabili al-tagut.*"¹⁶

The Qur'n has the potential to be utilised in accordance with immediate interests rather than for a more beneficial common good. Theological views that respect the authority and truth of the Qur'an provide opportunities for individuals to utilise it to reinforce their chosen perspectives and understandings. Ali bin Abi Talib argued that the Qur'an was authentically written but needed human interpreters. This demonstrates the Qur'an's dependence on interpreters who seek

¹² Private interview with Muhammad Sofyan Tsauri, at Depok, West Java, Indonesia on August 07, 2021.

¹³ Azyumardi Azra, *Pergolakan Politik Islam: Dari Fundamentalisme, Modernisme Hingga Pos-Modernisme* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996). 112-113.

¹⁴ Nasir ibn 'Abd al-Karim Al-'Aql, *Al-Khawarij; Awwal Al-Firqah Fi Tarikh Al-Islam* (Riyadh: Dar Ishbiliya, 1998). 25-33. Lihat juga di Jamileh Kadivar, *Exploring Takfir: Its Origins and Contemporary Use: The Case of Takfiri Approach* (London: Sage, 2020). 4-9.

¹⁵ 'Ali Al-Sabuni, *Al-Tibyan Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an* (Pakistan: Maktabah al-Busyrah, 2011). 125-126.

¹⁶ Personal Interview with Muhammad Sofyan Tsauri, Depok West Java on August 07, 2021.

to understand it, and if utilised to their advantage, can become an excuse for ephemeral and prejudicial views. Destruction is possible when this happens.¹⁷

The self-identity motive factor has an influence on the understanding and actions of terrorist groups. They view non-Muslims as enemies that need to be fought, referring to several Qur'anic verses as justification. They claim that infidels, including allied Muslims and governments that do not implement Islamic law, should be fought. This group identification leads to group discrimination, with a tendency to favour their own group (ingroup favouritism) and dislike other groups (outgroup favouritism).¹⁸ This is very evident from their opinion which understands that the first step to apply the sentence of tawhid alone must first *kufur* to *tagut*, *kufur* to *tagut* is the main requirement to obtain the status of believer, as QS. al-Baqarah verse 126. "We cannot be called a Muslim, if we are not *yakfur bi al-tagut*, *laa ilaha illa allah* must be *yakfur* first, first disbelieve in *tagut* and then glorify Allah, so *yakfur bi al-tagut wa yu'min bi allah*."¹⁹ And the word *tagut* here is understood by them as a country that does not apply Islamic law, and those who apply the law, namely government officials, are included as *tagut* referred to.

Violent acts in the form of resistance to the government and its apparatus are carried out by terrorist action groups because they want to realise the establishment of Islamic law and overcome social inequality that they consider unfair. The understanding of the verses of *jihad* and *qital* is an encouragement for them to carry out these obligations. According to Gurr, these violent acts are rooted in feelings of relative deprivation, which is a sense of disappointment because the expected values are not achieved.²⁰

Terrorist groups' interpretations of Qur'anic verses are influenced by the various interests they have. These interpretations are influenced by the feelings and thoughts of individuals or groups that are tied to their personal interests or group identities as Muslims, *kafir*, or *shuhada'*. Within the group, fanaticism, brotherhood, and love for group members, as well as hatred for external groups are built. This is in accordance with social identity theory which describes the phenomena of ingroup favouritism and outgroup derogation.²¹

¹⁷ Esack, Farid. *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspectives of Interreligious Solidarity Against Oppression* (USA: Rockport, USA MIZAN, 1997).

¹⁸ Henry Tajfel & John Turner, *An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict, The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relation* (Monterey: CA: Brooks-Cole, 1979). 96-97.

¹⁹ Personal Interview with Muhammad Sofyan Tsauri, Depok West Java on August 07, 2021.

²⁰ T.R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).24-29.

²¹ Henry Tajfel & John Turner, *An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict, The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relation*. 96-97.

Members of terrorist groups use a cognitive reinterpretation model influenced by social inequality to justify religious teachings in a euphemistic way. They interpret suicide as a noble form of jihad and martyrdom. This cognitive change, with euphemistic moral justification, is an effective psychological mechanism to increase destructive actions. Through this moral restructuring, they not only avoid self-inhibition, but also gain self-approval in carrying out the destructive act. Thus, what once considered as something morally reprehensible turns into an act that is considered moral, honourable, and proud as a destructive achievement.²²

According to McPhail, individual and collective violence becomes destructive when new norms and beliefs within a group are formed, and there is a phenomenon of groupthink towards the ideology. In the context of a terrorist action group, its members seem to experience deindividuation due to conformity within the group. As a result, their movements and actions make them feel anonymous and free from consequences and responsibilities.²³

Terrorist groups use the love of religion and God as justification to commit aggression against others, placing the responsibility on God. Psychologically, the violence perpetrated by these groups can be attributed to relative depression arising from disappointment and failure, which then develops into blind hatred and confrontation with the authorities. The ultimate goal is to abolish the system and overthrow the perceived inhuman ruler.²⁴

The Qur'ān does not identify who has the right to explain it, leading to a struggle among the people as to who has the most right to interpret it. This has the consequence of authoritarianism in Qur'ānic interpretation, due to the strategic position of the Qur'ān and the uncertainty of determining who is entitled to its

²² Albert Bandura, "Mechanism of Moral Disengagement", in Walter Reich (Ed.), *The Origin of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies State of Mind*, (Cambridge university Press, 1990), last modified 1990, accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/search>. Also see in Albert Bandura, "Mechanism of Moral Disengagement in The Exercise of Moral Agency," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71, no. 2 (1996): 364–372, <https://psycnet.apa.org/search/display>.

²³ C. McPhail, "The Dark Side of People: Individual and Collective Violence in Riots," *Sociological Quarterly*, last modified 1994, accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247237042>. Also see 'Abd al-Haq Mujitanah, "Mafhum al-'Anf al-Ijtima' Fi al-Buhuth al-Susiyulujiyyah Bayn al-Tarh al-'Ilmiyy wa al-Tarh al-Idiyulujiyyah," *Al-Majallah al-'Ilmiyyah Li Jami'ah Al-Jaza'ir* (al-Majallah al-'Ilmiyyah li Jami'ah al-Jaza'ir, n.d.), https://www.univ-alger3.dz/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Vol6_Num1_Art6.pdf, accessed July 20, 2022.

²⁴ Ehud Sprinzak, *The Psychopolitical Formation of Extreme Left Terrorism in a Democracy: The Case of The Weathermen, in the Origin of Terrorism*, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge University Press, 1990).

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interpretation.²⁵ The central and strategic position of the Qur'ān is recognised by Quraish Shihab, so that many individuals and groups use the Qur'ān as a reference for arguments to reject other ideas or defend their own ideas.²⁶

The Qur'ān provides ample opportunities for anyone who wants to understand its messages. The verses of the Qur'ān are always open to interpretation, without claims of exclusive or closed interpretations. There is a view of relativity in Qur'anic interpretation, with a rejection of claims of absolute and singular truth in the product of interpretation.²⁷

Tafsir of the Qur'an is the result of human efforts in understanding the Qur'an which is inseparable from the subjectivity of the reader. Ali ibn Abi Talib stated that the Qur'an is a written sheet that requires humans to give it a voice. M. Quraish Shihab acknowledges that the interpretation of the Qur'an produced by individuals can be influenced by factors such as intelligence, scientific fields, experience, social, political, and others, thus causing differences in the interpretation of the Qur'an.²⁸

It requires intelligence, foresight and maturity in choosing Qur'anic interpretations without claims of absolute truth or authoritarianism. It is important to have an attitude of responsibility and not to dismiss other views. Readers need to be critical in choosing tafsir references, because no tafsir is completely objective or free from subjectivity and environmental influences. In fact, political interests can also influence the product of interpretation.²⁹

Ex-convict terrorists such as Amir, Omar, Sofyan and their friends seem to be bound to an understanding of the Qur'an that is only based on the internal perspective of their group. They rarely make comparisons with other perspectives of Qur'anic understanding. However, after serving their sentences and interacting with other perspectives, they experienced changes in their understanding of the verses of *jihad* and *qital*. They realised that jihad has a more diverse meaning, not just in the form of war against infidels. Without adequate Islamic guidance and knowledge, youth are more easily influenced by extremist ideologies and reject

²⁵ Farid Esack, *Al-Qur'an, Liberalisme, Pluralisme: Membebaskan Yang Tertindas*, Translated. (Bandung: Mizan, 2000). 29.

²⁶ Quraish Shihab, *Posisi Sentral...*, 136.

²⁷ M. Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam: Common Question Uncommon Answer* (Colorado: West View Press, 1994). 35-36. Also see in Abu Zayd, *Ishkaliyat Al-Qira'at Wa 'Aliyat al-Ta'wil* (Beirut: Markaz al- Thaqafi al-'Arabi, 1992).16-17.

²⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Posisi Sentral...*, 159.

²⁹ S. Wild, *Political Interpretation of The Quran, in Jane Dammen*, ed. McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). 273-289.

moderate views. Such ideas have been around since the 1980s, wanting a literal application of Islam in Indonesia like in the Arab lands in the 7th century.³⁰

The Qur'an, as the holy book of Muslims, is often the object of competition among its readers. Qur'ānic verses are used to support political views and group interests, not just in the context of current Indonesian politics or the views of ex-convicted terrorists, but since the early days of Islam. This is referred to as ideological reading, misuse of the Qur'ān, or political interpretation of the Qur'ān.³¹

Religious texts with different themes can also influence the reader's understanding. For example, the themes of the stories of prophets and previous people, commands, prohibitions, advice, or eschatological and divine themes all have a particular influence on the reader. In addition, differences in time, place and social conditions also affect the understanding, as Abdullah Seed recognises.³²

Ex-convict terrorists gain their understanding through reading, watching, and hearing explanations from figures in their group. These factors greatly influence their understanding. However, through this process, they can also experience changes in their understanding. Damian Szlachter and Piotr Potejko suggest that countering extremism involves introducing and thoroughly exploring religious sources, which they initially referenced.³³ The teachings in the Qur'ān are contextualised and the messages received by the Prophets reflect the social, cultural, political, economic and intellectual context of the community at the time.

³⁰ Syed Huzaifah bin Othman Alkaff, "Using Theology to Legitimize Jihadist Radicalism," *Source: Counter Terrorism Trends and Analyses* 10, no. 3 (2018), 6, accessed March 21, 2022, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication> .

³¹ Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Al-Nass, al-Sultah, al-Haqiqah: Al-Fikr al-Diniy Bain Iradah al-Ma'rifah Wa Idarah al-Haimanah* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Thaqafi al-'Arabiyy, 1995), 13. Accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.noor-book.com/en/ebook>; Stefan Wild, *Political Interpretation...*, in Janne Dammen McAuliffe, *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). 273-276. Also see in Azyumardi Azra, *The Use and Abuse of The Quranic Verses in Contemporary Indonesian Politics*. (London: Oxford University Press, 2005).

³² Abdullah Seed, *Reading The Qur'an in The Twenty-First Century: A Contextualist Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 100. Accessed March 21, 2022, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication>.

³³ Damian Szlachter and Piotr Potejko, *Religious Extremism Among Islam Believers Living In Poland, Dalam Radicalism and Terrorism In The 21st Century* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2017), 193. Accessed March 21, 2022, from <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/face>.

Abu Zayd states that the Qur'ān is both a cultural product and a cultural producer.³⁴

Conclusion:

The understanding of ex-convict terrorists about the verses of *jihad* and *qital* is influenced by two factors, namely internal and external factors. External factors include situational factors and social interactions that influence changes in their understanding. Situational factors include behavioural appropriateness and support from the surrounding environment, while social interactions involve encounters, relationships, and the influence of close friends and electronic media. The social environment is considered an important factor in shaping a person's beliefs and knowledge.

Internal-personal factors play a dominant role in changing the understanding of ex-convict terrorists. Theological, political, and self-identity motives become strong internal factors in influencing their decisions. External factors such as religious texts only become open places that can be intervened by readers. Religious terrorism is also influenced by political factors, and self-identity motives play an important role in ex-convict terrorists' views on the verses of *jihad* and *qital* in the Qur'an. This analysis challenges some theories that conclude that religion is a source of violence in society.

³⁴ A. Seed & Ali Akbar, "Contextualist Approaches and Interpretation of The Qur'ān," *Journals Religions* 12 (2021), 53. Accessed March 21, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070527>.