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## Analysis of the Concept of Religious Tolerance as a Solution to Conflict in Hamka's Tafsir of Al-Azhar

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This study aims to explore the concept of religious tolerance in Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar and compare it with the interpretations of other classical and contemporary mufasir such as Ibn Kathir, Al-Maraghi, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, and M. Quraish Shihab, to reaffirm the Qur'an's instructions on peaceful interreligious relations in a pluralistic society, especially in Indonesia. **Theoretical framework:** The theoretical framework used involves a thematic and contextual interpretation approach to the Qur'an, paying attention to aspects of religious freedom, social coexistence, and multiculturalism values. **Literature review:** A literature review involves an analysis of classical and contemporary works of interpretation, as well as literature that discusses thematic interpretations and issues of religious diversity. **Methods:** The method applied in this study is a qualitative-descriptive method with a literature study approach and content analysis of six verses of the Qur'an related to religious tolerance (QS. Al-Baqarah: 256, Al-Kafirun: 1-6, Yunus: 40-41, Yunus: 99-100, Mumtahanah: 8-9, and Al-Maidah: 5). **Results:** The results of the study show that Hamka prioritizes a contextual and responsive interpretation approach to social reality, different from the more textual and theological interpretations of some other scholars. Hamka and Quraish Shihab's interpretations stand out for being inclusive and dialogical, demonstrating Islam's compatibility with the values of democracy and multiculturalism. **Implications:** Implications of these findings include the importance of a social interpretation approach in building inclusive education, developing tolerant policies, and encouraging interfaith dialogue. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in its contribution to the development of thematic and contextual interpretive methods to respond to contemporary challenges, as well as in showing that socially oriented interpretive approaches can be the foundation for harmony in a pluralistic society.

**Keywords:** tafsir of al-azhar, religious tolerance, interpretation of the qur'an, buya hamka, comparative interpretation.

### INTRODUCTION

Humans are essentially social creatures that cannot escape from interaction with their surrounding environment. This interaction is an essential need to meet the needs of daily life. In this social reality, humans are faced with the diversity of social groups, both in terms of

ethnicity, religion, and culture. One of the most fundamental aspects of this social diversity is the difference in terms of religion.

Religious diversity is a reality that cannot be ignored in social life, especially in the social context of Indonesian society. This phenomenon, if not addressed wisely, can potentially cause friction and threats to the integrity of the nation. Recently, issues related to religious differences have become increasingly strong and have become a factor that exacerbates social disintegration. Conflicts rooted in differences in religious beliefs often hinder efforts to reach common ground in solving various problems in community life [1].

In the context of the Indonesian state, freedom of religion and worship is a constitutional right of every citizen. This right is expressly guaranteed in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which obliges the state to protect the freedom of every individual to exercise their beliefs and worship their respective religions. Therefore, fostering tolerance between religious communities is the main prerequisite for realizing a harmonious social life in existing diversity.

In the history of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad SAW has given a real example of a society full of tolerance and respect for differences. One of the historical proofs is the Charter of Medina, a concept of agreement that accommodates a wide range of social backgrounds of the community, including ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. This charter guarantees the rights and interests of all elements of society fairly without any party feeling disadvantaged.

The Charter of Medina can be said to be the first formal political document in history that established the principle of freedom of religion [2]. Not only that but the Prophet Muhammad SAW also initiated various other agreements that guaranteed religious freedom and security for the Jewish and Christian communities, valid for all time wherever they are [3]. Human differences in aspects of ethnicity, nation, skin color, customs, culture, language, and religious beliefs, are part of fitrah and sunnatullah, a divine decree that must be accepted as a social reality.

The concept of tolerance implemented by the Prophet Muhammad SAW in the Charter of Medina is in line with the universal principles taught by the Qur'an, one of which is reflected in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 256. This verse states "*There is no coercion in religion*" (*A Day of Prayer*), which is a strong foundation that belief is an individual's conscious choice that should not be forced by any party [4]. Freedom of choice of belief is one of the human rights recognized in Islamic teachings since the beginning.

Buya Hamka in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* interprets this verse by emphasizing that Islam never teaches coercion in religion. According to Hamka, faith born of coercion has no value in the sight of God, because true faith must be born from personal belief and awareness without external pressure [5]. This view reinforces that Islam from the beginning stood on the principle of freedom of religion, in line with the values that the Prophet Muhammad SAW practiced in the social order of Medina.

From Indonesia itself, several mufasir have emerged who try to explain the meaning and purpose of the Qur'an according to their understanding, including Quraish Shihab, Buya Hamka, and several other local mufasir. Related to the above theme, this study focuses on the principle of diversity or Tolerance between Religions according to the tafsir of Al-mishbah, by the Indonesian mufasir, Quraish Shihab. Tafsir which has an Adabi-Ijtimai pattern, shows the beauty of the language of the Qur'an and tries to explain the meaning and purpose hidden in it. One of the prominent Indonesian mufassir in voiced the values of tolerance is Buya Hamka through Tafsir Al-Azhar [6]. This interpretation not only presents the depth of the text but also shows methodological courage in connecting the Qur'anic messages with the pluralistic social conditions of Indonesia. With the adab al-ijtima'i approach, Hamka emphasized the importance of individual awareness, social justice, and respect for each religious choice [7].

The Tafsir of Al-Azhar emphasizes that Islam does not teach coercion in faith. Faith in Hamka's view must be born from personal awareness, not from external pressure [8]. This approach is becoming increasingly relevant in the contemporary context, where religious claims are often politicized and used as tools of domination.

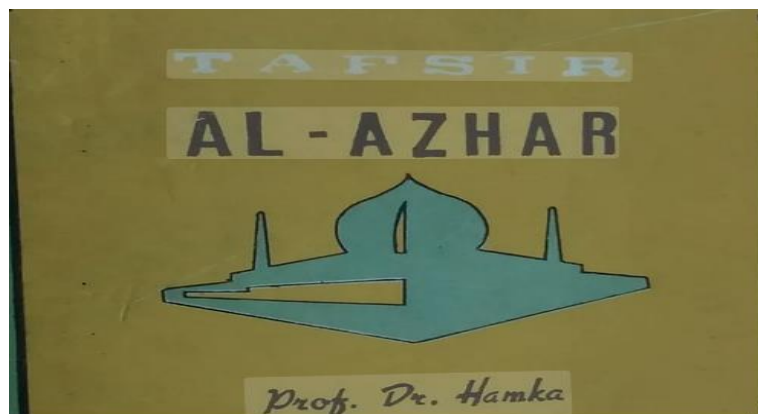


Figure 1. Book of Tafsir Al-Azhar by Prof. Dr. Hamka

Furthermore, Buya Hamka's view does not stand alone. Some classical and contemporary commentators such as Ibn Kathir, Al-Maraghi, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, and M. Quraish Shihab also discuss the issue of tolerance from different points of view, but still within the framework of the teachings of Islam that are just and rahmatan lil 'alamin [9]. Through a comparative approach, this study will reveal how the construction of thinking about religious tolerance is formed in these interpretations, as well as its contribution to the construction of moderate Islamic discourse.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Concept of Tolerance in Islam Buya Hamka's Perspective

Tolerance in Islam is etymologically often associated with the Arabic term *tasāmuh* which means generosity, openness, and an attitude of accepting differences without coercion. In the Qur'an, this concept is spread in some verses such as QS. Al-Baqarah: 256, QS. Al-Kafirun: 1–6, QS. Jonah: 99–100, and QS. Al-Mumtahanah: 8–9. These verses emphasize that faith is a conscious choice and that Muslims are forbidden to force others to embrace their faith. In Arabic, tolerance is called *Tasamuh* which means to facilitate and allow each other, derived from the root word *Samaha* which means generous, and gentle.

According to Hamka, religious tolerance is an attitude of extending a hand of peace and still behaving well and doing charity that brings *faidah* to fellow human beings even though they do not embrace Islam and opens an open chest for all those who want to approach Allah (want to embrace Islam) without any coercion [10]. Because with us Muslims extending peace and doing good to fellow human beings of different religions, there will be no more hatred and resentment in their hearts so their hearts will be open to accept Islam [11].

The tolerance and harmony that Islam has taught in the life of religious people is not a form of passive tolerance, but the tolerance that Islam teaches is active. Actively respects and appreciates the differences in other people's beliefs, is active, and is willing to always find common ground in differences. Because freedom of religion for a Muslim is a higher value of life than the value of his soul [12]. The form of religious tolerance can be realized in several ways, namely; First, recognition of the existence of other religions and respect for all human rights of their adherents. Second, emphasizing the attitude of mutual respect, respect, and mutual understanding so that harmony and tolerance are created that are fostered by awareness without various forms of pressure or avoiding the influence of hypocrisy (hypocrisy).

## Social Interpretation and Approach to Adab al-Ijtima'i

In the development of the tafsir method, there is an approach to social interpretation or adab al-ijtima'i that relates the message of the sacred text to the reality of society. Buya Hamka is one of the important figures of this approach in Indonesia. In Tafsir Al-Azhar, he not only explains the verses linguistically and theologically but also relates them to the social and historical conditions of Indonesian society.

The adab al-ijtima'i approach aims to interpret the Qur'an not only as normative but also applicable in answering life's problems. This interpretation positions the text of the Qur'an as a dynamic guide to life (hudan) [13]. In the context of religious tolerance, this approach is very relevant because it can present a meaning that is responsive to the challenges of diversity [14].

## Thematic and Contextual Interpretation Methodology

Thematic interpretation (tafsir maudhū'i) is a method of interpretation that collects all verses related to a certain theme, to be analyzed in their entirety and comprehensively. This method provides the flexibility to explore the Qur'anic messages in depth, including tolerance, plurality, and religious freedom [15].

Buya Hamka in many parts of Tafsir Al-Azhar adopts a thematic approach by presenting some interrelated verses, then providing contextual narrative analysis [16]. This is in line with the contemporary approach of mufasssirs such as M. Quraish Shihab, who emphasized the importance of understanding the text of the Qur'an in the framework of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah and social reality [17].

## Comparative Study of Interpretive Scholars

To gain a broader understanding, this study also reviews the views of other mufasssirs regarding the verses of tolerance.

Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH) in his commentary tends to emphasize theological and historical aspects (asbāb al-nuzūl), as well as interpreting the verse of tolerance within the framework of defending the faith. One of the verses studied by Ibn Kathir in the context of tolerance is the words of Allah in Surah *al-Kāfirūn* verses 1-6. In his commentary, Ibn Kathir explained that this letter is a form of affirmation of rejection (*And that's it.*) against all forms of worship carried out by the polytheists. Any attempt to mix the teachings of monotheism with the practice of shirk is considered to be rejected in the teachings of Islam. In general, letters *al-Kāfirūn* contains two main content trees. First, the declaration of purification of monotheism, which is to praise Allah in all forms of worship [18]. Second, a statement of rejection of all forms of worship practices other than Allah carried out by the infidels. The closing of this letter affirms the principle of reciprocity: "To you is your religion, and to me is my religion [19]." This indicates that every religious person has the right to practice their own beliefs without coercion, and each will be responsible for their own beliefs before Allah [20]. With the coming down of this surah collapsed the efforts of the Quraish polytheists who wanted to invite the Prophet Muhammad to compromise in terms of faith. Islam firmly states that tolerance does not apply in matters of faith and worship, but only in social affairs and muamalah.

In other verses, as the Word of Allah says, there is no compulsion to (enter) religion (Islam); Indeed, the right path is clear from the wrong path. Therefore, whoever disobeys Thaghut and believes in Allah, has held on to a very strong rope that will not be broken. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (al-Baqarah/2: 256)

According to Ibn Kathir's explanation in his commentary, a Muslim is not allowed to force anyone to convert to Islam. Islam is a religion whose teachings are clear and the evidence of

truth is very clear, so there is no need to force others to embrace it. Those who are guided and open their hearts will convert to Islam with real awareness and evidence. Whereas those whose hearts are closed and their vision is dark, do not deserve to be forced to accept Islam. From this, it can be seen that Ibn Kathir's view of the verses related to tolerance shows that the concept of tolerance in Islam is logical, realistic, and uncomplicated. However, in matters of faith and worship, Islam is firm and does not accept compromise. This means that the faith of Muslims in Allah cannot be equated with the belief of adherents of other religions in their worship, as well as in aspects of worship that have fundamental differences. Islam also affirms a strict prohibition against denouncing the worship of other religions, showing respect for different beliefs [21].

Al-Maraghi (d. 1945 AD), an Egyptian mufassir, emphasized religious freedom as a form of Islamic respect for human reason. The interpretation of Ahmad Musthafa al-Maraghi in *Tafsir al-Maraghi* can be seen when he interprets the words of Allah surah al-Kâfirûn/109:1-6. In interpreting this verse, al-Maraghi said that religious tolerance is a person's freedom in making choices about beliefs, with no coercion in embracing a specified religion, because to embrace a belief must be accompanied by faith, faith must also be followed by a sense of obedience, obedience, and submission. So that it can distinguish which is the right way and which is the wrong way. Therefore, this can never be realized if there is an element of coercion in it. After tolerance is felt, and then one determines Islam as his creed. This means that a person is bound by the rules that are the obligations and guidance of Islam which is no longer an obligation. Then he also has no tolerance for abandoning his beliefs, because it is a form of apostasy.

Al-Maraghi's opinion agrees with what Hamka said that in religious tolerance there is no coercion or pressure from others because faith can only be obtained through faith accompanied by obedience. So, there is no reason not to obey all the rules of the chosen belief, be it in the form of commandments, prohibitions, or recommendations.

Wahbah al-Zuhaili in *Tafsir al-Munir* shows moderate nuances in discussing interactions with non-Muslims, limiting tolerance in the area of muamalah, but still maintaining the exclusivity of the faith. Deep *Tafsir al-Munir*, Wahbah al-Zuhaili explained that Allah SWT. Gives relief (rukhsah) and permission to Muslims to do good to the disbelievers who do not fight the Muslims, do not expel them from their homes, and do not help others in the effort to expel the Muslims. This explanation refers to the words of Allah in Surah al-Mumtahanah verses 8–9. Allah does not forbid Muslims to be kind to non-Muslims who coexist peacefully, not to engage in hostility due to religious factors, and not to expel Muslims from their hometowns [22]. This form of kindness includes maintaining kinship relationships, being kind to neighbors, receiving their visits with kindness, and doing justice such as fulfilling promises, maintaining trust, and paying for transactions in full without harm. Allah loves and loves the righteous, and hates and punishes those who do wrong. Wahbah al-Zuhaili also emphasized that the attitude of the infidels towards the Muslims is divided into two: the attitude of peace and the attitude of hostility. These two verses provide directions on how to build relationships with non-Muslims based on these two attitudes:

It is permissible for Muslims to do good, establish harmonious relations, and be fair to non-Muslims, as long as they do not show hostility or fight against Muslims, do not expel Muslims from their homes and territories, and do not help others who intend to expel Muslims. Allah SWT. Loves those who behave justly and oblige justice to all humans, both against those who are hostile and those who are peaceful. The group in question are the disbelievers such as the tribe of Khuzâ'ah, who have made a peace agreement with the Prophet PBUH not to fight and not to help the enemies of Islam. The Prophet was ordered to maintain good relations and comply with the contents of the agreement until the expiration of its validity period. Qatadah added that this provision applied in the early days of Islam when peace treaties were still in force before this rule was removed (nasakh) with a new verse ordering confrontation [23]. When the months of the Haram are over, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them, and arrest them. Surround them and spy on them. If they repent and

pray and pay zakat, then give them the freedom to walk. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. (al-Taubah/9:5). On the other hand, the majority of scholars of interpretation think that this verse belongs to the category of *muhkamah* (the law that remains in force) and does not undergo *nasakh* (abolition). This is supported by the example of Asma' bint Abu Bakr who was allowed to do good, show affection, and treat her non-Muslim mother well, as explained earlier. Some scholars even use this verse as the basis for the argument that a Muslim child is obliged to provide support for his parents who are still infidels. However, this opinion was rejected because the permission or absence of a prohibition in a case does not automatically make it mandatory, but merely indicates that the action is permissible.

A Muslim is forbidden to act as guardians, role models, protectors, close friends, or loyal friends of those who fight Muslims on religious grounds, expel them from their homeland and their homes, and assist others in the expulsion effort. Those referred to here are polytheists from Makkah.

In closing, Wahbah al-Zuhaily explained that Allah does not forbid Muslims to do good to non-Muslims. The prohibition that exists is only related to establishing *muwâlah*, which is making them guardians, protectors, or loyal friends. In the context of social relations (*muamalah*), Muslims are still allowed to interact and build good relations with non-Muslims.

M. Quraish Shihab (Indonesia), in Tafsir Al-Misbah, emphasizes tolerance within the framework of *ukhuwah insāniyyah* and makes freedom of religion part of the basic human right in Islam. M. Quraish Shihab in his book *Tolerance: Godliness, Humanity, and Diversity* reveals that tolerance is related to the recognition of the existence of other parties, both in terms of self, religious beliefs, and views, even if one does not always agree with them, as long as it is conveyed peacefully and does not violate rules and laws. He emphasized that every individual may believe that his religion, culture, or tribe is the most right, but this should not be an excuse to be unfair or to deny equal rights to others. According to Quraish Shihab, tolerance is an attitude, trait, or action that is not easy because it requires the ability to bear mental burdens. Therefore, tolerance requires patience, which means the ability to control the impulse of lust to achieve the greater good [24].

In the end, it is necessary to respect each other and appreciate every form of difference, be it in terms of religious views, beliefs, politics, race, skin color, culture, and customs, both between individuals and between religious groups. For example, Quraish Shihab in interpreting surah *al-Kâfirîn* verses 1–6, especially in the sixth verse, explains the principle of coexistence in society. The phrase "*To you your religion*" means that other people's religions will not affect Muslims in the slightest, and they are free to practice their beliefs. Meanwhile, the phrase "*For me, my religion*" shows that Muslims also have the full right to practice their religion without interference. This verse affirms the reciprocal recognition of the existence of each religion, so that each party is free to practice what he believes to be right without imposing his beliefs on others, but still sticks to the principles of his own beliefs.

This interpretation of Quraish Shihab teaches that a believer must acknowledge the existence of another party. This recognition is manifested by treating them as fellow human beings, even as brothers. If they are not brothers in religious beliefs, then they are still considered brothers in humanity or countrymen and countrymen. Therefore, from the humanitarian side, religious diversity can be carried out, because religious teachings are revealed by Allah for the good of humans [25]. It is undeniable that attachment to religious teachings if understood and practiced correctly, is one of the important factors in building an attitude of tolerance. Some people try to contrast loyalty to religion with loyalty to humanity as if one of them should take precedence. In his interpretation of other verses, Quraish Shihab emphasizes that in choosing religion there should be no compulsion, as affirmed in the words of Allah in the Surah *al-Baqarah* Verse 256.

There is no compulsion to (enter) the religion (Islam) (al-Baqarah/2:256).

In Islamic teachings, it is emphasized that there is no coercion in embracing religion, what is meant here is that there is no coercion in matters of faith. That is, after a person chooses a belief, he is bound to follow the rules and teachings contained in his religion. He is obliged to carry out all the orders that have been set. If he ignores or does not carry out these teachings, then there will be consequences in the form of punishment or punishment from God. Therefore, a person who has been a believer is obliged to obey and practice all obligations in his religion [26].

This comparison is important to show that despite the variation in approaches, the core value of tolerance remains the consensus among the mufassir.

### **The Practice of Religious Tolerance**

The long history of Muslims has given birth to an example of the understanding of pluralism and religious freedom. This happened not without reason because the Prophet himself initiated it as stated in the charter of Medina (Mitsaq al-Madinah) in space and time at that time. Although in a simple form, the charter has guaranteed freedom to adherents of different religions to practice their beliefs by the teachings of their respective religions. The reign of Caliph Umar Bin Khattab was a period of Islamic expansion to areas outside the peninsula that had previously embraced Christianity. When the Muslims succeeded in seizing victory in Baitul Maqdis Palestine, Caliph Umar himself departed for Baitul Maqdis. He signed a treaty with the Christians containing guarantees for souls, property, churches, crosses, and other matters relating to interreligious relations. The relationship that Islam teaches with the people of other religions above is not only in the form of theories or slogans but a real attitude that has been practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions fifteen centuries ago.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Types of Research Approaches**

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach, with a library research method [27]. This approach was chosen because a study was carried out on tafsir texts, both classical and contemporary, to explore the meaning of religious tolerance as constructed by mufassir, especially Buya Hamka through Tafsir Al-Azhar. Thematic interpretation (tafsir maudhū'i) is a method of interpretation that collects all verses related to a certain theme, to be analyzed in their entirety and comprehensively. This method provides the flexibility to explore the Qur'anic messages in depth, including tolerance, plurality, and religious freedom [28].



**Figure 1. Buya Hamka's Profile**

Buya Hamka in many parts of *Tafsir Al-Azhar* adopts a thematic approach by presenting some interrelated verses, then providing contextual narrative analysis. This is in line with the contemporary approach of mufassirs such as M. Quraish Shihab, who emphasized the importance of understanding the text of the Qur'an in the framework of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* and social reality [29].

In addition, this interpretation displays the peculiarities in its presentation, namely by combining the text of the Qur'an verses with their meaning, and is complemented by a description of relevant religious terms. In the science of tafsir, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* is Classified in the pattern *Adab al-Ijtima'i*, namely a model of interpretation that focuses on the accuracy of the redaction of verses, the preparation of the content of meaning in the form of beautiful redaction, and the prominence of aspects of the Qur'anic guidance in social life. This interpretation also seeks to relate the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an with the laws of nature that apply in society [30].



**Figure 3. Buya Hamka and His Work Tafsir Al-Azhar**

### **Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques**

The data sources in this study are divided into two types:

Primary Dates:

1. Tafsir Al-Azhar by Buya Hamka
2. Tafsir of Ibn Katsir by Ismail Ibn Katsir
3. Tafsir Al-Maraghi by Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi
4. Tafsir al-Munir by Wahbah al-Zuhaili
5. Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab

### Secondary Data:

Books, journal articles, dissertations, and research results relevant to the themes of tolerance, social interpretation, and comparative studies of interpretation. A legal document or an international declaration on religious freedom as a reference material if needed. The data collection technique was carried out by documentary analysis, which examined the content and structure of the text of interpretation related to the theme of tolerance, and marked the parts that contain the meaning of religious freedom, attitudes towards adherents of other religions, and the limits of tolerance according to the mufassir [31].

### Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed using content analysis and comparative analysis methods. Analysis of the Content of this process is carried out by:

1. Identify Qur'anic verses related to religious tolerance (e.g. Qur'an Al-Baqarah: 256, Jonah: 99–100, and Qur'an Al-Maidah: 5)
2. Reading and analyzing the interpretations of the mufassir related to these verses.
3. Compile a category of meaning and attitude towards tolerance in the interpretation of each mufassir.

### Comparative Analysis

After the data was classified, a comparison was made of the approaches, arguments, and thematic emphasis of each character. This process aims to:

1. Assess differences or similarities in the meaning of tolerance.
2. Exploring the contextual, textual, or social approaches used by each mufassir.
3. Summing up the peculiarities of Tafsir Al-Azhar compared to other tafsir.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Hamka's Interpretation of the Verses of Tolerance in Tafsir Al-Azhar

Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Baqoroh 256

لا إكراه في الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغي فمن يكفر بالطاغوت و يؤمن بالله فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى لا انفصام لها والله سميع عليم

"There is no coercion in religion. The truth and the truth are revealed. So, whoever rejects all great transgressions and believes in Allah, then he has indeed been held by a very firm rope, which will not be broken forever. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. That is why"

Hamka said that this verse is indeed a challenge to humans because Islam is true. People will not be forced to embrace it, but people are simply invited to think. As long as he thinks healthy, he will reach Islam. But if there is coercion, there must be coercion of thought, and there must be taqlid.

This verse is the firm foundation of Islam. The enemies of Islam make all kinds of slander and it is scientifically said that Islam is spread by the sword. Islam is accused of forcing people to embrace their religion. If they want to look for scientific data, they should look directly at the Qur'an, which as stated in Surah al-Baqarah: 256, that in terms of religion, there should be no coercion. The asbabun nuzul of this verse is that some of the inhabitants of Medina before Islam handed over their children to the Jews of the Banu Nadhir to be cared for and educated. After growing up, the children became Jewish. After the people of Medina converted to Islam and the expulsion of the Banu Nadhir took place, they wanted their

children who had become Jews to be reconverted to Islam and, if necessary, by force. But the Prophet did not agree to this request. The children were given the freedom to choose whether to remain Jewish and be expelled from Medina or return to their parents to become Muslims and live in Medina [32].

The Qur'an Surah Jonah 40-41

و منهم من يؤمن به من لا يؤمن به وربك أعلم بالمفسدين وإن كذبوك فقل لي عملي ولكم  
عملكم أنتم بريؤون مما أعمل وأنا بريء مما تعملون

*"Among them are those who believe in the Qur'an, and among them are those who do not believe in it. Your Lord knows better about those who do evil. If they deny you, then say: "To me is my work, and to you is your work. You detach yourself from what I do and I detach yourself from what you do."*

Look at and reflect on the events of the past. Those who deny the Apostles, are stubborn, and refuse to examine and understand the truth, are ultimately unjust because they reject the invitation to the truth. As a result, various disasters befell them as a form of punishment from God [33]. Some were destroyed by earthquakes, some were burned by hot winds, some were scorched by drought, and some perished by floods and drowned like Pharaoh's army swallowed up by the sea. In short, Allah has inflicted various forms of punishment on them according to His will. Likewise, the fate that will befall the people visited by the Prophet Muhammad. Every wrongdoer will surely get a bad retribution for the wrongdoing they committed, and destruction will come according to God's decree:

*You have detached yourself from what I have done and I have detached myself from what you have done (base verse 40)*

The situation at the time this verse was revealed in Makkah was the same. Half of them have believed and half have endured their sharia. And the situation after Islam spread was like that. Some hold Islam firmly and some are geography or descendants only. Then the Lord said:

*But the Lord Thou knowest better those who perish. (End of verse 40).*

Those who profess to believe only by speech, or whose Islam is only limited to hereditary inheritance, will ultimately be proven through their respective deeds and deeds. Allah knows who commits shirk, tyranny, persecution, damage, and evil because his soul has been corrupted and his nature has been affected by Satan. Such people will inevitably receive punishment, both in the form of failure and disappointment in the world. Meanwhile, you, O Messenger, will surely achieve victory.

When they continue to deny you, say: "To me is my deeds, and to you is your deeds" (verse 41). This means that if they remain stubborn, unwilling to believe, and even continue to deny, then each should stick to his deeds. I am responsible for my deeds, which are to constantly preach the teachings of Allah, to preach, to call for goodness, to teach devotion to Allah, to give warnings to those who refuse, and to bring glad tidings to the believers. Even if you continue to lie, I will not stop my da'wah task. You are also welcome to remain in disbelief, shirk, destruction, and tyranny.

*You are all free from what I do and I am free from what you all do. (End of verse 41)*

Let each of us stick to our own efforts and life choices. You are free to continue your lies and disbelief, while I will remain steadfast in my faith and conviction. All the results of my deeds have nothing to do with your deeds. Every deed will produce a suitable consequence: good deeds are unlikely to produce evil, and bad deeds will not produce good.

If you experience bad consequences in the future, whether in the form of defeat and destruction in this world, or torment and punishment in the hereafter, it is entirely your

responsibility. I have carried out all my duties diligently, fulfilling the mandate given to me. So don't blame me, after receiving the bad consequences, because I never stop reminding and trying. Indeed, the absence of good results is entirely due to you who remain in disobedience [34].

The Qur'an Surah Jonah 99-100

ولو شاء ربك لأمن من في الأرض كلهم جميعاً أفأنت تكره الناس حتى يكونوا مؤمنين وما كان لنفس أن تؤمن إلا بإذن الله ويجعل الرجس على الذي لا يعقلون

*"And if your Lord wills, all those who are on the earth will believe. So do you force people to become believers? And no one will believe except with Allah's permission, and Allah brings wrath upon those who do not use their understanding"*

This verse is also a warning to the Quraysh that if they repent immediately, and do not continue to oppose Allah's Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), they will also be able to be punished by God (punishment). And this is a subtle warning that a leader should not be discouraged by the disobedience of his people.

*And if God wills, believe in all the people on earth (Verse 99)*

God has full power to do all of that. Has He not created angels who are always obedient without disobedience? Did not God also create creatures such as ants and bees that live in agreement without opposition? However, if man is created that way, then he is no longer called man. Freedom of thought and choice will be taken away, and all that remains is instinct.

God created man complete with his mind. Man is appointed as a caliph on earth, a very special being. It is with this intellect that man can distinguish between good and bad, and understand the true meaning of faith which is impossible to understand without the choice of kufr. To be able to judge the good, there must also be the bad as a comparison.

If Allah wills all people to believe without exception, it will be very easy for Him. It is enough to eliminate freedom of thought and remove all struggles in search of the values of life that are the privilege of humans as caliphs on earth.

*So, do you want to force people so that all become believers? (End of verse 99)*

This verse, together with verse 256 of Surah al-Baqarah which reads "There is no coercion in religion," became the main foundation of Islamic da'wah. In spreading religion, what is needed is not coercion, but active da'wah efforts. Humans have a pure sense and nature. However, their view of life is influenced by the environment in which they are located, both in terms of space and time. Their judgment of right and wrong is greatly influenced by the surrounding conditions. If a person is given an explanation or da'wah that suits his conscience, in a free atmosphere without pressure or coercion, then he will accept it sincerely. On the other hand, if a person is forced to accept religion, while his heart refuses, then in essence there is no real change in him.

To understand how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) applied the principle of non-coercion in religion, we can recall the explanation in the interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah verse 256. Before the Ansar (inhabitants of Medina) embraced Islam, some of them once gave up their young children to be cared for by the Jewish community of the Banu an-Nadhir [35]. The children grew up in a Jewish environment and eventually embraced their religion. When the Banu an-Nadhir were expelled from Medina for their betrayal of the Prophet and Islam, the fathers who had converted to Islam wanted to force their children to return to Islam. However, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explained that there should be no coercion. The children were given the freedom to choose

for themselves, whether they wanted to go with the Banu an-Nadhir who had raised them or to remain in Medina as Muslim. Some of them choose to leave, but many also decide to stay.

However, accusations from Orientalists, Christian missionaries, and the zenade movement that Islam is spread by violence are not well founded. The accusation covers up their history, which is full of inter-religious wars due to coercion, such as the fierce conflict between Catholics and Protestants after Luther's reform movement [36]. In addition, the Catholic Church once exerted strong pressure on Muslims after the end of Islamic rule in Spain. In fact, during the 700 years of rule there, Muslims gave fair protection to Christians. When Christianity came back to power, the kindness was repaid with tyranny. Clear evidence to date is the persistence of Coptic Christian communities in Egypt as well as Christian communities in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, despite the long presence of Islam in the region. On the other hand, after Christianity regained control of Spain and established a state based on Christian rule, there was hardly a single Muslim family left there after Islamic rule ended in 1492.

*And no one will believe, except with Allah's permission* (base verse 100) that is, Allah has given to man the intellect and the mind to weigh between good and evil. Other human beings, not even the Prophet or the Messenger himself have the power to make people believe. Man only strives for what will reward such a noble Faith, the faith that is the ray of life of man is Allah Himself.

Although at the beginning of the verse it has been explained that faith that enters into a person's heart occurs with the permission of Allah by His power and decrees, at the end of the verse Allah gives an explanation that encourages people to use reason and think [37]. Because Allah has bestowed reason on man, man should use his intellect to choose the good path, stay away from the bad, and weigh which brings benefits and which brings harm [38].

In verse 99 it has been explained that faith cannot be forced to enter one's soul, and in verse 100 it is affirmed that faith can only grow with the permission of Allah. However, at the end of the verse, Allah gives us a clue for us to reflect on the meaning of His permission, namely that uncleanness befalls those who do not use their senses [39]. This shows how important reason is in human life; Without reason, man loses his true meaning. After this clear explanation, verse 101 came to command the Prophet (peace be upon him) to invite everyone to use their intellect.

Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Maidah verse 5

اليوم أحلّ لكم الطيبات وطعام الذين أوتوا الكتاب حلّ لكم وطعامكم حلّ لهم  
والمحصنات من المؤمنات والمحصنات من المؤمنات من الذين أوتوا الكتاب من  
قبلكم محصنين غير مسافحين ولا متّخذين أخدان ومن يكفر بالإيمان فقد حبط عمله وهو  
في الآخرة من الخاسرين

*"Today it is permissible for you who are good. The food (slaughter) of those given by the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them. (And it is permissible for a woman who keeps honour among the women who believe and the women who keep honour among those whom the Book has given before you when you have paid their dowry intending to marry her, not to commit adultery and not making them concubines. Whoever disbelieves after believing (does not accept the laws of Islam), then abolish his deeds and he will be among the losers on the Day of Resurrection."*

If we study this verse carefully and deeply, we can conclude that there are several types of animals, including dogs, that are allowed to be trained and used in hunting activities. These animals that have been trained to hunt are called *mukallibina*, which means training or

educating animals to hunt. The term *mukallibina* comes from the word *kilab*, which means dog because dogs are the most commonly used animals for this purpose, so the word became the basis for its naming.

According to a narration from Ibn Abi Halim, he received it from Said bin Jubair, he also received it from Adi bin Hatim and Zaid bin Muhalhil, both Thaif, because the descent of this verse is that Adi bin Hatim and Zaid bin Muhalhil once came to the Messenger of Allah (saw) asking: O Messenger of Allah! If you had explained the food that we were forbidden to eat, now we are asking which food is halal. Then this verse comes down: *They ask you which one is permissible. Say: it is permissible for you who are good.* Until the last verse of said explained that it is halal slaughter, because it has been explained which is haram, we now want to explain which is halal [40].

## Research Results

This study aims to examine the concept of tolerance between religions in Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar and compare it with the interpretation of several other mufasssirs on relevant verses of the Qur'an. Based on a qualitative analysis of the five main sources of interpretation, it was found that the approach used by each mufasssir to the theme of religious tolerance showed differences in the point of pressure, scope, and epistemological basis. Buya Hamka emphasizes the social-contextual aspect, while classical mufasssir such as Ibn Katsir emphasizes more on the normative-theological aspect.

The data was analyzed through content analysis of key verses that are directly related to the concept of tolerance, namely QS. Al-Baqarah: 256, Qur'an Surah Yunus 40-41, QS. Jonah: 99–100, and QS. Al-Maidah: 5. Each verse is studied in five tafsirs: Tafsir Al-Azhar, Tafsir Ibn Katsir, Tafsir Al-Maraghi, Tafsir al-Munir, and Tafsir Al-Misbah. To clarify the results, the following is presented as a comparison table of the main ideas of each mufasssir to these verses:

**Table 2. Summary of Research Results**

Verses of the Qur'an	Tafsir Al-Azhar	Ibn Kathir	Al-Maraghi	Al-Zuhail	Quraish Shihab
Al-Baqoroh:256	Rejecting religious coercion, conscious faith	The context of the prohibition on forcing Jews	Rational faith, not forced	Affirmation of freedom of faith	Faith as an individual right
Jonah: 40-41	The call for every group to be responsible for its beliefs, the Prophet continued to preach without coercion.	Allah explained that disbelief or faith is part of the individual's responsibility, the Prophet did not need to be grieving.	Affirmation that the Prophet was only in charge of conveying, not forcing those who refused	The rejection of the infidels does not affect the truth of Islam, da'wah still works.	The principle of respect for beliefs, each one does charity according to his choice.
Jonah: 99-100	Pluralism as God's Will	Freedom is given but there is a punishment	The reason is given a role in choosing faith	Proof of free will	Pluralism is part of the divine will

<b>Al-Maidah:5</b>	Interreligious association is allowed	Limited tolerance in food and marriage	Islam opens up limited social relations	Muamalah interaction within the limits of the law	Social tolerance does not obscure faith
<b>Al-Kafirun:1-5</b>	Affirmation of the limits of beliefs	Refusal of compromise in worship	Spiritual Freedom	Tolerance versus faith	Principles of tolerance and non-violence
<b>Al-Mumtahanah:8-9</b>	Positive social interaction is encouraged	Prohibition of helping enemies of religion	Peaceful relations are allowed	Limits on interaction with hostile	Global cooperation and morality

Of the five mufassir studied, it was found that Hamka and Quraish Shihab stood out in the use of contextual approaches and social relevance. Al-Maraghi also shows a rational approach that respects freedom of thought. In contrast, Ibn Kathir and al-Zuhaili tend to be more normative, focusing on the protection of the faith and the limitation of relationships in a theological context [41].

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the concept of religious tolerance in Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar and compare it with the views of other mufassirs such as Ibn Kathir, Al-Maraghi, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, and M. Quraish Shihab. Based on the analysis of some verses of the Qur'an that are directly related to the theme of tolerance (including QS. Al-Baqarah: 256, Al-Kafirun: 1–6, Al-Mumtahanah: 8-9, Jonah: 40-41, Yunus: 99–100, Al-Kahfi: 29 and Al-Maidah: 5), it is found that Buya Hamka emphasizes a social-contextual approach in interpreting these verses. His interpretation highlights the value of religious freedom, respect for differences of belief, and the importance of peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society. The main findings of this study show that Hamka consistently rejects all forms of coercion in matters of faith and views religious plurality as part of God's will. This view is in line with the contextual and inclusive approach also carried out by M. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Misbah. Meanwhile, the tafsir of Ibn Kathir and Wahbah al-Zuhaili tends to be more textual and limits the space of tolerance in certain areas while maintaining strict boundaries of faith. On the other hand, Al-Maraghi shows a rational approach that emphasizes the role of reason in choosing beliefs, which is also in line with the basic principles of freedom of thought in Islam. From the theoretical side, this research enriches the treasures of thematic interpretation and strengthens the relevance of the adab al-ijtima'i approach in answering contemporary issues, especially those related to pluralism and interreligious relations. Hamka's approach shows that interpretation does not have to be confined to normative narratives alone, but can be developed into a social tool that encourages tolerance and harmony. This contribution is important in establishing a socio-contextual interpretive framework that not only understands the text literally but also explores its applicative meaning in the sociological context of modern society. Applicatively, the results of this study provide positive implications for the development of religious education, strengthening religious tolerance policies, and moderate da'wah approaches. Hamka's thoughts in Tafsir Al-Azhar can be an important reference in the development of an Islamic education curriculum that is oriented towards human values and interreligious dialogue. In addition, this interpretation can be a source of theological legitimacy in formulating public policies that uphold diversity as a social force, not as a threat to the unity of the nation. Nevertheless, this study has some noteworthy limitations. First, the scope of the interpretation analyzed is still limited to five figures, so it does not represent the entire spectrum of interpretation thought in Islam. Second, this study is literature and does not involve empirical data from social practices that can illustrate the extent to which this interpretation of thought is adopted in society. Third, the historical and

socio-political context of the mufassir has not been discussed in detail, even though it can enrich the understanding of their interpretation orientation. Based on these limitations, further research is recommended to expand the scope of analysis to more interpretive figures from various schools, traditions, and geographical backgrounds. Research can also be complemented by empirical qualitative approaches, such as observations or interviews with educational actors, da'wah, and policymakers who adopt the principles of tolerance in interpretation. Interdisciplinary studies involving approaches to the sociology of religion, education, or even public policy science can expand the influence and relevance of the results of this research in the realm of praxis research. Thus, the academic contribution of this study does not stop at the enrichment of the theory of interpretation but also has a real impact on building an inclusive and civilized society.

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### **Author Contribution**

All authors contributed equally to the conception, design, and execution of this study. Each author was actively involved in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation, as well as in drafting and revising the manuscript critically for important intellectual content. This research represents a collaborative effort, and all authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript. The integrity and quality of the publication reflect the joint responsibility of all contributors.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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