

Interpretation the Text of QS. Ali Imran Verses 190–191: Charles Sanders Peirce's Philological and Semiotic Study of the Representation of Knowledge

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Abstract

This study explores the deeper meaning of QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 through a philological approach and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, aiming to understand how the representation of knowledge is constructed within the Qur'anic text. These verses are chosen because they contain a contemplative call to reflect on the signs of creation, serving as an epistemological foundation in Islam. The philological approach is employed to trace textual variants and examine the dynamics of manuscript transmission as well as the historical context surrounding the interpretation of these verses in various classical sources. Meanwhile, Peirce's semiotic framework particularly the trichotomy of representamen, object, and interpretant is used to analyze the verses as a system of signs representing the relationship between revelation, reason, and knowledge. The findings indicate that while QS. Ali Imran: 190–191 does encourage reflection on the greatness of Allah, a more in-depth analysis reveals that these verses also offer an epistemic framework that integrates cosmic contemplation with intellectual development in Islam. Hence, the text implies that knowledge in Islam emerges not only from deductive reasoning but also through a reflective interpretation of divine signs. This study underscores the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding the Qur'an as a text rich in meaning and open to cross-disciplinary scholarly inquiry.

Keywords: *Tafsir, QS. Ali Imran, Verses 190–191, Philology, Semiotics Charles Sanders Peirce*

Abstrak

Kajian ini mengeksplorasi makna QS. Ali Imran ayat 190–191 yang lebih dalam melalui pendekatan filologis dan teori semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce, yang bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana representasi pengetahuan dikonstruksi dalam teks Al-Qur'an. Ayat-ayat ini dipilih karena mengandung seruan kontemplatif untuk merenungkan tanda-tanda penciptaan, yang berfungsi sebagai landasan epistemologis dalam Islam. Pendekatan filologis digunakan untuk melacak varian tekstual dan mengkaji dinamika transmisi manuskrip serta konteks historis seputar penafsiran ayat-ayat ini dalam berbagai sumber klasik. Sementara itu, kerangka semiotik Peirce, khususnya trikotomi representamen, objek, dan interpretan, digunakan untuk menganalisis ayat-ayat tersebut sebagai sistem tanda yang merepresentasikan hubungan antara wahyu, akal, dan pengetahuan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa QS. Ali Imran: 190–191 memang mendorong refleksi tentang kebesaran Allah, namun analisis yang lebih mendalam mengungkapkan bahwa ayat-ayat ini juga menawarkan kerangka epistemik yang mengintegrasikan kontemplasi kosmik dengan perkembangan intelektual dalam Islam. Dengan demikian, teks ini menyiratkan bahwa pengetahuan dalam Islam muncul tidak hanya dari penalaran deduktif tetapi juga melalui interpretasi reflektif terhadap tanda-tanda ilahi. Kajian ini menggarisbawahi

pentingnya pendekatan interdisipliner dalam memahami Al-Qur'an sebagai teks yang kaya makna dan terbuka untuk penyelidikan ilmiah lintas disiplin.

Kata Kunci: Tafsir, QS. Ali Imran, Ayat 190–191, Filologi, Semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce

Introduction

The Qur'an is seen as a book of guidance (hudan) that contains texts with a wealth of signs (verses) that contain various layers of meaning. The richness of meaning opens up space for exploration through various multidisciplinary scientific approaches.¹ One part that is often used as a reference in theological and philosophical studies is QS. Ali Imran verses 190-191, which contains the relationship between revelation, rational thought (reason), and knowledge, and is the basis for developing discourse on the integration of spiritual and intellectual aspects in understanding Islam. The verse says:

*"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day there are signs for people of understanding (ulū al-albāb), (namely) those who remember Allah while standing or sitting or lying down and they think about the creation of the heavens and the earth (while saying): 'Oh Allah, You did not create this in vain, Glory be to You, so protect us from the torment of hell (QS. Ali Imran: 190-191)"*²

This verse describes the connection between cosmic contemplation and spiritual awareness. In Islamic tradition, this forms the basis of an integrative epistemology between reason ('aql), revelation, and sensory experience, as developed in the thought of Muslim philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and al-Ghazali.³ However, approaches to this verse are still largely dominated by normative and theological interpretations alone.⁴ Meanwhile, its potential meaning can be further explored through interdisciplinary studies, particularly with the help of semiotics as the science of signs and the production of meaning. In this context, Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory offers a sharp framework for examining how texts (including revelatory texts) represent meaning in the relationship between representamen (signs), objects (the objects signified), and interpretants (the meanings in the mind of the interpreter).⁵

Peirce divides signs into three main categories: icons (direct resemblance to objects), indices (causal or contextual relationships), and symbols (conventional relationships).⁶ QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191, when read within this framework, present natural signs as representamen pointing to divine objects (God's act of creation), which are then interpreted by human subjects as interpretants in the form of existential, scientific, and spiritual consciousness. This aligns with the idea that revelation not only commands but also triggers cognitive and affective reflection. Philological study in this research is important as a

¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary," *New York: HarperOne*, 2015.

² "Al-Qur'an Al-Karim," n.d., 190–91.

³ Franz Rosenthal, "Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam," *Leiden: Brill*, 1970.

⁴ Al-Razi, "Fakhr Al-Din. Mafātīḥ Al-Ghayb (Tafsīr Al-Kabīr)," *Beirut: Dar Ihya Al-Turath Al-Arabi*, 1990.

⁵ Charles Sanders Peirce, "The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce," *Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press* Volumes I– (n.d.): 1931–1958.

⁶ Saleha Aryani and Mia Rahmawati Yuwita, "Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce Pada Simbol Rambu Lalu Lintas Dead End," *Mabadaya: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya* 3, no. 1 (2023): 65–72, <https://doi.org/10.34010/mhd.v3i1.7886>.

foundation to ensure that the text being analyzed is not detached from the context of the manuscript and possible reading variants. Philology, as a science that emphasizes text reconstruction and understanding of intellectual transmission, helps in reading the verse with historical and textual awareness. As stated by Hellmut Ritter (1959)⁷, Islamic philology plays a central role in bridging the gap between the text and its historical meaning, especially when linked to the legacy of classical exegesis and manuscripts spread across various Islamic scholarly traditions.⁸

Thus, this study aims to: Examine QS. Ali Imran: 190–191 philologically through the exploration of classical exegesis texts and relevant manuscripts, Analyze the verse using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory to understand how science is represented in relation to divine signs, Offer a new interpretive framework that bridges Islamic studies, the humanities, and meaning theory in a contemporary context.

Theoretically, the approach developed in this study not only presents a new reading of QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 but also conceptually challenges the old epistemological framework that tends to limit the relationship between revelation and reason within a dichotomous framework. By combining philology as the foundation for textual reconstruction and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics as an interpretive approach to meaning production, this study builds a methodological and epistemological bridge between classical exegesis and contemporary scientific paradigms. The reconstruction of textual variations and the contextualization of key terms such as *ulū al-albāb*, *yatafakkarūn*, and *āyāt* within the framework of classical Arabic language reveal that this text not only contains normative content but also opens up a layered, flexible, and ever-changing structure of signs within the circulation of interpretation.

Using Peirce's primary categories in semiotics, such as icons, indices, and symbols, this verse demonstrates that cosmic phenomena (sky, earth, night, and day) operate as signs (representamen) that have a specific relationship with divine objects (God's act of creation) and are then interpreted by humans in the form of reflective consciousness. This process shows that the production of meaning in the Qur'an is not linear but dialogical and open to reinterpretation across different temporal and spatial horizons. Knowledge, in this case, is not a static entity absorbed from the outside, but the result of the active involvement of the interpreting subject who possesses cognitive, affective, and spiritual capacities. This affirms that Islamic epistemology is essentially semiosentric, making signs the medium of encounter between text, experience, and transcendence.

Furthermore, interpreting QS. Ali Imran: 190–191 through this dual approach allows for a rearticulation of the position of revelation in relation to reason and reality. Revelation is not reduced to mere moral instructions or legal provisions, but rather becomes an open text system that contains unlimited possibilities for interpretation and serves as a source of knowledge. In this context, reason is not positioned as an entity standing vis-à-vis revelation, but as a hermeneutic tool empowered by revelation itself. Thus, the process of thinking is not merely a rational endeavor, but part of a spiritual responsibility. Such a conception makes

⁷ Hellmut Ritter, "Philology and Wisdom: The Humanistic Tradition in the Near East," *Trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young*, n.d., Leiden: Brill, 1959.

⁸ Mohammed Arkoun, "Lectures Du Coran.," *Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose*, 982.

revelation, reason, and the cosmos three interconnected poles in a unified epistemological field, as can be traced in the intellectual heritage of classical Islam from the Peripatetic philosophy of Ibn Sina, the illuminative epistemology of Suhrawardi, to the ethics of knowledge of al-Ghazali.

The interdisciplinary approach offered by this research contributes not only to a reinterpretation of the Qur'anic text but also to the reconstruction of Islamic epistemology itself. QS. Ali Imran: 190–191 can serve as a Qur'anic epistemological model that integrates observation of empirical signs, cognitive reflection, and transcendental awareness. This also reflects the basic structure of the semiosis process in Peirce's theory, which operates in an endless spiral pattern, indicating that knowledge is not a final conclusion but an ongoing process of meaning that demands the continuous involvement of the interpreting subject.

This research does not merely present an analysis of a Qur'anic verse but also offers a new methodological and epistemological position in Islamic studies. In a global context that demands integration between the natural sciences, the humanities, and spiritual traditions, such an approach is important for building an Islamic scientific discourse that is not trapped in the polarization between scripturalism and rationalism. It proposes a reading format that acknowledges the plurality of meanings, respects the depth of philological heritage, and is open to contemporary conceptual articulation. An effort to restore the Qur'an as a living source of knowledge that continues to speak to every age through the system of signs it contains.

At this point, the researcher poses the fundamental question: "How do QS Ali Imran verses 190–191 construct the epistemological representation of knowledge in Islam through a sign structure that can be analyzed philologically and interpreted within the framework of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, and to what extent can this construction offer a new paradigm for a transdisciplinary and contextual reading of the Qur'an?" This interrogative formulation serves as a guide for the investigation, while also establishing the theoretical-methodological horizon to be achieved in this study. The main contribution of this research is to present a new understanding of the Qur'anic text as a sign system that is open to the exploration of meaning, not only normatively, but also reflectively and analytically. In a world that continues to face the challenge of integrating religion and science, this approach is expected to enrich the discourse on Islamic epistemology and open up new space in interdisciplinary Qur'anic studies.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with text analysis methods, combining two main disciplines: philology and semiotics. From a philological perspective, this study examines the text of QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 through a critical analysis of classical exegetical manuscripts and textual variants (*qira'at*) found in authoritative exegetical literature such as the works of Al-Tabari, Al-Razi, and Al-Qurtubi. This approach aims to identify the historical construction of meaning in the verses under study, including understanding the linguistic, editorial, and hermeneutical contexts within the trajectory of Islamic scholarly tradition. Once the textual foundation is established, the analysis continues with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, which classifies signs into three main types: icons, indices, and symbols, and dissects the relational structure between representamen, object, and interpretant in the

text. Peircean semiosis models are used to map how the meaning of science is represented through cosmic and linguistic signs present in the verse, as well as how that meaning is interpreted by epistemic subjects (ulū al-albāb).

This procedure is carried out by referring to classical semiotics theory (Peirce, 1931–1958)⁹ and its contemporary elaboration (Santaella, 2005)¹⁰ to ensure that the reading of the Qur’anic text does not stop at the normative level but moves toward deeper philosophical and critical reflection. This combination of methods allows for the integration of historical awareness of the text and a modern interpretive framework, in order to formulate a more complex, contextual, and transdisciplinary representation of science in QS. Ali Imran:190–191.

Results And Discussion

A. The Semantic Depth of QS. Ali Imran Verses 190–191: A Philological Study of Meaning and Interpretation

Verses 190–191 of Surah Ali Imran mark the culmination of cosmological verses in the Qur’an. Its dense text contains key concepts about creation, observation, and awareness of the meaningfulness of reality. Textually, the phrase “inna fi khalqī al-samawati wa al-ard” (indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth) opens with inna, a particle of taukid (emphasis) that underscores the urgency of the verse’s meaning. The use of the form fi (in) indicates that the signs are not only found “behind” creation, but are inherent in it. The term ulū al-albab etymologically derives from the root word lubb, which means the core, essence, or reality of something. Thus, this phrase does not merely mean “people of understanding,” but refers to those who have refined their intellect to the point of achieving spiritual and philosophical depth of understanding. In Tafsīr al-Kabīr, al-Rāzī explains that this verse contains an implicit command to engage in philosophical contemplation of the structure of the cosmos.¹¹

He mentions that zikr and think in this verse are not two separate activities, but rather an epistemic unity that shapes the way of understanding reality: “al-dzikru huwa al-taharruk al-‘aqli al-mustamirru” (zikr is the continuous movement of the mind). This is similar to what Helma Winda wrote in her article *Analysis of Zikir for Peace of Mind: Islam in a Psychological Approach*.¹² By reading zikir or remembering Allah, the human mind will be open to the greatness of Allah. Meanwhile, Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī¹³ emphasizes that yatafakkarūna (they think) is used in the fi’l mudhārī‘ form to indicate that thinking is a dynamic, continuous process that does not stop at one final conclusion. Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr¹⁴ also reinforces the meaning of zikr as a comprehensive activity, not just verbal, but also involving the heart and reason. This philological analysis shows that QS. Ali Imran:190–191 cannot be understood merely as a call to observe the beauty of nature. It is an epistemological framework that demands the total involvement of humanity as reflective subjects who perceive the signs (ayat) of God through an approach that is not only scientific but also spiritual and existential.

⁹ Peirce, “The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce.”

¹⁰ L Santaella, “Theories of the Sign in Classical Semiotics,” *Ottawa: Legas*, 2005.

¹¹ Al-Razi, “Fakhr Al-Din. Mafātīḥ Al-Ghayb (Tafsīr Al-Kabīr).”

¹² Helma Winda, “Analysis Of Dhikr Toward Peace Of Mind: Islam In Psychological Approach,” *International Journal of Sociology of Religion* 1, no. 1 (2024): 116–27, <https://doi.org/10.70687/ijsr.v1i1.10>.

¹³ A. Al-Qurṭubī, “Al-Jāmi‘ Li Aḥkām Al-Qur’ān,” *Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-‘Ilmiyyah*, 1993.

¹⁴ I Ibn Kathīr, “Tafsīr Al-Qur’ān Al-‘Azīm,” *Beirut: Dār Al-Fikr*, 2000.

Such a perspective not only revitalizes the Qur'an as a foundational source of epistemology but also encourages a dynamic interaction between classical Islamic thought and contemporary intellectual challenges. It opens the door for a hermeneutical model that does not isolate revelation from the evolving landscape of human knowledge, but instead situates it within an ever-unfolding process of meaning-making that is responsive to historical, cultural, and scientific developments. By treating the Qur'an as a living semiotic system, this research challenges reductionist readings that confine its relevance to legalism or doctrinal orthodoxy. Instead, it invites scholars to engage with the Qur'an as a text that encourages inquiry, reflection, and intellectual openness. This interpretive openness not only aligns with Peirce's notion of unlimited semiosis but also reflects the spirit of *ijtihād* in the Islamic tradition an ongoing effort to interpret divine guidance in light of changing circumstances.

Moreover, this study provides a conceptual bridge between textual studies and broader epistemological inquiries, thereby fostering a dialogue between Islamic scripture and global philosophical discourses. It asserts that Qur'anic epistemology, when explored through interdisciplinary lenses such as semiotics and philology, can contribute meaningfully to contemporary conversations on knowledge production, ethics, and the integration of science and spirituality.¹⁵ Ultimately, this approach affirms that understanding the Qur'an requires more than mastery of its language or legal traditions it demands a holistic methodology that appreciates the Qur'an's symbolic richness, its historical transmission, and its potential to generate transformative meanings in diverse intellectual and cultural contexts

B. Semiotic Mapping: QS. Ali Imran Verses 190–191 in the Framework of Charles Sanders Peirce Semiotics

QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 are one of the most explicit examples in the Qur'an that emphasize the importance of observing cosmic reality and responding to it reflectively.¹⁶ This verse opens up a rich epistemological space by presenting the relationship between natural phenomena (the heavens, the earth, night, and day), human consciousness, and existential statements about the meaning of creation. When read through the lens of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, the structure of this verse reveals a complex and dynamic configuration of signs. Peirce, a central figure in American semiotics theory, developed a three-part model of signs: the representamen (the sign itself), the object (what the sign refers to), and the interpretant (the meaning or effect produced by the sign in the mind of the recipient).¹⁷

In this concept, the phenomena of the heavens and the earth, as well as the cycle of night and day in QS. Ali Imran:190, are representamen, i.e., empirical signs that can be observed through the senses. These phenomena do not stand alone but point to a metaphysical object, namely God as the Creator who wisely and orderly governs the cosmos.¹⁸ Human awareness of this order, expressed in verse 191 through remembrance and reflection, is an interpretant, that is, the spiritual and rational meaning that emerges from the process of

¹⁵ Andri Kurniawan et al., "Social , Political , and Religious Dynamics : A Study of Modern Islamic Thought *Dinamika Sosial , Politik , Dan Agama : Telaah Pemikiran Islam Modern*" 1, no. 2 (2025): 109–20.

¹⁶ M Danesi, "The Quest for Meaning: A Guide to Semiotic Theory and Practice," *Toronto: University of Toronto Press*, 2007.

¹⁷ Peirce, "The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce."

¹⁸ D Chandler, "Semiotics: The Basics," *London: Routledge*, 2017.

interpreting these signs. In other words, the sign structure in this verse is not static but actively connects physical reality with divine consciousness. Furthermore, Peirce classifies signs into three types: icons (signs that resemble their objects), indices (signs that have a causal or existential relationship with their objects), and symbols (signs whose meanings are determined by convention or cultural interpretation).¹⁹ In this context, natural phenomena such as the rotation of day and night are indexical signs because they have a direct existential relationship with the Creator; they are not merely information but evidence of interconnectedness. Meanwhile, the revelatory text (the Qur'an) that frames and gives meaning to nature is a symbolic sign that must be interpreted. The verse does not explicitly state "Allah created all this," but builds a system of signs that leads to that conclusion through reflective interpretation.²⁰

What the human subject does in verse 191 remembering Allah in various conditions and reflecting on the creation of the heavens and the earth is a model of the process of semiosis, which is the never-ending process of meaning production. This semiosis does not produce absolute and final meaning, but rather opens up the possibility of contextual, reflective, and evolving interpretations. Here lies the vitality of the Qur'an: it does not speak only to one era, but provides a system of signs that can be interpreted across space and time. The relevance of Peirce's model to this verse is also evident in the way classical and contemporary interpreters construct the meaning of the verse in layers. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī²¹, for example, emphasizes that contemplation of creation is a path to stronger faith and not merely an intellectual activity.

This is an interpretation of the higher-level interpretant, namely that the interpretation of cosmic signs has spiritual and moral consequences, not just intellectual knowledge. Contemporary interpretations, such as those by Nasr Abu Zayd²², also show that every linguistic structure in revelation holds polysemic potential, that is, multiple meanings open to historical, social, and existential readings. Thus, sacred texts function like symbols in Peirce's theory, where their meaning is constantly renewed through the process of reading. Therefore, the semiotic approach to QS. Ali Imran:190–191 not only explains how knowledge in Islam is formed through reflection on the signs of God but also demonstrates that the Qur'anic epistemological system is dynamic, participatory, and continuously evolving. Knowledge, in this perspective, is not merely the result of observing the world, but an active engagement between the human subject, the revealed text, and the reality of the universe. This process forms an epistemic movement that aligns with Peirce's concept of the interpretant, namely that all knowledge is the result of continuous interaction between signs, the world, and consciousness.

C. Qur'anic Epistemology: Integrating Revelation, Reason, and Reality in the Representation of Knowledge

¹⁹ Peirce, "The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce."

²⁰ Santaella, "Theories of the Sign in Classical Semiotics."

²¹ Al-Razi, "Fakhr Al-Din. Mafātīḥ Al-Ghayb (Tafsīr Al-Kabīr)."

²² N. H Abu Zayd, "Reformation of Islamic Thought: A Critical Historical Analysis," *Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press*, 2006.

QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 provide an important foundation for the construction of Qur’anic epistemology, namely a model of knowledge that unites divine revelation, human reason, and the reality of the universe as a field of representation. In these verses, knowledge is not understood as a neutral and separate entity, but rather as the result of contemplative interaction between humans and the signs of God’s creation. Revelation, in this case, does not merely convey commands or dogmatic teachings but also guides humans to use reason in understanding the structure of reality. Therefore, Qur’anic epistemology has a character that is not only normative but also hermeneutic and reflective. This conception is in line with the structure of the verse that directly links observation of nature (*inna fī khalqī al-samāwāt wa al-ard*) and deep thinking (*yatafakkarūn*), followed by transcendental awareness (*Rabbana mā khalaqta hādhā bāṭilan*). Here, cosmic reality is positioned as a semiotic space, a space of signs that mediates between God as the source of meaning and humans as interpreters. Nature is not only observed but also read (*iqra*) as a divine text full of signs (*ayat*) that demand layered interpretations.

The concept of *āyah* in the Qur’an itself is an epistemological key. Literally meaning “sign,” *āyah* refers to both written revelations and natural phenomena. According to Toshihiko Izutsu²³, this is the form of epistemological duality in the Qur’an: God conveys His message not only through the book but also through the universe. Both forms of *āyah*, text and world, function as mutually reinforcing epistemological vehicles. As Sayyed Hossen Nasr²⁴ states, Qur’anic epistemology differs from the modern Western epistemological model, which is dichotomous and separates fact from value, object from subject, science from faith. In classical Islamic tradition, the unity of revelation and reason is an inevitability. Al-Ghazali, in *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*²⁵, states that reason is a tool for verifying truth, but revelation is the authoritative source that guides reason toward true light. Ibn Rushd goes further to assert that revelation and reason cannot contradict each other because both originate from the same source, namely Allah.²⁶ This thought underlies the epistemic relationship between humans, texts, and reality in Islam, as described in QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191: that true knowledge is not only obtained through empirical observation, but through the internalization of the meaning of God’s signs in a rational and spiritual manner.

If we draw on Peirce’s semiotics, the process of interpreting cosmic signs (*ayat kauniyyah*) is a form of semiosis, that is, a dynamic movement between representamen (natural phenomena), object (divine reality), and interpretant (human consciousness). This process does not stop at one absolute meaning but continues to evolve. This affirms that epistemology in Islam is never final but remains open to reinterpretation as long as it is bound by scientific ethics and spirituality. Therefore, knowledge in Islam is not merely the product of rational thought but the result of a dialogue between humanity as the subject of interpretation, revelation as the source of meaning, and reality as the arena of signs that must be read. This model also has implications for how we understand contemporary science and knowledge. In

²³ T Izutsu, “Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’an,” *Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust*, 2002.

²⁴ S. H. Nasr, “Science and Civilization in Islam,” *Cambridge: Harvard University Press*, 1968.

²⁵ Al-Ghazālī, “*Al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl*,” *Cairo: Dar Al-Ma’arif*, 2000.

²⁶ Ibn Rushd, “*Faṣl Al-Maqāl Fīmā Bayna Al-Ḥikmah Wa Al-Sharī’ah Min Al-Ittiṣāl*,” *Cairo: Dar Al-Ma’arif*, 1959.

Qur'anic epistemology, science cannot be separated from theological values and consciousness. Empirical phenomena must be interpreted in the light of revelation and within the framework of awareness of the purpose of creation. This aligns with the theomorphic epistemology approach developed by Seyyed Hossein Nasr²⁷, which holds that knowledge in Islam is always oriented toward restoring awareness of God (tawhid) in all aspects of life, including science.

Thus, QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 are not only the basis of individual spirituality but also contain a very strong epistemological framework: that science is not merely an accumulation of information but the result of an existential engagement between humanity, revelation, and the universe. True knowledge is knowledge that gives rise to responsibility, contemplation, and ethical orientation toward reality. This is reflected in the closing of the verse: “faqina ‘adhaban-nar,” where true knowledge does not make humans arrogant, but rather leads them to submission and concern for the safety of themselves and society.

D. Implications and Contributions of Research: Reconstructing the Meaning of Science in Interpretation

This study offers an important contribution to the development of contemporary Qur'anic studies, particularly in the fields of Islamic epistemology, thematic exegesis, and interdisciplinary approaches to revelatory texts. One of the main conceptual implications of this study is the reconstruction of the meaning of knowledge as the product of a continuous process of semiosis, namely the interaction between cosmic signs (ayat kauniyyah), revelatory texts, and human consciousness as interpreters. Within the framework of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, knowledge is not viewed as neutral and static but as the result of an active dialogue between representamen, object, and interpretant. Therefore, the meaning of science in QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 is not only formed through observation but through deep reflection that is simultaneously spiritual, cognitive, and ethical.²⁸ This aligns with Peirce's idea that every interpretive process produces new meaning that becomes the next representamen in an infinite chain of semiosis.

Methodologically, the integration of philological and semiotic studies in this research provides a rich and original approach to reading the Qur'anic text. Philological studies provide a strong textual foundation for understanding word roots, syntactic structures, and classical interpretive contexts, while Peirce's semiotics enable researchers to dissect the structure of signs and the dynamics of their meanings in a contemporary context. This dual approach has proven effective in uncovering new layers of meaning in the sacred text, which was previously tended to be read in a dogmatic or literalist manner. This approach can be replicated for other Qur'anic themes such as eschatology, ecological ethics, or the relationship between humanity and nature, as has begun to be developed in science-based thematic exegesis studies and education.²⁹

From an epistemological perspective, the findings of this research also reinforce the understanding that the integration of revelation and reason does not merely signify the

²⁷ S. H Nasr, “Knowledge and the Sacred,” *Albany: State University of New York Press.*, 1989.

²⁸ Peirce, “The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce.”

²⁹ I Ramadhan, A. R., Arsyad, H., Sopian, A., & Fadlurrahman, “Eschatology in the Qur'an: Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotic Study of Sūrah Al-Wāqī'ah,” *Mashdar: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis.*, 2024.

coexistence or compromise between two sources of knowledge, but is an active process of constructing meaning through the interaction between humans as rational subjects and the revelatory text as a divine sign structure. Thus, knowledge is not only the result of empirical and rational processes but also a form of spiritual responsibility toward the signs of God. This expands the concept of science integration previously proposed by modern Muslim thinkers such as Nurcholish Madjid and Seyyed Hossein, and reopens the classical debate between reason and revelation within contemporary Islamic epistemological discourse.

The practical contribution of this finding also touches on the world of Islamic education, particularly in the context of curriculum development and teaching methods. The reconstructed “zikir-pikir” reading model through this semiotic framework can be used to design interdisciplinary tafsir learning in Islamic boarding schools, madrasahs, or Islamic universities. By combining textual analysis and scientific reflection on natural phenomena, students are not only encouraged to understand the textual content of the Qur’an but also trained to think critically, reflectively, and ethically responsibly regarding the knowledge they acquire. The concept of semiosis in this context serves as a pedagogical approach to developing the skill of reading signs, building layered understanding of meaning, and connecting it to the current socio-cultural context.

Finally, this research also opens up space for further research agendas. Some potential areas of exploration include: (1) comparative semiotic studies of other cosmological verses such as QS. Al-Rum: 20–25 or QS. Al-Mulk: 3–4; (2) the development of a Qur’anic semiosis-based learning model that is empirically tested in the context of Islamic education; and (3) mapping the network of meanings (intertextuality) of verses containing the terms *ulū al-albāb*, *yatafakkarūn*, or *āyāt*, to construct a more systematic epistemological map of the Qur’an. These agendas enable the emergence of a new form of exegesis that is not only responsive to contemporary scientific needs but also remains firmly rooted in original and profound Islamic methodology.

With all the above contributions, this research not only offers a new way of reading QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 but also proposes a more critical, open, and intellectually transformative paradigm of exegesis. Exegesis is no longer seen merely as an explanation of the text but as an intellectual endeavor that opens a dialogue between revelation, reason, and the universe. In this context, the representation of knowledge in the Qur’an becomes the meeting point between spirituality and rationality, between text and world, between contemplation and action.

Conclusion

This article has explained that QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 are an important foundation for the construction of Islamic epistemology, which harmoniously integrates the dimensions of revelation, reason, and cosmic reality. Through a philological approach, it was found that the lexical structure of these verses reveals a meaning that is not only spiritual, but also epistemological and reflective. Terms such as *ulū al-albāb*, *yatafakkarūn*, and *āyāt* indicate a framework of thought that emphasizes the importance of intellectual awareness and contemplation in understanding the signs of God scattered throughout the universe. Meanwhile, through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, QS. Ali Imran verses 190–191 can be understood as a field of semiosis that connects natural phenomena

(representamen), God as the source of meaning (object), and humans as interpretants who continuously produce meaning. This process reflects the dynamic epistemology of the Qur'an, where knowledge is not a static end result but a reflective process involving cognitive and spiritual aspects simultaneously. The ontology of knowledge in Islam, as depicted in the verse, places God as the center of meaning and the source of truth, reality as a network of signs that point to His existence, and humans as subjects who are given the responsibility to interpret these signs responsibly. Thus, knowledge in Islam does not stand neutrally, but is sacred, teleological, and oriented toward servitude. The interpretation of this verse shows that true knowledge is born from the combination of remembrance and thought, between spiritual submission and intellectual reflection. In addition to offering theoretical discoveries, this research also contributes to the development of interdisciplinary interpretation methods, especially in combining classical philological studies and modern semiotics in reading revelatory texts. This approach opens up new space for more critical, contextual, and open-minded interpretation studies, without neglecting the spiritual depth of the Qur'anic text. Its practical implications can be felt in the development of integrative Islamic education that emphasizes the importance of reading nature and revelation as an inseparable epistemological unity. Finally, the meaning of knowledge in QS. Ali Imran 190–191, as revealed through philological and semiotic approaches, not only invites humans to think but also to realize that all creation is a guide toward divine meaning. Thus, knowledge from a Qur'anic perspective is not the ultimate goal but a bridge toward genuine recognition of God.

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