



The Integrity of Ulama in Hamka's Al-Azhar Interpretation

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal and analyze the concept of the integrity of scholars as reflected in Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar. The integrity of scholars is one of the important values in religious life that reflects the morals, knowledge, and moral responsibility of scholars in conveying Islamic teachings. Tafsir al-Azhar, as one of Hamka's monumental works, presents thoughts that are full of scientific values, ethics, and a commitment to truth. This research is aqualitative research. The method used is library research, which is a type of research that limits its activities only to library collection materials without requiring field research. Therefore, the data collection technique in this study is the documentation technique, namely the technique of recording, collecting and recording all data findings in books or other literature. After that, it is selected and then displayed in descriptive form, then all data related to the discussion of scholars taken from primary and secondary sources are initially recorded and collected in a structured and systematic document folder. Then selected according to the portion of needs and feasibility in the argumentation quotation. Until the next process is presented in a descriptive statement through the conclusion of the analysis and findings. The results of the analysis show that there are two important points in the concept of the integrity of scholars which are reflected in Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar. 1) namely raising the muru'ah of scholars, that there are several ways to raise the muru'ah of scholars. First by maintaining personal integrity, second maintaining good morals, third education and development, fourth leadership training, fifth effective communication, and sixth becoming a mediator in conflict. 2) namely Hamka's interpretation in Tafsir al-Azhar about the verses of scholars, first in Q.S. al-Maidah verses 44 and 63 the word ahbar is a pious person or scholar from among the Bani Israil, second in Q.S. asy-Syu'ara' verse 197 also clearly states that the scholars referred to in this verse are scholars of the Bani Israil, thirdly Q.S. Fatir verse 28 scholars in this verse are scholars of Muslims who are said to be scholars are people who are knowledgeable with their knowledge, fear of Allah SWT arises. The results of this study can be used as initial data for subsequent researchers in studying this problem in different contexts and issues.

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INTRODUCTION

Ulama is one of the variants of the term used by society for people who have knowledge, this title is often given to people who have Islamic religious knowledge only. Meanwhile, the term for people -who have knowledge other than Islamic religious knowledge is usually used other terms such as scientists, lecturers, teachers. Ulama is a form of the word alim which means a person who is an expert in Islamic religious knowledge. The word alim is a noun from the verb alima which means "to understand or know" (Mahmud Yunus, 2010).

Ulama in the context of Islam, refers to scholars or religious experts who have in-depth knowledge of the Qur'an, hadith, and other Islamic sciences. They function as teachers, advisors, and spiritual leaders in society. In Islamic tradition, ulama are considered the heirs of the Prophets, playing an important role in educating the people and maintaining Islamic teachings so that they remain pure and relevant to the development of the times (Muhtarom, 2005). The significance of the role of ulama in the lives and loyalty of the people towards them makes the influence of ulama such that it maintains cooperation both among rulers and businessmen. In the socio-cultural configuration, ulama are also considered cultural brokers, ulama are the ones who are able to provide socio-cultural filtration (Ade Wahidin, 2014).

However, the influence and charisma of building loyalty slowly faded and even disappeared, especially in Indonesia. This condition is caused by at least three things, first the development of information technology, second the lack of exemplary behavior and partisanship of scholars for the people, third the loss of the ulama's muru'ah. Therefore, serious efforts are needed to restore the ulama's muru'ah through strict moral education (Asmullah, 2017).

The urgency of this research is to find out how the concept of the integrity of scholars in Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar and to raise the muru'ah (marwah) of scholars and how Hamka interprets the verses of scholars. The results of this research are expected to benefit various parties. For the author, it is to increase insight into anything related to scholars.

METHODS

This research method uses a qualitative research type. Therefore, this research is called library research, so the data collection technique in this study is the documentation technique, namely the technique of recording, collecting and recording all data findings in books or other literature (Neong Muhadjir, 2000). After that, it is selected and then displayed in descriptive form, so all data related to the discussion of scholars taken from primary and secondary sources are initially recorded and collected in a structured and systematic document folder. Then selected according to the portion of needs and feasibility in the argumentation quotation. Until the next process is presented in a descriptive statement through the conclusion of the analysis and findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first theme is to increase the dignity of scholars

Muruah, in the context of Islam, refers to the honor and self-esteem that must be maintained by every individual, including scholars. Increasing the muruah of scholars is very important, both to maintain their integrity as spiritual leaders and to strengthen their position in society (al-Mahamid, 1996). Here are some ways or steps that scholars can take to raise and increase the muruah of scholars:

1. Maintain Personal Integrity

Ulama must demonstrate harmony between the knowledge they possess and their daily actions. This includes applying Islamic teachings in real life, so that they can be good examples for society (Nurul Zuriah, 2008). Several propositions in al-Qur'ân and hadith also emphasize the importance of maintaining personal integrity, including:

Q.S. al-Baqarah verse 42

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Meaning: And do not mix the truth with the false and do not hide the truth while you know.

Q.S. al-An'am verse 152

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ لَا تُكْلِفُوا نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۚ وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ۚ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَىٰكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Meaning: Do not approach (use) the wealth of an orphan, except in a more beneficial way, until he reaches (the age of) adulthood. Perfect the measurements and scales fairly. We do not burden a person according to his ability. When you speak, do it fairly even if it is your relative. Also fulfill the promises of Allah SWT. Thus He commanded you so that you take heed.

Q.S. al-Maidah verse 8

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَتَاؤُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۚ اعْدِلُوا ۚ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: O you who believe, be you upholders (of the truth) for Allah SWT (and) witnesses (who act) fairly. Don't let your hatred of a people encourage you to act unfairly. Be fair because (fair) is closer to piety. Have faith in Allah SWT. Indeed, Allah SWT is very careful about what you do.

2. Maintaining Good Morals

Ulama need to prioritize commendable morals, such as patience, honesty, and fairness. This will create a positive image in the eyes of the community (Musthofa Zahir Arizqi Ihsan Pratama, 2019).

3. Education and Guidance

Education based on morals integrates moral education into the Islamic education curriculum. This will help the younger generation understand the importance of muru'ah and how to apply it in everyday life (Imam al-Ghazali, 2005).

4. Leadership Training

Ulama need to take training to improve their leadership skills, so that they can lead well and be role models for society (Rivaldi, 2024).

5. Effective Communication

Transparency and openness of the ulama must communicate openly about Islamic teachings and contemporary issues. This will help build trust among the people (Kurniawan Muhammad Agus, n.d.).

6. Becoming a Mediator in Conflict

Ulama can act as a mediator in social or inter-group conflicts, thus demonstrating a just and wise attitude (C. Asror, 2017)

The second theme is Hamka's interpretation in al-Azhar's interpretation of the verses of the scholars.

1. Q.S. al-Maidah verse 44

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبِّيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاحْشَوْا اللَّهَ ۚ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِإِلَهِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Meaning: *Indeed, We have sent down the Torah. In it there is guidance and light. With it the prophets, who submitted themselves (to Allah SWT), gave judgment on the case of the Jews. Likewise, the rabbis and their scholars (also gave decisions) because they were ordered (by Allah SWT to) guard the book of Allah SWT and they were witnesses to it. Therefore, do not fear people, (but) fear Me. Do not exchange My verses for a cheap price. Whoever does not decide (a matter) according to the provisions revealed by Allah SWT, then they are the disbelievers*

Interpretation of the Verse:

In Tafsir al-Azhar Hamka explains that the word "ahbar" means a pious person or scholar from the Bani Israel. This verse criticizes the Jewish scholars and priests who did not prevent their people from committing sins and consuming illicit wealth. They should have acted as guardians of the moral and spiritual of society, but instead allowed evil to occur (Hamka, 2003)

2. Q.S. al-Maidah verse 63

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّخْتَ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

Meaning: *Why don't the scholars and priests forbid them from speaking false words and eating haram (food)? Really, that's the worst thing they always do*

Interpretation of the Verse:

The interpretation of the verse above is that the word "ahbar" means a pious person or ulama but in this verse the ulama referred to comes from the Bani Israel, in this verse the pious person or ulama is very responsible for his people. Ibn Abbas said that this verse is a harsh rebuke to the ulama, if they have neglected to provide guidance and direction, and no longer carry out Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Mungkar (Hamka, 2003).

3. Q.S. asy-Syu'ara' verse 197

أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ

Meaning: *Is it not (sufficient) proof for them that it (the Qur'an) was known to the scholars of the Children of Israel?*

Interpretation of the Verse:

Before the Prophet SAW was sent as a Prophet, many of the people of Mecca who were still polytheists had also received news from the Bani Israel scholars, either those who met them in Mecca, because many Jews lived there, or from Jews who met on their business trips to the land of Syria, that another Prophet would be born, whose characteristics had been mentioned in the previous books. Only later, after the Prophet came, desire arose in their souls, then they denied it, or they transferred it to another Prophet who would come, so they said that the Prophet they were waiting for was not this Prophet (Muhammad SAW). The conclusion from the verse above is proof of the truth of al-Qur'an (Hamka, 2003)

4. Q.S. Fatir ayat 28

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ

Meaning: *Likewise, among humans, living moving creatures, and livestock there are various colors (and types). Among the servants of Allah SWT who fear Him, only the ulama. Indeed, Allah SWT is all-powerful, all-forgiving.*

Interpretation of the Verse:

In this verse it is explained that people who can feel fear of Allah SWT are people with knowledge. At the base of this word God uses the word "innamaaa" which means "other than just". Experts in Nahwu science say that the letter "innamaaa" is a hashr, which means "a tool for limiting". Therefore, the correct and precise meaning is: "It is not only people who have knowledge who will feel afraid of Allah SWT." If knowledge did not exist, no one would be afraid of Allah SWT. Because knowledge arises after being investigated. So it is clear at the end of the verse that Allah SWT has said: "Don't you see!"

So if you don't look, you won't know. If you have seen and known it, you will naturally understand the greatness of Allah SWT, His strength and His majesty. Feeling small before that Great Power; then fear arises. If fear has arisen, then submission will arise, then all orders are carried out and all prohibitions are stopped. In this verse, we find the phrase Ulama, which means people who are knowledgeable. And it is also clear that knowledge is very broad (Hamka, 2003).

CONCLUSION

This study has succeeded in revealing several points about the muru'ah of scholars as stated above that muru'ah is a very important thing, both to maintain their integrity as spiritual leaders and to strengthen their position in society. As well as Hamka's interpretation in the Tafsir al-Azhar about the verses of scholars, the intention of the scholars in this verse in the Tafsir al-Azhar is a pious person/a knowledgeable person with his knowledge, a sense of fear arises in him towards Allah SWT.

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