



**THE PROSPECT OF HUMAN
IN THE EXEGETICAL WORK:
A Study of Buya Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar**

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Abstract: This paper elucidates Buya Hamka's views on the prospect of humans on the earth while facing persistent challenges in their lives. This study is based on library research that focuses on Hamka's work *Tafsir al-Azhar*. *Tafsir al-Azhar* represents a modern Quranic exegetical work written by a modern Indonesian Muslim scholar. This paper argues that in Hamka's view, humans' acts are created by their own since God has bestowed them as a perfect creature. With their sense, humans can weigh and distinguish between good and evil and between right and wrong. To Hamka, people are free to determine their own life. The perfect human is those who have a strong belief and mind to determine the direction of life. Furthermore, the future of humans depends on their will to move forward and know the consequences of their actions. In the Islamic context, as Hamka maintains, perfect human is reflected in the Muslim community who can maintain brotherhood, uphold equality and keep independence.

Keywords: Prospect, Human, Tafsir al-Azhar

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Introduction

THE QUR'AN is a literal revelation from the words of Allah, delivered in Arabic through the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad for a span of twenty-three years during his prophetic term. The first verse was revealed when the Prophet was in the Cave of Hira' on a mountain of light (*jabal al-nūr*) near Mecca, and the last verse was revealed only sometime before his death. The verses were memorized by many companions and gradually began to be written by leading companions such as 'Ali and Zaid. Finally, during the reign of Uthman, the third caliph, the definitive

text which was based on early copies and confirmations from those who had heard the verses directly from the Prophet himself, was copied and sent to all four corners of the Islamic world.

The Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic teachings and guidelines for every Muslim. The Qur'an not only merely contains instructions on the relationship between humans and God, but also regulates the relationship amongst humans, as well as humans and their surroundings. To fully understand the teachings of Islam (*kāffah*), it is necessary to understand the content of the Qur'an and practice it in daily life in a serious and consistent manner.¹ The Qur'an is the guidelines and demands of the life of Muslims, both as individuals and as people. As a guide and demand for life, it is not only to be read textually, but also to be understood, lived and practised empirically in social community life.²

The Qur'an has introduced itself as guidance for humans (*hudan li al-nās*). As a guide or religious book, it contains natural phenomena (*al-āyat al-kawniyah*). One of the themes about modern scientific problems illustrated by the Qur'an is the phenomenon of the origin of human, namely the soil (Q.s. Nūh: 17-18; Q.s. Ṭāhā: 55).

From the earth (land) That We made you and to him We will restore you and from there We will expel you at another time

The similar verses that explain the human origins are numerous. The terms used by the Qur'an to refer to it include (1) *Ṭurāb* (Q.s. 22: 5); (2) *ṭīn* (Q.s. 6: 2); (3) *ṭīn lāzibin* (Q.s. 37: 11); (4) *sulālatin min ṭīn* (Q.s. 23: 12); (5) *ṣalṣāl min hama'in masnūn* (Q.s. 15: 26); and so on. The illustration of human origins can now be proven by modern science through the results of scientific experiments.

Human origins, as there are several verses above, all refer to the creation of the first man, Adam, who is also commonly known as the father of humans (Abu al-Bashar) (Q.s. 38: 71-72). The

¹ Sayyid Agil Husein al-Munawwar, *Al-Qur'an Membangun Tradisi Kesalehan Hakiki* (Ciputat: Ciputat Press, 2005), 3.

² Sayyid Agil Husein al-Munawwar, *Aktualisasi Nilai-nilai Qur'ani dalam Sistem Pendidikan Islam* (Ciputat: Ciputat Press, 2005), 16.

Qur'an clearly does not explain the process of Adam's creation as evolutionarily as humans afterwards.

In this article, we will explain how in the Hamka's perception, humans have a very difficult task after God created this world, one of which is to make the caliph on earth. For this purpose, this article aims to examine Indonesian Quranic commentator Buya Hamka's work regarding the role and prospect of human.³ Hamka's interpretation is very supportive in interpreting the caliph, which is adapted to the times that are developing at this time because it is in accordance with its modern interpretation.⁴

Biography of Buya Hamka

Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, or known as Hamka, was born in Minanjau, West Sumatra on February 16, 1908 or on the 14th of Muharram 1326 H, in a village called Sungai Batang.⁵ His father's name is Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah or Haji Rasul, one of the leaders of Islamic modernism in Minangkabau, and his mother's name is Safiyah.⁶ Haji Rasul started his movement in 1908 upon his return from studying in Mecca. At that time, there was a time of conflict between young people (*kaum mudo*) and the elderly (*kaum tuo*).⁷

Hamka began his education by reading the Qur'an at his own parents' home. When he was seven years old, his father put him in

³ Most studies on the Qur'an exegesis has still been dominated by the work of Muslims scholars from the mainland of Islam both classical or modern interpreter. See for example Walid A. Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical Tafsir Tradition: The Qur'an Commentary of Al-Thalabi* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Majid Danesghar, *Tantawi Jawhari and the Qur'an: Tafsir and Social Concerns in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Routledge, 2017).

⁴ See Minim A. Sirry, "What Is Modern about Modern Tafsir? A Closer Look at Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar," in *The Qur'an in the Malay-Indonesian World: Context and Interpretation*, by Majid Danesghar, Peter G. Riddell, and Andrew Rippin (Cambridge: Routledge, 2016).

⁵ Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Kenang-kenangan 70 Tahun Buya HAMKA* (Jakarta: Yayasan Nurul Islam, 1978), 91. Lihat juga Tim Penulis IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, *Ensiklopedi Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1992), 294.

⁶ Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Kenang-kenangan Hidup* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974), 8.

⁷ Rusydi Hamka, *Pribadi dan Martabat Buya Hamka* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1983), 1.

the village school, and in the afternoon he studied at the non formal of Islamic school (*madrasa*). In 1919, Hamka entered the Islamic modern school (Sumatra Thawalib). Among his teachers were Sheikh Ibrahim Musa Parabek, Tengku Muda Abdul Hamid, and Zainuddin Labay and his own father. At the age of 21 years, on April 5th, 1929, Hamka married a girl named Siti Rahma, who was then 15 years old.⁸

In 1942 he went to Yogyakarta, Java. In this city, he met and studied the modern Islamic movement to HOS Cokroaminoto, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, RM. Soerjopranoto, and H. Fakhruddin. In this city too, he began to recognize and know the comparison between the political movements of Islam, East Indies, Islamic union, and Muhammadiyah social movements. In fact, with his natural ability to arrange words, both in speech and in writing, has put him in a very special position among his friends.

In 1945, Hamka returned to Padangpanjang and led religion school. At this time, his books were published: *The Islamic State, Islam and Democracy; the Thought Revolution; the Religious Revolution; the Mingangkabau Tradition Facing the Revolution; and From the Valley of Dreams*. One year later, in 1946 when the Muhammadiyah Conference was held in Padangpanjang, Hamka was elected as the Chairperson of the Muhammadiyah Leadership Council of the West Sumatra region until 1949.

At the 32nd Muhammadiyah Congress in Purwokerto in 1953, he was chosen to be a member of the central leadership. So, when the congress was held in the following years, he was always nominated to remain the central administrator of Muhammadiyah until 1971. In 1950, he moved to Jakarta. In Jakarta, he published several books, such as *My Father; the Memento of Life; the Development of Sufism from the Ages to the Ages; and the Uric of Tanggung Pancasila*. Then, in 1955, during the general election in Indonesia, Hamka was elected as a member of parliament representing Masyumi party. Through this council, he tried his best to fight for the sake of Islam.

Aside from being a parliament member, he had also been a high-ranking official and religious advisor. This position gave him

⁸Ibid., 2.

the opportunity to attend various meetings and conferences abroad. In 1952, the United States government invited Hamka to stay there for four months. Since his visit to America, he has had a more open view of non-Islamic countries. Upon returning from America, he published two volumes of his travel book *Four Months in America*.

In 1953, Hamka became a member of the Muangthai cultural mission, representing the Ministry of Religion to attend the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's death in Burma in 1954 and to attend an Islamic conference in Lahore in 1958. He also attended the invitation of Al-Azhar University in Cairo to give his lecture on the influence of Muhammad Abduh in Indonesia for which he was given the title of Doctor Honoris Causa.⁹ In July 1959, he succeeded in publishing the Panji Masyarakat monthly magazine with KH. Faqih Usman, the contents of which emphasized Islamic cultural knowledge. Then on August 17th1960, the magazine was banned by Sukarno because he had published the work of Dr. Hatta with the title "Our Democracy" which contains criticism of the conception of guided democracy and the violations committed by Sukarno.¹⁰

The banning of the magazine did not lessen his enthusiasm for work. In 1962, he published the Gema Islam magazine, chaired by Lieutenant General Sudirman and Brigadier General Mukhlas Rawi as a substitute for the banned magazine. Then in 1964, 12th of Ramadan 1383 H or January 27th1964, after giving lectures Hamka was arrested by the government on charges of anti-Subversive violations. In detention, he wrote *Tafsir al-Azhar*. After the fall of the Old Order regime and the rise of the New Order government, Hamka was released on January 21st1966. With his freedom, Hamka continued and improved his exegesis.¹¹ In the period 1958-1966, Hamka has held various important positions including as Parliament Member, Imam of al-Azhar Kebayoran Mosque, new Jakarta in 1958, Publisher of Panji Rakyat magazine in 1959,

⁹ Ibid., 49.

¹⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹¹ Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, "Mensukuri Tafsir al-Azhar," *Panji Masyarakat*, n.d., 39.

Lecturers in various Islamic Universities, Professor at the University of Dr. Mustopo; honoris causa of Professor by the people of Minangkabau in 1966.¹²

After the establishment of the New Order period in 1966, the *Panji Rakyat* magazine which had been banned was published and Hamka became its leader until the end of his life. In 1973 when asked to become general chairperson of the MUI (The Indonesian Council of Ulama), Hamka first consulted with the Muhammadiyah headquarter. And when he put his position as chairman of the MUI in May 1981 and until the end of his life, he was still asked to be an advisor to the Muhammadiyah council.¹³ After two months of his resignation as chairman of the MUI, he was then admitted to the hospital due to a heart attack. For one week lying in Pertamina Hospital in Jakarta, he died on Friday, July 17th 1981 at the age of 73. Hamka, besides being a well-known scholar, is also a very productive writer. He had a bunch of works which almost reach 59 titles, but the most fundamental one is the Qur'anic exegesis comprising several volumes named as *Tafsir al-Azhar*.¹⁴

Al-Azhar's Pattern and Method of Interpretation

Hamka's creativity was apparent at a young age. When he was 57 years old, Hamka had written 84 works, and even some said he had written 113 books covering the fields of religion, philosophy, and literature.¹⁵ The idea of compiling *Tafsir al-Azhar* originated from the dawn teachings delivered by Hamka at the Al-Azhar Great Mosque since 1959. Hamka wrote this interpretation every dawn since the end of 1958. However, it turned out that the compilation of the exegesis took a long time. Until January 1964, what he was doing had not yet come to an end. This interpretation

¹² Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Doktrin Islam yang Menimbulkan Kemerdekaan dan Keberanian* (Jakarta: Idayu Press, 1977), 28–29.

¹³ Hamka, *Pribadi dan Martabat*, 7.

¹⁴ Al-Azhar's interpretation comes from the dawn lecture he gave at the Agung al-Azhar mosque since 1959. See Hamka, "Mensukuri Tafsir al-Azhar," 39.

¹⁵ Sides Sudyarto DS, "Hamka, Realisme Religius", in Nasir Tamara, *Hamka di Mata Hati Umat*, p. 140

is given the name *Tafsir Al-Azhar* because this interpretation arises in the Great Mosque of Al-Azhar, the name of which was given by Shaykh Jami 'Al-Azhar, Mahmoud Syaltout.¹⁶

Aside from writing, Hamka also had a busy schedule of teaching. He was a lecturer at several universities, both in Jakarta and in the regions. He became a professor at the Army Center for Islamic Education. With so many activities he had, Hamka even felt pessimistic about being able to finish his exegesis work. He seemed to write down his grievances, "If this is the case, surely this interpretation will not be finished in 20 years even though it gets older too. Because, if calculated in terms of age at that time, namely the end of 1963, maybe this interpretation will not be finished until I die."¹⁷

On Monday, Ramadan 12th 1383 (January 27th 1964) Hamka as usual held a weekly recitation at the Al-Azhar Great Mosque where about 100 female participants attended to discuss Q.s. Al-Baqarah 255. At 11 am, it was over and Hamka returned home to unwind for a moment waiting for the arrival of Zuhur.¹⁸ It was during this break that four people picked up Hamka to be detained, having previously submitted a detention assignment letter. After four days in detention, Hamka was then examined on charges of planning to kill the Minister of Religion H. Saifuddin Zuhri, about to stage a coup, inciting students to continue the rebellion of Kartosuwiryo, Daud Beureuh, M. Natsir, and Syafruddin Prawiranegara.¹⁹

The detention is a blessing in disguise that enables Hamka's to write and accomplish the compilation of the exegesis. The prison separated him from his wife, children, and all the activities so that he could complete the heavy work, interpreting the Qur'an. While under house arrest for more than two months, Hamka also used it to revise the work.²⁰ Hamka felt grateful, even though he had to go through his days behind bars. He had lots of free time. The night

¹⁶ Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, vol. Juz 1 (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 2001), 66.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Juz 1:67.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Juz 1:70.

can be used for worship and night pray. While on the day he could write, think (*tafakkur*)²¹ and review his work or other materials (*muṭa'la'ah*).²² Thus, the prison brought great wisdom to Hamka.

Why does this study focus on *Tafsir al-Azhar*? Because this work belongs to the modern interpretation written by a contemporary Muslim scholar from a country that is commonly less studied regarding exegetical work. This interpretation can have a dialogue between the text of the Qur'an with the condition of Muslims when this interpretation was written. Hamka was eager to propose solutions to the problems faced by humans in organizing the future of their lives.

Methodologically, *Tafsir al-Azhar* belongs to the combination of exegesis on the basis of other Quranic verses, the hadith and the opinions of the companions (*tafsir bil ma'thur*) with that of the rational exegesis (*tafsir bil ra'yi*). The style of interpretation is quite complete because it does not only presents the conventional style or the law, but also the historical and scientific style which describes the content of the Qur'an from the point of view of the non-scientific sciences of religion.

The Nature of Humans' Creation

Human was created by God from the essence of the clay, then becomes semen (*nutfah*), a clot of blood (*'alaqa*), and lumps of meat (*mudḡah*) so that eventually it becomes the most perfect creature and has various abilities. Therefore, humans must be grateful for the gift that God has endowed. Humans originate from clay, a term that is given in a different word in the Qur'an, such as *Turāb* (dry-dusty land), *ṭīn* (clay), *ṣal-ṣāl* (cultivated soil), and *sulāla* (kernel of clay or refined soil).²³ It can be interpreted that the human body was created by God from various chemical elements found in the soil.

²¹ *Tafakkur* is the activity of thinking or contemplating all phenomena that occur in the universe. Whether it's from an event or from a sense experience

²² *Muṭala'ah* is namely how to present lessons by reading both reading aloud and reading silently.

²³ *Turāb*, *ṭīn*, *ṣal-ṣāl*, and *sulāla* is that the human body was created by God from various chemical elements found in the soil. As for the stages in the next process, the Qur'an does not explain in detail.

Becoming an ideal human being is the goal of everyone. Since the essence of human beings is the soul, the purpose of life is for the perfection of the soul. Thus, the purpose of human life is perfection in accordance with its substance, namely the soul. Therefore, every action or action must lead to the improvement of the soul.²⁴

The verses that explain that humans are created from the soil are generally understood outwardly. That raises the opinion that humans are really from the soil, assuming God is powerful to make things happen. But there are some Muslims who argue that Adam was not the first human. This opinion concludes that the verses which describe human beings created from the clay do not mean that all the chemical elements present in the soil also experience chemical reactions. This is like the statement that plants grow from the soil because not all the chemical elements in the soil are absorbed by plants, but only part of it. Therefore, the human-forming materials referred to in the Qur'an are human instructions that exist in the Qur'an. It is an indication that the actual human-forming materials namely ammonia, menthe, and water in the soil react chemically.

The verse that states if God wants something to be, then it will be is not a verse that guarantees that everything that God wants will be realized immediately. In this case, the sentence must be distinguished from *kun fayakūn* (God orders something to happen that it happens).²⁵ What God wants must be realized and possible realization will go through a process. God states that the creation of Jesus is like the process of Adam's creation, then it can lead to the thought that if Jesus was born from something living, namely Maryam, then Adam was also born from something that lived before. That is because there is also the occurrence of a process. The differences of opinion about whether or not the first man Adam created directly or through a process does not seem to have an end because each will be firm in its stand. If this difference is continually extended, it will only spend time and no longer have

²⁴ Elfi and Damadjati Supadjar, "Konsep Manusia Ideal dalam Pemikiran Hamka," *Jurnal Humanika* 17, no. 2 (2004): 286.

²⁵ *Kun fayakūn* "is" Be! Then it happened.

time to think about the status and duties assigned by God to humans. The Qur'an is quite complete in providing information about it. To understand that information in depth, the experts in chemistry, biology, and others need to be involved, so that in understanding the verses are not literally. What needs to be reminded now is that humans are expected by God to be the caliph or successor that spread God's message and laws.

The Creation of Humans from Hamka's Exegesis

Humans are perfect beings since they have beautiful (physical) form and are equipped with souls or psychics. The human perfection can be seen from the fused function between the body and soul in the human body. For example, the union of the body and soul from the function of the five senses of the skin. When the skin is pinched, it will cause pain. The pain turns out to be something that is felt by the body and soul. The body without soul can be seen in a dead person and if it is pinched, then the dead will not feel anything because his/her organs have become numb. Likewise, a soul without a body cannot be pinched, because it is unseen and invisible. God creates pain in human life when it is pinched. It turns out that the pain in the five senses of the skin when pinched is a feeling that arises from the union of the body and soul in the human body.²⁶

In the methodological aspect, *Tafsir al-Azhar* is included in the interpretation group of *tahlili-ijmali*.²⁷ In interpreting Q.s. al-Hajj: 5, Hamka explained it globally from several phases of human creation. Prior to explaining the phases in human creation, Hamka accounted in advance why this issue is important for all to know. Starting from the word of God in the Q.s. al-Hajj: 5, "(O all human

²⁶ Eka Kurniawati and Nurhasanah Bakhtiar, "Manusia Menurut Konsep Al-Qur'an dan Sains. JNSI: Journal of Natural Science and Integration," *JNSI: Journal of Natural Science and Integration* 1, no. 1 (2018): 79, <http://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/JNSI/article/view/78-94>.

²⁷ *Tahlili* is a method of interpreting the Qur'an that is done by explaining the verses of the Qur'an in various aspects, as well as explaining the intent contained therein so that the activities of mufassir only explain verse by verse, letter by letter. *Ijmali* means the method of interpreting the Qur'an carried out by explaining the intentions of the Koran globally, not as detailed as the interpretation of *tahlili*

beings), God explains that this is an appeal to all mankind without exception about the basics of thinking that will become the basis of life, that is, believe in the existence of God and in the resurrection after death.

All of those are due to the fact that many humans do not believe in God's authority and doubt the truth of Divine revelation. They assume that what has changed from its original form such as the process of human death, from being buried for hundreds of years to scattered bones or becoming ashes after being burned will not be able to return to normal.

Logically speaking, that would be impossible. That is what will make someone doubt about the divine revelation. Even the doubt will increase when the mind always rests on a limited capacity. Therefore, in some verses of the Qur'an we are told to reflect on the things we always face, even about ourselves. To prove that God has power over everything, including raising people who have died, the next verse mentions the origin of human events. This verse explains that human creation goes through several phases. Explicitly, Hamka did not express certainty about the division of these phases. However, if the interpretation is carefully reviewed, then it appears that the human creation is divided into seven phases. They are:²⁸

Fase Ṭurāb (Soil)

According to Hamka, this phase does not only relate to the first human being, namely Adam, but also all humans are created from the soil. The earth which was hit by the rainwater will grow various kinds of plants, vegetables, fruits, and even all kinds of staple foods such as rice, barley, wheat and sago. From various kinds of food, there are substances that can fertilize human life.²⁹ This is in line with Q.s. al-Sajdah: 27

And Are they not paying attention, that We drive (clouds containing) water to barren earth, then We grow with rainwater that plants from there Eat their livestock and themselves. Do they not pay attention?

²⁸ Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, vol. Juz 17 (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 2001), 137.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Various kinds of food, both rice and vegetables or fruits that we eat eventually become blood in which there are hormones to increase the desire for sexuality. It is from the blood that the sperm comes from, both male and female sperm.³⁰

*Fase nutfa*³¹

The second phase of human creation in verse is the *nutfa* (semen) phase. As explained earlier, that *nutfa* is originally from some of the foods that humans consume every day. In interpreting this term, Hamka does not specialize only in men. It is not only owned by men as understood so far but the integration of male and female sperm in the womb.

*Fase 'alaqa*³²

The third phase is *'alaqa* (a clot of blood). This phase is a continuation of the earlier phase. Hamka interpreted this term as 'a clot of blood'. He further stated that the process of *nutfa* to become *'alaqa* in a woman's womb takes place for forty (40) days.

Fase Mudgha (a lump of meat)

The next phase is the *mudgha* (meat clump) phase. The process of turning *'alaqa* into *mudgha*, according to Hamka, also requires forty days. The interpretation of "for us to explain to you" in the verse by Hamka at least has two meanings: (1) so that it is clear to you how the human is created, (2) that after $3 \times 40 = 120$ days (four months) it is clear to you the further development of human creation so that safeguarding for pregnancy is carried out with peace at that time.

While the interpretation "and We determine in the wombs what we want" in the next sentence explained that apart from the period of three times forty days. It was determined by God in the wombs what was desired by God, whether male or female, the

³⁰ Ibid., Juz 17:138.

³¹ *Nutfa* means very small drops of water or a small amount of water.

³² *'Alaqa* is taken from the word *alaqa* which means something that is frozen, dependent or attached. So that it can be interpreted as something that depends on the wall of the uterus.

benefits, bad luck, good luck, the appearance, the size of the body, and the skin resembles the mother or father-like.

Fase ṭifl (Baby)

Ṭifl (baby) phase is the phase after *mudgha*. The process of becoming *ṭifl* from *mudgha* takes a long time. In the *mudgha* phase, God has determined several things regarding sex, wealth, bodily shape, and so forth. In this phase, even though his body shape is quite perfect, he does not know anything yet. All of the five senses are not enough. This is as explained in Q.s. al-Naḥl: 78: "And Allah is the one who removes you from the belly of the mother, you know nothing".

Fase Asudda (Adult)

This phase is a continuation of the preceding phase. The process of becoming an adult also goes through a gradual process. From babies milking their mothers, to be able to eat hard foods and from a small baby to an adult and strong person.

Fase Senile/Senility

This phase is the last phase that must be passed by humans. Because, for those whose ages were shortened by God, of course, this phase could not be lived, even some did not reach the *mudgha* phase if a mother miscarried. Normally, all these phases will be passed by humans.

For those who are extended, until they reach 100 years, for example, then they will experience a situation where they become weak again, even unable to remember the things they once knew. According to Hamka, people who are lengthened like that are called 'captives of Allah' (*asirullah*) who are still held temporarily in this world, because they fulfill the highest wisdom of God. And in due time, such people will be re-enslaved by God, as He promised.

The Future of the Caliph on Earth

The caliph in Islamic thought (*al-siyasa al-syari'iyya*) is one of the interesting issues to study. The debate over the view of separation and unification between state and religion caused two

different groups. Firstly, religion is politics (power) so it is obligatory to establish a state on the basis of religion. Secondly, religion and state are two different things. The views are the root of debates about the Islamic state system and Muslim groups. This can happen because it is related to political attitudes. Among Muslims themselves, there are still a number of different thoughts.³³

God gives humans the potential for extraordinary reason. So, one of the tasks of the caliph is to use the potential properly to create something that is beneficial to the environment. By optimizing the potential of the mind they have, humans certainly can prosper the earth as their mandates. This is in line with Neviyarni's opinion,³⁴ That humans are God's creatures who are equipped with the ability to learn and have the knowledge, as well as knowing by various means for that, such as hearing, vision, language, thinking and writing. With the mind and heart, humans manage nature to be something useful for life. As a caliph, the necessity of always seeking and increasing knowledge is something that cannot be avoided.³⁵

The task of humans as the caliph is to maintain and be responsible for him/herself, fellow human beings and nature which is the source of livelihood. As the caliph on earth, the humans have obligations that must be done, namely obligations between humans and their God, between fellow human beings themselves, and between humans and their ecosystems. These obligations must be implemented because it is a mandate from God. Human's responsibility for the morality of religion as a caliph on earth is to manage the universe as well as possible and the social life in it. Human life is very dependent on other

³³ Muhyiddin Thohir and Muh. Ngali Zainul Makmun, "Penafsiran Ayat Al-Qur'an Tentang Khilafah (Kajian Perbandingan Tafsir Al-Misbah Karya M.Quraish Sihab dan Al-Azhar Karya Abdul Karim Amrullah [Hamka])," *Sumbula* 2, no. 2 (2017): 546.

³⁴ Neviyarni, *Pelayanan Bimbingan dan Konseling Berorientasi Khalifah Fil Ardh* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2009), 47.

³⁵ Yesi Lisnawati, Aam Abdussalam, and Wahyu Wibisana, "Konsep Khalifah dalam al-Qur'an dan Implikasinya terhadap Tujuan Pendidikan Islam (Studi Maudu'i terhadap Konsep Khalifah dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah)," *Tarbawy* 2, no. 1 (2015): 54, <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/tarbawy/article/view/3377>.

components in the ecosystem so that morally humans are responsible to keep continuity, balance and sustainability of nature which is the source of their life.³⁶

As humans, Hamka reminds, we should remember two things: Firstly, how you will disbelieve in God. Secondly, how will you disbelieve in God, even though all the contents of the earth have been provided for you. Beforehand the provision to receive your arrival on earth was prepared, even from the rhetoric to the seven heavens themselves. If so, think about who you are. For what you were created. Then came the verse about humans becoming caliphs:

"Remember when your Lord said to the Angels: " Verily I want to make a caliph on the face of the earth. " they say: "Why do you want to make (the caliph) on earth a person who will cause damage to him and shed blood, even though we always glorify by praising you and purifying you?" The Lord said: "Surely I know what you do not know." (QS: al-Baqarah: 30)

Undoubtedly, God's meeting with His angel did not happen in one place, because if it happened in one place, of course God will take place. It is not the Angel who face to face and sit face to face with God, because if so surely the position of the angel as a creature and God as the creator are obscured and ruined. When God had said to the Angels stating the intention of appointing a caliph on this earth, the angels also asked for an explanation of God's intention to appoint caliph?

The creation of Adam in such a form that functions as a caliph on earth is the greatest blessing and must be grateful for his descendants by obeying God. God has provided this universe for Adam, who has been privileged and perfected. He also provided Adam with knowledge and taught Adam about the names of things. God also gives the knowledge to know what they do not know yet.³⁷

³⁶ Watsiqotul Mardiyah, Sunardi, and Leo Agung, "Peran Manusia Sebagai Khalifah Allah Di Muka Bumi Perspektif Ekologis Dalam Ajaran Islam," *Jurnal Penelitian* 12, no. 2 (2018): 367, <http://journal.stainkudus.ac.id/index.php/jurnalPenelitian/article/view/3523>.

³⁷ Zulhelmi, "Konsep Khalifah Fil Ardhi dalam Perspektif Filsafat (Kajian Eksistensi Manusia sebagai Khalifah)," *Intizar* 24, no. 1 (2018): 38, <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/intizar/article/view/1879>.

So we imagine that the Angel as a spiritual being whose knowledge is certainly not as extensive as God's knowledge asks for an explanation of how the caliph's pattern is? Is it not possible to happen with the caliph? What damage will be caused or will bloodshed occur? Even though nature with the sacred God's willingness has been at peace, because angels have been created by God as a submissive, obedient, and faithful creature. In the way of angels' opinions when these types of creatures are already crowded they will scramble interests among each other. The interests of one person or one group collide with one person or one other group, then there is a hard and arising conflict which thus arises damage and even bloodshed. Thus the tranquillity that has existed in the presence of obedient and faithful beings is lost.

The above verse can be concluded that this will be used as a guide for the angels to know that all the actions of God certainly contain wisdom and absolute perfection even for the angels who still seem vague. So we should know that God never disputed the opinions of the Angels, only explained that their opinions and knowledge were not as extensive and far as God's knowledge. God does not deny that even damage will arise and blood will be shed, but there is another purpose that goes beyond that, so that damage is only as a compliment, builder and bloodshed which is only one level of life's journey in the direction of perfection. So with the answer of God like that, the Angel received with solemnity and obedience.

Referring to Hamka's interpretation of the meanings of the caliph, we have found many in his work, and it have also been described in the first part of the exegesis. God revealed to the angel that He wanted to hold a caliph on the earth. The meaning that is close to the caliph is a substitute or executor. Adam as the first father of humans can be considered as the caliph on earth, for the reason that God bestows on him or to humans shows how divine power through His revelations to the Prophets and His inspiration to people who think, so that this life becomes prosper because of human actions.

Truly power is a tough test. Power can cause people to forget where he received the power, then he did arbitrarily will because of abusive power. In the law of society in this world, his mind will

be tortured by the power itself. Large dictators have gone crazy with power. In the hereafter, they will be punished, because a ruler does not come up.

Buya Hamka's Thoughts on Contemporary Humanism

Humans as caliphs on earth only have the duty to build, process, and regulate this world according to God's will. The purpose of human life is nothing but serving God. With regard to the task of man as the Caliph on earth, human is equipped with the potential to succeed in these tasks. The potentials of humans to succeed in their duties include: (1) The ability to know the properties, functions, and uses of all kinds of things. (2) The subjugation of the earth, sky and everything in it: stars, planets and so on. (3) The ability of the mind and the five senses. (4) The ability and positive power to change the style of life in this world.³⁸

Humans are the only creatures whose elements of creation contain a divine spirit,³⁹ while humans are not given knowledge about the spirit, except a little (Q.s. al-Isrā' [17]: 85).

And they ask you about spirits. Say: "The Spirit is the business of my Lord, and you have not been given knowledge but little.

Another interpretation of human creation and role is prosed by Quraisy Shihbab, an Indonesian contemporary Quranic commentator who graduated from al-Azhar University. As a comparative analysis, we present his thoughts here. Humans, according to Quraish Shihab recognizes three levels of 'nature', through which they experience and determine the quality of self and the standard of living. The three levels of 'nature' in question are the material nature, the mental realm, and the realm of the soul (psychic and spiritual). These three levels of 'nature', when paralleled according to the perspective of Islamic psychological theory, can be compared with the theory of the four levels of

³⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), 234.

³⁹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an, Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, 2006), 278.

consciousness. That is awareness unconscious, conscious threshold, conscious, and supra-awareness.⁴⁰

At the natural level material, human behaviour is controlled by the 'unconscious' nature because the impulses that appear are natural, so it does not require coordination with mind and heart. This is the lowest level because at this stage, human quality values are not functional. Whereas at the level of the mind human behaviour is controlled by the nature of 'consciousness' because here the power of reason and heart has begun to function and determine the value of human quality. As for the natural level of the soul, human behaviour is determined by the urge of passion or spiritual impulse. When human behavior is driven by lust, then when humans are controlled by their conscious threshold, which functions to realize the biological instinctual impulses found in the unconscious to the conscious world. Now, here the way lust meets the demands of instinctual biological needs is determined by the level of quality of their mind and spirit. So this is where human lust will be assessed or evaluated whether this is as lust. Then if their behaviors are driven by spiritual or spiritual impulse, it means humans have been at the highest level, namely the nature of supra-consciousness. At this level, they not only know their physical and social environment, religion and responsibilities but also analyze and feel the dimensions of spirituality and the like which is commonly referred to as the sixth sense.⁴¹

Many problems that cannot be reached by the human mind in carrying out the task as a caliph, especially regarding themselves, the future, and the nature of human beings themselves, such as the problem of spirit, death, and so forth. This shows the weakness of human potential. Therefore, humans are given instructions by God in accordance with their functions as the caliph. Humans as caliphs on earth are equipped with instructions by God as a refinement of His favors to His servants.

⁴⁰ Muhammad Hasbi, "Konsep Jiwa dan Pengaruhnya dalam Kepribadian Manusia (Studi atas Tafsir al-Mishbah Karya Quraish Shihab)," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 17, no. 1 (2016): 53, <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/alquran/article/view/1456>.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 54.

Human brotherhood is also not just a human relationship, but the concept of humans as social and relationships that are built on the values of justice, good treatment, compassion, and peace, even more concerned with the interests of others and are willing to sacrifice to help human needs. What bears the nature of humanity is the nature of reason, feelings, morals, morality and emotions. Reason thinks correctly; feeling very sensitive in feeling the pain of others; feelings of emotion that are always pushing and motivated to achieve happiness, kindness and beauty; moral and morality which always strive to build cooperation with all humans to realize the interests of all humans and put the interests of others ahead of personal interests.

The word moral always refers to the pros and cons of humans as humans. So it is not just about the good and bad, for example as a lecturer, cook, badminton player or preacher, but as a human being. The moral field is the field of human life in terms of its goodness as a human being.⁴²

While Buya Hamka proves that God is all-powerful over everything, including raising people who have died, in the next verse it is mentioned about the origin of human creation, that is, the verse explained that the process of the creation goes through several phases. Explicitly, Hamka did not express certainty about the division of these phases. However, if followed by the direction of its interpretation, it seems that it divides the phase of human creation into 7 phases.⁴³

According to Hamka, human nature is a soul, with three strengths, namely the power of reason, the power of anger, and the power of lust. So, Hamka tends to understand monism. On the other hand, Hamka sees humans as paradoxical creatures, which in addition to containing the potential for good also contain the potential for ugliness or evil. Third, the essence of human actions, according to Hamka is self-created, because humans have been given reason by God. With that reason humans can weigh,

⁴² Sudin, "Pemikiran Hamka tentang Moral," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 12, no. 2 (2011): 228, <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/esensia/article/view/122-02>.

⁴³ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Juz 17:137.

distinguish between good and bad, can choose which path is wrong and which is the right path. In this connection, Hamka is one of those who have the Islamic understanding, that is, understanding which gives freedom to humans in their wills and actions. Thus, according to Hamka, humans have freedom in determining their own lives.⁴⁴

Humans are as theocentric creatures sent down to the world in the context of limited activities (space and time). God's representative status means He must function as an integrated being, that is, a complete, harmonious and creative being in all dimensions of His personality physically, spiritually, morally, intellectually and aesthetically. Universally, the core attribute of human beings is a personality that has self-awareness, self-direction, will, and creative intellectual. With this view of human status and function, religion provides a complete moral code. This complete moral rule is based on a value system that contains the norms for the search for religious spiritual life, namely: piety, surrender to God, truth, justice, compassion, wisdom and beauty. This value system must become a reference for all humans in their various creativities.⁴⁵

The typology of modern humans is the attitude of those who overly boast of science and rely too much on rationality in dealing with problems. Even though it turns out, deification to excessive rationality can plunge humans into secularistic values.⁴⁶

The Qur'an Proves Human Creation

Humans consist of body and soul. What determines the pros and cons of humans is the soul. If the soul is good, then humans are good, on the contrary if the soul is bad, then humans will be

⁴⁴ Ris 'an Rusli, "Agama Dan Manusia Dalam Pendidikan Hamka (Studi Falsafat Agama)," *Intizar* 20, no. 2 (2014): 216, <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/intizar/article/view/430>.

⁴⁵ Silawati, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Hamka Dalam Kehidupan Modern," *An-Nida: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 40, no. 2 (2015): 119, <http://ejournal.uinsuska.ac.id/index.php/Anida/article/view/1502>.

⁴⁶ Sutoyo, "Tasawuf Hamka Dan Rekonstruksi Spiritualitas Manusia Modern," *Jurnal Islamica: Jurnal Study Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (2015): 117, <http://islamica.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/islamica/article/view/268>.

bad. Humans consist of body and soul can be seen from secular psychology (general) and Islamic psychology based on the Qur'an as divine revelation. People who argue that humans consist of body and soul are Aristotle, while Plato argues that the body is to express the soul.⁴⁷

As a virtue of the Qur'an, the truth of every word and sentence contained in it, can be proven scientifically. Scientists have found so much scientific evidence, so the allegations of those who accuse the Qur'an of being wrong can be refuted. The following concerns one aspect related to humans, namely the problem of human creation. The Qur'an has confirmed that humans were created specifically, God says:

"Verily I will create man from the kernel of soil. Then when I have perfected the event and I have breathed it into my spirit (creation), then you should fall down on prostration with it." (Q.s. Şād: 71-72).

In another verse:

"And Allah created you from the ground, then from semen ..." (Q.s. Fāṭir: 11)

Then, in the verses of the Qur'an, we find that God confirms the creation of humans by using the word *qad* which was preceded by *lam* which has an affirmative function (*lām ta'kîd*). God says that:

"And indeed We created man and knew what his heart whispered." (Q.s. Qāf: 16)

Thus, the Qur'an emphasizes the specificity of human creation. But misguided people who do not want to acknowledge the truth of the Qur'an accuse the Qur'an of lying, because according to them, humans were created as a result of the evolution of other creatures. These creatures which preceded the original form of man, they called the 'father' for every mammal. But their lies were finally revealed. In 1986, when archaeologists discovered an ape fossil in Africa, they concluded conclusively without doubt there was no connection at all between apes and humans in the origin of its creation. When telling about human creation, the Qur'an gives the instructions contained therein truths that can be proven

⁴⁷Abu Tamrin, "Manusia Berbasis Al-Quran Dalam Dimensi Filsafat Ilmu," *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial & Budaya Syar-i* 5, no. 3 (2018): 220, <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/salam/article/view/10298>.

scientifically. And many other verses which all show scientific evidence contained in the Qur'an.

Conclusion

It seems clear in the interpretation of this verse how Hamka gave an explanation that if Adam as the first human was created from the soil, then as a descendant of Adam the people who live until now are very dependent on the soil elements. The meaning that is close to the caliph is a substitute or executor. Adam as the first father of man can be considered as the caliph of God on earth, for the reason that God bestows on him and his descendants.

A simple explanation, mixed with the phenomenon of human events that reflect the scientific side of the contents of the verses of the Qur'an produces a style of scientific interpretation that can be digested by the audience who are really waiting for news about the relationship of the content of the Qur'an with the progress of science and technology on this time. Moreover, not many interpretive works written in Bahasa or Malay origin from Indonesia, because most of the Qur'anic interpretation literature is still written in Arabic and only a small number of Indonesians are able to understand it.

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