

Wansbrough's Perspective

As a Catalytic Challenge in Contemporary Qur'anic Study

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Abstract

Purposes— This article examines John Wansbrough's thoughts on the Qur'an, as presented in his major works Qur'anic Studies and The Sectarian Milieu. It aims to describe his main ideas, analyse critiques from both Muslim and Western scholars, and assess the relevance of his theories for Qur'anic studies, particularly in the Indonesian academic context.

Design/methods— This research employs a qualitative method with a library research approach. It analyses Wansbrough's primary works along with secondary literature published in the last decade.

Findings— The study reveals that Wansbrough's ideas significantly influenced the expansion of Qur'anic studies in the West through historical-critical approaches. However, from an Islamic perspective, his views are considered erroneous as they contradict the principles of revelation and the history of the Qur'an's codification. Its relevance in Indonesia lies in encouraging Muslim scholars to be more systematic and scholarly in defending the authenticity of the Qur'an.

Keywords: John Wansbrough, Qur'an, Orientalist Criticism.

Ethical Statement: It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were adhered to during the preparation of this work, and all sources used have been properly cited in the bibliography. The article has been reviewed by at least two peer reviewers, a similarity report was obtained using Turnitin, and compliance with research/publication ethics has been confirmed.

Conflicts of Interest: : The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.

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Article Type: Research Article

1. Introduction

The Qur'an is the holy book of Muslims which occupies a central position in all aspects of life, whether in the theological, legal, or spiritual realms. For Muslims, the Qur'an is believed to be the word of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and its authenticity has been preserved since the beginning of revelation. This view is the basis of Islamic theology and has been passed down through a rich tradition of interpretation for centuries. However, in the Western academic tradition, especially since the emergence of Orientalist studies in the 19th century, the Qur'an is not only viewed as a text of revelation, but also as a historical document that can be researched through philological approaches, textual criticism, and religious history (Goldziher, 1981). This tradition gave birth to a few important and influential works, for example Theodor Noldeke with *Geschichte des Qorans* which is considered the initial milestone of Qur'anic philological studies in the West (Noldeke, 1860).

Furthermore, Richard Bell with *Introduction to the Qur'an* attempted to outline the chronology of revelation through linguistic style analysis, while Arthur Jeffery researched reading variants and Qur'anic manuscripts as an effort to understand the redaction process (Bell, 1953; Jeffery, 1952). These studies show that from the beginning, the Orientalist approach emphasized the historicity of the text more than its theological aspects. From here the next generation was born, including John Wansbrough, who continued as well as surpassed the previous Orientalist tradition by offering a more radical hermeneutic approach and literary criticism towards the origins and authority of the Qur'an (Wansbrough, 1977).

In the last ten years, John Wansbrough's thoughts have been increasingly re-examined, both by Western scholars and Muslim academics. Azwar Sani (2023) in his article *A Study of John Wansbrough Thoughts on Qur'anic Studies* emphasizes that Wansbrough's historical-literary approach opens new perspectives in Qur'anic studies, although he highlights the existence of problems when the theory is confronted with Islamic interpretation traditions (Sani, 2023). In Indonesia, Muslih, Muttaqin, and Sahidin (2023) assess that Wansbrough's claims about the historical construction of the

Qur'an must be re-read through an Islamic worldview framework that emphasizes the aspect of revelation (Muslih, Muttaqin, & Sahidin, 2023).

Other research by Zaenudin and Alam Tarlam (2023) focuses on criticism of Wansbrough's views regarding the Qur'an, the prophethood of Muhammad, and Islam; they conclude that Wansbrough's framework is problematic because it relies too much on historical assumptions that are not supported by manuscript evidence (Zaenudin & Tarlam, 2023). Meanwhile, Maqdis and Lukman Hakim (2022) compare Wansbrough's interpretation principles with the tradition of Islamic commentators, showing that Wansbrough's methodology emphasizes aspects of philology and cross-religious polemics, while Islamic commentators focus on normative and theological aspects (Maqdis & Hakim, 2022). The presence of this literature shows that despite receiving much criticism, Wansbrough remains an important reference point in contemporary debates regarding the origins and authority of the Qur'an text.

Although recent literature shows that John Wansbrough's thought still receives widespread attention, there are a number of gaps that have not been touched much by previous research. First, most studies are only descriptive, limited to explaining Wansbrough's historical-critical framework without proposing sharp methodological criticism or considering its implications for the study of interpretation (Zaenudin & Tarlam, 2023). Second, the controversy regarding the validity of Wansbrough's assumptions has become increasingly prominent with the discovery of ancient Qur'an manuscripts such as the *Ṣan'ā'* palimpsest, which provides stronger evidence of the existence of the Qur'an text in the early days of Islam and thus challenges Wansbrough's hypothesis about a long-term redaction process (Sadeghi & Goudarzi, 2012). Third, research in the Indonesian context is still limited; Orientalist studies, including Wansbrough, are generally treated merely as part of the history of Western thought without a serious effort to weigh their relevance to the methodology of Qur'anic studies in the contemporary Islamic world (Muslih, Muttaqin, & Sahidin, 2023).

This article tries to fill that void by presenting a more critical analysis of Wansbrough's framework, examining the academic response to it, and placing that discussion in the context of Qur'anic scholarship in Indonesia. With this, the research confirms the novelty (*state of the art*) as an effort to balance the explanation of

Wansbrough's thought and a critical reading of its methodological implications for contemporary Qur'anic studies.

The main problem underlying this article is how to understand John Wansbrough's view of the Qur'an as a text born from a long redaction process and rooted in the polemics of early monotheistic communities (Wansbrough, 1977). This view is clearly different from the perspective of most Muslim scholars who emphasize the authenticity of revelation since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. This sharp difference raises a fundamental question: to what extent can Wansbrough's theory be accepted or rejected based on the latest academic findings? This article aims to answer this question by systematically analyzing the methodology used by Wansbrough, outlining the main points of his thought, and examining the criticisms directed at him (Wansbrough, 1978). The context of this research is important because in academic discourse in Indonesia, studies on Wansbrough are relatively rarely conducted in depth, even though debates surrounding the authority of the Qur'an text and Orientalist study methods are still relevant issues in contemporary Islamic studies (Muslih, Muttaqin, & Sahidin, 2023).

The unit of analysis in this research is the main ideas of John Wansbrough as contained in his works, especially *Qur'ānic Studies* and *The Sectarian Milieu*, as well as the academic responses that emerged to these two works. By limiting the focus to textual analysis and academic reception, this research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive picture of Wansbrough's position in the modern Qur'anic study landscape as well as its relevance for scientific discourse in Indonesia.

The structure of this article is arranged systematically so that the discussion can be understood coherently. The first part presents an introduction regarding the context of the emergence of John Wansbrough's thought, including his intellectual background and methodological position in the Orientalist study tradition (Sani, 2023). The second part details Wansbrough's main ideas, particularly his idea regarding the Qur'an as a text formed through a long redaction process in a Judeo-Christian polemic environment (Wansbrough, 1977). The third part discusses critical responses to these thoughts, both from Western academics and Muslim scholars, by highlighting the controversies that have emerged and their contribution to enriching contemporary Qur'an discourse (Zaenudin & Tarlam, 2023). The fourth part places the discussion in the context of

Indonesian academia by examining how Wansbrough is understood, accepted, or rejected in Islamic studies in the country (Muslih, Muttaqin, & Sahidin, 2023). Finally, the fifth section serves as a conclusion that summarizes the main findings while confirming the novelty of this article in highlighting the relevance of Wansbrough's thought for contemporary Qur'anic studies.

2. Methods

This research is qualitative research with a library research approach. Library research was chosen because the focus of the study is John Wansbrough's thoughts on the Qur'an, which are expressed in his academic works and responded to by scholarly literature afterward (Mestika, 2014). As qualitative research, this approach emphasizes in-depth analysis of texts, ideas, and arguments, rather than statistical data or field experiments. This method is also in accordance with the character of theological and philological research, where the main sources are written documents, both classical and contemporary (Moleong, 2019). Literature access was carried out through university libraries, online repositories, as well as international and national journal databases relevant to the study of the Qur'an and Orientalism (Nazir, 2014). This research was conducted in the span of mid-2024 to early 2025, in line with the article writing process. Determining this period allows the author to examine the latest literature so that the results of the study remain relevant to recent academic developments.

The research subjects are the thoughts of John Wansbrough as contained in his main works, especially *Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (1977) and *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (1978) (Wansbrough, 1977). These two works became the primary data because they directly represent Wansbrough's theories regarding the origin of the Qur'an text. Secondary data were obtained from academic literature that discusses, interprets, or critiques Wansbrough's thought. This literature includes journal articles, books, and proceedings, both in the context of Western studies and studies in Indonesia (Wansbrough, 1978).

The selected secondary sources focus on the latest literature in the last ten years, such as the research of Azwar Sani (2023), Muslih, Muttaqin, and Sahidin (2023), and

Zaenudin and Alam Tarlam (2023), each of which provides a critical reading of Wansbrough's theory (Sani, 2023; Muslih, Muttaqin, & Sahidin, 2023; Zaenudin & Tarlam, 2023). The selection of this latest literature is important so that the research does not only highlight classical thought but also reflects the ongoing contemporary academic discourse.

The data collection technique was carried out using the documentation method. This method includes the process of identification, inventory, and classification of literature sources relevant to the research topic (Sugiyono, 2019). Primary and secondary data were collected from books, journal articles, and online databases such as JSTOR, Brill Online, Taylor & Francis, and national journal portals. In the documentation process, the author emphasizes strict selection so that the sources used have high academic credibility and direct relevance to the focus of the research.

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis and comparative analysis approaches. Content analysis was used to outline Wansbrough's main ideas in his primary works, including the historical-critical method he used and his views on the Qur'an redaction process (Krippendorff, 2019). Comparative analysis was applied to weigh Wansbrough's views against academic critiques, from both Western scholars and contemporary Muslims, so that a more balanced understanding was obtained. In addition, the descriptive-analytical method was used to present Wansbrough's thoughts systematically before then being analyzed critically (Babbie, 2021). The choice of this method was based on the consideration that John Wansbrough's thought is an academic product that can only be analyzed through a library approach. By using qualitative methods, this research is able to highlight the historical, theological, and philological aspects of Wansbrough's theory. The use of content and comparative analysis also allows the author to not only describe but also assess the relevance and limitations of Wansbrough's views in the context of contemporary Qur'an studies. Thus, this research method is considered the most appropriate to achieve the objectives of the article, namely to provide a critical and comprehensive analysis of Wansbrough's views on the Qur'an.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Intellectual Profile of John Wansbrough

John Edward Wansbrough (1928–2002) was an American orientalist who later built his career at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. He pursued classical studies and Middle Eastern history, eventually settling in England from the late 1960s until the end of his life. At SOAS, Wansbrough served as a lecturer and researcher in the fields of early Islamic history, Semitic philology, and Qur'anic studies. The cosmopolitan academic environment of SOAS, with its long tradition of philological and orientalist studies, deeply influenced the formation of his intellectual framework (Calder, 2003).

Wansbrough's most influential works are *Qur'anic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (1977) and *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (1978). These two works made his name prominent in the world of Islamic studies, even though they initially received a cold response and even harsh criticism from Muslim academic circles. In these two books, he offered the radical view that the Qur'an was not a text finalized during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, but rather the result of a long redaction process that was only codified centuries later within a polemical environment between Jewish, Christian, and early Islamic communities (Wansbrough, 1977; Wansbrough, 1978).

Methodologically, Wansbrough was heavily influenced by the Western tradition of biblical criticism. He used a historical-critical approach, borrowing methods previously used in Old and New Testament studies to be applied to the Qur'an. Consequently, Wansbrough treated the Qur'an as a literary-religious document that could be studied using philological, literary, and historical tools, rather than solely as divine revelation (Sinai, 2014). This step became one of the main reasons why his thoughts are considered controversial and are often rejected by the majority of Muslim scholars.

Besides being an academic, Wansbrough was also known as a teacher and mentor for the next generation of orientalists, including Andrew Rippin, Patricia Crone, and Michael Cook. Through his students, Wansbrough's influence spread widely within critical Qur'anic studies. For instance, Crone and Cook in *Hagarism* (1977) continued some of Wansbrough's ideas regarding the historical construction of early Islam, albeit

with different emphases. Andrew Rippin, one of his close students, later became an important figure in the development of Qur'anic interpretation studies in the West, also inspired by Wansbrough's methodological framework (Rippin, 2012).

Although he did not write many works other than his two major books, Wansbrough's contribution lies in his courage to shift the paradigm of Qur'anic studies. He rejected the traditional assumption that accepts the history of the *mushaf* codification at face value and replaced it with the hypothesis that the Qur'anic text was formed within a sectarian milieu full of polemics. Thus, Wansbrough did not only present a theory but also opened a space for methodological debate that continues to resonate in academic discourse today, both in the West and in the Islamic world (Neuwirth, 2019).

3.2 Main Ideas of Wansbrough on the Qur'an

John Wansbrough's thoughts on the Qur'an can be mapped into several main themes that form the overarching framework of his theory. He did not only question the canonical chronology of the text but also proposed a new methodological approach to Qur'anic studies. The main points of his thought can be summarized into four major ideas: the Qur'anic redaction hypothesis, the concept of the sectarian milieu, the use of the historical-critical method, and the theoretical implications for modern Qur'anic studies.

a. The Qur'anic Redaction Hypothesis

One of Wansbrough's most radical contributions is the hypothesis that the Qur'an was not a text completed during the time of Prophet Muhammad, but rather the result of a long redaction process. According to him, the final form of the Qur'an was only reached several centuries after the death of the Prophet, through a process of literacy and codification within an Islamic community still in the stage of seeking its identity (Wansbrough, 1977). In other words, the Uthmanic *mushaf* accepted in Islamic tradition is not considered the original text from the beginning, but rather the result of historical construction.

In *Qur'ānic Studies*, Wansbrough asserts that the compositional structure of the Qur'an shows signs of redactional layers. The presence of repeated verses, variations in linguistic style, and irregular thematic arrangements are considered by

him as evidence that the text underwent gradual processing (Sinai, 2014). This theory clearly contradicts the traditional belief of Muslims who view the Qur'an as a revelation that was sent down in a complete and final form during the Prophet's time.

b. The Concept of the Sectarian Milieu

Another core point of Wansbrough's thought is the idea that the Qur'an was born in a sectarian milieu, namely an intellectual and religious environment filled with inter-religious polemics, particularly between Jews, Christians, and the early Islamic community. In *The Sectarian Milieu*, he asserts that many Qur'anic themes—such as the stories of the prophets, theological polemics, and eschatological concepts—can only be understood in the context of intersection with previous scriptural traditions (Reynolds, 2011).

According to Wansbrough, the Qur'anic text in its early stages was a product of interaction and debate, not merely a reflection of the Prophet Muhammad's personal experience. This view paved the way for intertextual studies, namely reading the Qur'an in dialogue with Jewish and Christian texts, which remains one of the dominant approaches in academic Qur'anic studies in the West today (Neuwirth, 2019).

c. The Historical-Critical Method

Wansbrough adapted the biblical criticism method that has long been used in Bible studies. With this method, the Qur'an is analyzed not as a holy text free from historical influence, but as a document formed through social, political, and intellectual processes. He applied literary analysis, philology, and history techniques to interpret the layers of the Qur'anic text.

Using the historical-critical method, Wansbrough sought to show that the Qur'an cannot be separated from the milieu of Late Antiquity. This means that the Qur'an is part of the same intellectual tradition as Judaism and Christianity, not a text that emerged in a vacuum (Sinai, 2019). This approach makes the Qur'an better understood within a framework of cross-religious comparison, although it simultaneously causes theological controversy.

d. Theoretical Implications for Qur'anic Studies

Wansbrough's thought has major implications for the development of modern Qur'anic studies. First, he shifted the paradigm from an apologetic approach toward a critical-historical approach. Second, his theory challenges traditional assumptions about Qur'anic codification and forces scholars to re-examine the foundations of early Islamic historiography. Third, his ideas inspired the emergence of intertextual methods, as further developed by Gabriel Said Reynolds, Nicolai Sinai, and Angelika Neuwirth (Neuwirth, 2019).

Although receiving sharp criticism, especially from Muslim scholars, Wansbrough's ideas remain a primary reference. Criticism is usually directed at the lack of historical evidence supporting the Qur'anic redaction hypothesis, as well as the tendency to negate Islamic tradition itself (Sani, 2023). Nevertheless, the presence of his thoughts has opened new methodological discussions that continue to this day.

3.3 Critique of Wansbrough's Thought

John Wansbrough's thought has garnered various critiques from both Muslim scholars and Orientalists themselves. These critiques are primarily directed at the basic assumptions, methodology, and conclusions he proposed regarding the origins of the Qur'an. Through these critiques, it is evident that although Wansbrough is academically influential, his views remain methodologically weak and theologically erroneous.

a. Critique from Muslim Scholars

Muslim scholars reject Wansbrough's hypothesis because it is considered to contradict Islamic doctrine regarding the authenticity of the Qur'an. MM. Azami, for instance, asserts that from the time of the Prophet to Caliph Uthman, the transmission of the Qur'an took place through guaranteed mechanisms of memorization, chains of narration (*sanad*), and written codification. Quraish Shihab also emphasizes that the claim of the Qur'an being the result of redaction centuries later is groundless because it contradicts strong Islamic historical testimony. Thus, from an Islamic perspective, Wansbrough's theory is clearly mistaken and unacceptable.

b. Methodological Critique

Critique is also directed at the historical-critical method in the style of biblical criticism used by Wansbrough. According to Azami, this method fails to understand the unique tradition of the Qur'an, namely the tradition of collective memorization and oral transmission that is unknown in the biblical tradition. Sahiron Syamsuddin adds that the historical-critical approach can provide methodological insights, but it is irrelevant if used to negate revelation and the authenticity of the Qur'an. This shows that Wansbrough's method is epistemologically weak because it is not suitable for the object being studied.

c. Critique from Orientalists

Interestingly, criticism also comes from Orientalist circles. Gabriel Said Reynolds acknowledges that Wansbrough's framework opens up intertextual space but judges his chronological hypothesis as too speculative. Nicolai Sinai in *The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction* also assesses that the assumption that the Qur'an was formed long after the Prophet is difficult to prove with historical data. Stephen J. Shoemaker adds that although Wansbrough correctly highlights the sectarian milieu, he fails to show manuscript evidence that supports his claims. These critiques confirm that Wansbrough's theory is not only rejected by Muslim scholars but is also fragile in the eyes of Western academics themselves.

Thus, the critique of Wansbrough's thought shows two important things: first, theologically, his views contradict the basic principles of Islam; second, methodologically, his hypothesis is weak due to a lack of empirical evidence. Therefore, even though his ideas have an academic impact, Wansbrough's thought remains invalid within both the framework of scholarship and Islamic theology.

3.4 Implications of Wansbrough's Thought for Contemporary Qur'anic Studies

John Wansbrough's thought, although controversial, has a significant influence on the development of modern Qur'anic studies. His theory not only challenges Islamic tradition but also encourages the emergence of new approaches. These implications can be seen in three major areas: the development of intertextual methodology, the paradigm shift in Western Qur'anic studies, and the increasingly critical academic

response from Muslims. However, all these implications are purely academic and are not a justification for his views.

a. Development of Intertextual Methodology

By emphasizing the sectarian milieu, Wansbrough opened up space for an intertextual approach, namely reading the Qur'an in dialogue with Jewish and Christian texts. This approach was subsequently applied by scholars such as Gabriel Said Reynolds in *The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext* and Angelika Neuwirth in *The Qur'an and Late Antiquity*.

Academically, this approach enriches the analysis of the Qur'anic text. However, from an Islamic perspective, this viewpoint is erroneous if used to negate the authenticity of revelation. Intertextuality can only be considered as a helpful method, not as proof that the Qur'an is merely a derivative of previous scriptures.

b. Paradigm Shift in Western Qur'anic Studies

Before Wansbrough, Qur'anic studies in the West were largely philological-descriptive. Through his approach, a new generation of Western scholars emerged who were more critical, such as Patricia Crone and Michael Cook through their work *Hagarism*. Thus, Wansbrough triggered a paradigm shift toward historical-critical studies.

From an Islamic point of view, this shift is not necessarily positive. The focus on historical speculation and doubt regarding Islamic accounts actually has the potential to obscure the main message of the Qur'an. Therefore, this influence is only relevant at the level of Western academia, not to theological truth

c. Muslim Academic Response

For Muslim scholars, Wansbrough's theory forced the birth of critical responses. Initially in the form of normative rejection, it later developed in an academic direction, such as the research of Azwar Sani (2023), Muslih, Muttaqin, and Sahidin (2023), as well as Zaenudin and Alam Tarlam (2023). This response shows the existence of healthy intellectual dynamics.

However, it is important to emphasize that the goal of the Muslim response is not to continue Wansbrough's theory, but rather to refute and weaken his

assumptions. Thus, the value of Wansbrough's theory for Muslims is not because it is correct, but because it becomes a stimulus to strengthen Islamic epistemology.

d. Implications for the Direction of Qur'anic Studies

Wansbrough's thought provides an awareness that Qur'anic studies need to engage with philology, archaeology, and cross-religious studies. This makes Qur'anic research more methodologically open. However, this openness must not be understood as a justification for Wansbrough's speculation. For Muslim scholars, the most important implication is how to build solid Qur'anic studies while still adhering to the principle of revelation, while mastering modern academic methodology.

Thus, although Wansbrough's thought has an academic impact, it remains incorrect from the Islamic side. Its relevance is limited to being an intellectual trigger that encourages the birth of refutations, the strengthening of methodology, and critical awareness among Muslim scholars. Therefore, Wansbrough's thought is more accurately viewed as a challenge, not a truth.

3.5 Relevance of Wansbrough's Thought for Qur'anic Studies in Indonesia

Qur'anic studies in Indonesia have a long tradition rooted in pesantren, the interpretations of local scholars, and the academic traditions in Islamic higher education. In its development, this field has been increasingly influenced by modern methodologies, including hermeneutics, philology, and cross-religious studies. It is in this context that John Wansbrough's thought, although theologically rejected, still presents several methodological challenges and opportunities for the development of Qur'anic studies in Indonesia.

For Indonesian Muslims, the majority of whom hold to the doctrine of the authenticity of the Uthmanic *mushaf*, Wansbrough's theory is clearly in fundamental contradiction. If accepted without critique, such thoughts have the potential to cause theological confusion and weaken the faith of the community. Therefore, Indonesian Muslim scholars need to treat it as an intellectual challenge, not as a truth. Although theologically incorrect, Wansbrough's critical approach to the Qur'anic text can serve as a methodological mirror. For example, the importance of philological studies and textual

history can inspire Qur'anic research in Indonesia to more seriously explore manuscripts, reading variants, and the classic interpretive traditions of the Nusantara. In this way, the content of Wansbrough's critique is not followed, but rather used as a trigger for the advancement of local research.

Responses to Wansbrough's theory can also strengthen Islamic epistemology in Indonesia. The stronger the external challenge, the greater the drive to produce solid academic arguments from within the Islamic tradition itself. This is evident from the many dissertations and articles in Indonesia that explicitly refute Wansbrough's assumptions while simultaneously developing new methodologies that remain faithful to Islamic theological beliefs. Thus the relevance of Wansbrough's thought for Qur'anic studies in Indonesia does not lie in the substance of his theory, which is clearly erroneous according to Islam, but rather in its academic impact. That relevance lies in how it encourages Indonesian Muslim scholars to be more critical, systematic, and to use scientific argumentation in defending the authenticity of the Al-Qur'an. In this manner, Wansbrough's thought functions as an intellectual challenge that strengthens, rather than weakens, the Qur'anic tradition in Indonesia.

4. Concluding Remarks

This study concludes that John Wansbrough's work fundamentally reshaped Western academic discourse on the Qur'an's origins by introducing a radical historical-critical framework, which posits a long, polemical redaction process over the traditional narrative of a fixed, early canonization. While his hypothesis is methodologically significant for challenging descriptive philology, it is critically flawed for its reliance on biblical models that ignore the Qur'an's unique oral transmission and its theological incompatibility with the Islamic principle of revealed authenticity. Consequently, for contemporary Qur'anic studies—particularly in Indonesia—Wansbrough's primary relevance lies not in the acceptance of his thesis, but in his role as a catalytic intellectual provocateur. His challenges have compelled Muslim scholars to rigorously fortify their methodological defenses, deepen philological and historical-textual research, and articulate more robust theological arguments for the Qur'an's integrity. Ultimately, Wansbrough's legacy is thus one of productive adversity: his most enduring impact is the sophisticated epistemological

and scholarly response he ignited, which seeks to reconcile critical academic inquiry with the foundations of Islamic faith.

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