

THE CONCEPT OF TOLERANCE FOR TRADITIONAL CUSTOMS IN ISLAM IN NORTH SUMATRA BUYA HAMKA'S PERSPECTIVE IN THE BOOK OF TAFSIR AL AZHAR

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Article Info

Article history:

Received :
 Revised :
 Accepted :
 Available online
<http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/analytica>

E-ISSN: 2541-5263

P-ISSN: 1411-4380



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ABSTRACT

This study examines how the concept of tolerance of customs in North Sumatra in the perspective of Buya Hamka in Tafsir Al Azhar. This research is a qualitative research with a literature study approach (library research) and thematic interpretation (maudhu'i). Data were collected using documentation techniques, namely through reading, recording, and reviewing texts from primary and secondary sources relevant to the focus of the research. The results of this study indicate that Tolerance is the ability to respect the basic nature, beliefs, and behavior of others because Islamic teachings do not prohibit its followers from creating and implementing a custom in dealing with something that happens to them as long as the implementation does not conflict with Islamic teachings therefore Buya Hamka emphasized that customs are part of people's lives, but must be filtered with Islamic values. In the area of North Sumatra, especially in the Javanese tribe, many of the population still follow the putih fast. Putih fasting is not part of Islamic teachings that are sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Buya Hamka's View on the "putihan" Label: Rejected as a tool to divide Muslims; Fasting in traditional rituals (such as putih) is not in accordance with the Sunnah and is considered bid'ah. General Principle: All religious practices must return to the foundations of the Quran and Sunnah, without any unsubstantiated religious innovations.

Keywords: Tolerance, Customs in North Sumatra, Buya Hamka's Perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the concept of tolerance in the customary practices of Muslim communities in North Sumatra through the perspective of Buya Hamka in Tafsir Al-Azhar. This study is important to demonstrate how open and contextual Islamic thought can support social harmony amidst the diversity of local cultures and traditions.

Tolerance comes from the English word "tolerance" or "tolerantia" in Latin. In Arabic, this term refers to the words "tasamuh" or "tasahul." Meanwhile, "harmony" in the KBBI (Indonesian Dictionary) is defined as living together in society through unity of heart and agreement to avoid disputes and quarrels. ³ The Random House College Dictionary, by Diane Tillman, states that tolerance is defined as a fair and objective attitude toward people whose opinions, behaviors, ethnicities, religions, nationalities, and so on differ from our own. freedom from prejudice Tolerance is generally defined as an attitude of being willing to tolerate (respect, allow, permit) the stances (opinions, views, beliefs, habits, behavior, etc.) of other parties that are different or contradict one's own stance. (Saptono, 2011) In the context of Islam, the values of tolerance are not foreign. Islam, as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for the universe), emphasizes the importance of peaceful coexistence, respect for differences, and upholding the values of social justice. However, the practice of tolerance in a society that upholds customs often creates dynamics where customs are perceived as contradictory to religious principles. Therefore, a hermeneutic approach is necessary to understand how the values of tolerance can be harmoniously applied in traditional and religious life.

Buya Hamka, a prominent Indonesian cleric, scholar, and cultural figure, made a significant contribution in bridging Islamic values with local wisdom. In his monumental work, Tafsir Al-Azhar, Buya Hamka not only presents interpretations of Quranic verses but also incorporates contextual perspectives relevant to Nusantara culture, including the traditional values of Sumatra. His moderate and inclusive views serve as an important reference in understanding how Islam can coexist harmoniously with customs.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative research with a library research approach and thematic interpretation (maudhu'i). This study examines Buya Hamka's thoughts as stated in the Tafsir Al-Azhar related to the concept of tolerance, customs, and the relationship between religion and local culture, as well as its relevance to the people of North Sumatra. Data were collected using documentation techniques, namely through reading, recording, and reviewing texts from primary and secondary sources relevant to the research focus. Primary data sources were taken from the book Tafsir Al-Azhar Buya Hamka and other relevant writings of Buya Hamka and secondary data sources in the form of books, journals, articles, and documents discussing this research.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The Concept of Tolerance in Islam

Tolerance comes from the English word "tolerance" or "tolerantia" in Latin. In Arabic, this term refers to the words "tasamuh" or "tasahul." Meanwhile, "harmony" in the KBBI (Indonesian Dictionary of the Indonesian Language) is defined as living together in society through unity of heart and agreement to avoid disputes and quarrels. ³ The Random House College Dictionary, by Diane Tillman, defines tolerance as a fair and objective attitude toward people whose opinions, behaviors, ethnicities, religions, nationalities, and so on differ from our own; freedom from prejudice. Tolerance is generally defined as an attitude of being willing to tolerate (respect, tolerate, or permit) the positions (opinions, views, beliefs, customs, behavior, and so on) of others that differ from or contradict one's own. (Saptono, 2011)

Tolerance is the ability to respect the fundamental nature, beliefs, and behavior of others. In Islamic literature, tolerance is referred to as "tasamuh," which is understood as the quality or attitude of respecting, allowing, or permitting the positions (views) of others that conflict with one's own. Tolerance is defined as the quality of allowing the opinions, beliefs, customs, and behaviors of others to differ from one's own. Tolerance also means respect for the multiculturalism that exists in society. These views on tolerance lead to the statement that what is meant by tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for differences that exist in society (Hutchison, 2012). The Character Aspects of Tolerance are divided into three aspects, namely: First, Peace consisting of Caring, Fearlessness, Love. Second, Respect for Differences and Individuals, namely Mutual respect for each other, Respect for the differences of others, Respect for oneself. Third, Awareness, namely Respect for the goodness of others, Openness, Receptivity, Comfort in life, Comfort with others (Supriyanto, 2017). Islam has very firm principles regarding this tolerance issue, including the Word of Allah SWT contained in Q.S Al Hujurat verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Meaning: "O people, indeed We created you from a man and a woman and made you into nations and tribes so that you might know each other. Indeed, the noblest person among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is the most pious among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing." (Al-Quran and its translation.)

Customary tolerance in Buya Hamka's view is an important theme that touches on the relationship between customs (traditions) and religion, especially Islam, in people's lives. Buya Hamka, as a great Indonesian scholar, writer and thinker, really emphasizes the importance of maintaining customs that do not conflict with Islamic law, while still upholding tolerance in social life.

Buya Hamka emphasized that:

- a) Tolerance towards customs must be exercised as long as the customs do not conflict with Islamic beliefs and sharia.
- b) Customs that contain elements of polytheism, superstition or immorality must be abandoned.
- c) However, he also rejected rigid and radical attitudes that sought to eradicate customs entirely without considering their social and humanitarian values.

Buya Hamka demonstrated customary tolerance with the following principles:

- a) Forgiving differences in social interactions, not in beliefs.
- b) Prioritizing preaching with wisdom, not violence.
- c) Respecting local wisdom, as long as it does not violate Islamic principles.

Islamic Views on Customs

The teachings of the Islamic religion do not prohibit its adherents from creating and carrying out traditional ceremonies in the face of something that happens to them as long as the implementation does not conflict with Islamic teachings. In fact, everyone who adheres to the Islamic religion is given the freedom to create and implement the provisions contained therein if they are appropriate or can be justified according to Islamic teachings. Every individual or tribe who adheres to Islam must follow and practice the teachings of their religion in all their actions in life. If in the implementation of a custom there are no longer any things found that are contrary to Islamic teachings, then the position of such custom can be made into applicable law and must be obeyed by the community. (Ismail Nasution. 2013)

In this context, it needs to be emphasized that customs and religion do not always conflict or cancel each other out. As stated by Syahrin Harahap (1999) in his research on Batak customs, customs are the result of interactions between local cultural values and Islamic religious values brought by the spreaders of Islam in the region. In this way, customs and religion can go hand in hand and enrich each other, provided that there are efforts to adjust and filter out aspects that conflict with religious principles.

Buya Hamka's thoughts/perspectives and Tafsir Al Azhar

Buya Hamka emphasized that customs are part of people's lives, but must be filtered with Islamic values. He is very famous for his saying: "Adat is based on syarak, syarak is based on the Book of Allah." This means that customs can be carried out as long as they do not conflict with Islamic law. In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Buya Hamka often mentions Minangkabau culture, his place of origin, as an example. He praised local wisdom such as deliberation, consensus and mutual cooperation, but also rejected customs that brought shirk or injustice, such as:

- a. Customs that encourage excessive partying

- b) -Belief in sacred objects
- c) -Unfair inheritance according to sharia

Buya Hamka emphasized that customs are only tools to support life, not the goal of life itself. If customs help uphold Islamic values, then they are worth worship. However, if it is the opposite, then it must be abandoned. Buya Hamka explained that ethnic and traditional differences are natural, and must lead to brotherhood and cooperation, not to arrogance or fanaticism. Buya Hamka in Tafsir Al-Azhar shows a wise and in-depth approach to the relationship between customs and Islamic law. He did not reject the existence of customs absolutely, but straightened them out and filtered them with Islamic principles. This shows that Islam is not an anti-cultural religion, but regulates culture so that it does not deviate from monotheism and justice. In Minangkabau society, Buya Hamka is very familiar with the philosophy: "Adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah."

According to him, this expression is ideal if it is truly implemented, namely that custom stands on the Shari'a, and the Shari'a stands on the Al-Quran and Sunnah. However, in reality, not all customs are in accordance with Islamic teachings. He considers several forms of customs, such as shirk rituals, unfair matrilineal inheritance, or belief in sacred objects, to be contrary to Islam and must be abandoned.

Traditional Customs in North Sumatran Society

The customs of North Sumatra from an Islamic perspective are a fascinating topic because they demonstrate the relationship between local culture and religious teachings. North Sumatra is home to many ethnic groups, including the Toba Batak, Mandailing, Karo, Simalungun, Pakpak, and Malay, each with its own distinct customs. In predominantly Muslim communities, particularly the Mandailing and Malay Javanese, Islamic values are evidently integrated into traditional practices.

In North Sumatra, particularly among the Javanese, many residents still practice the "mutih" fast. "mutih" fast is not part of Islamic teachings derived from the Quran and Sunnah. It originates from the Javanese Kejawen tradition and is considered a form of asceticism or spiritual practice with rules such as: eating only white rice (without side dishes or spices), drinking only water (sometimes not drinking at all). It is usually performed for one, three, or seven days (depending on the intention). Its goals vary: drawing closer to God, calming the soul, seeking supernatural powers, or cleansing the soul's energy. Buya Hamka was very firm about adding to worship without any basis in evidence. If a practice is considered worship but does not originate from the Prophet, he called it bid'ah. "Islam is perfect. There is no need to add to it with practices that have no guidance." (Tafsir Al-Azhar, QS Al-Ma'idah: 3)

Buya Hamka did not explicitly discuss or support the practice of "white fasting" in his works, including Tafsir Al-Azhar, Modern Sufism, or his lectures. However, we can understand his views on practices like white fasting through his Islamic framework. White fasting is a practice of asceticism in the Kejawen (Javanese) tradition, in which the practitioner eats only white rice without side dishes and drinks water, with the aim of purifying the soul, drawing closer to supernatural powers, or as a personal spiritual practice. This practice is not included in Islamic law. Islam teaches fasting during Ramadan, the Sunnah of Mondays and Thursdays, the fast of David, and others. As taught by the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Buya Hamka's Viewpoint Aspects Buya Hamka's Viewpoint The "mutihan" label is rejected as a tool to divide the Muslim community. Traditional ritual fasting (such as mutih) is not in accordance with the Sunnah, and is categorized as bid'ah. General principles: All worship practices must return to the foundations of the Quran and Sunnah, without any religious innovations that lack evidence. If mutih fasting is performed with the belief that it brings special spiritual benefits without evidence from the Shari'a, then it is considered bid'ah or even superstition. The Prophet SAW said: "Whoever invents something in our affairs (religion) that is not part of it, it is rejected." (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). Islam forbids acts that endanger oneself. If mutih fasting causes excessive hunger or harms health, then it is considered makruh (rejected) and can even be forbidden because it falls under the prohibition of self-torture.

4. CONCLUSION

Tolerance is the ability to respect the fundamental nature, beliefs, and behavior of others. In Islamic literature, tolerance is referred to as tasamuh, understood as the quality or attitude of respecting, allowing, or permitting the opinions (views) of others that conflict with our own. Islamic teachings do not prohibit its adherents from creating and carrying out traditional ceremonies in response to events that occur to them, as long as the implementation does not conflict with Islamic teachings. In fact, every Muslim is given the freedom to create and implement the provisions contained therein if they are appropriate or can be justified according to Islamic teachings. Buya Hamka, in his Tafsir Al-Azhar, demonstrates a wise and profound approach to the relationship between custom and Islamic law. He does not reject the existence of custom outright, but rather clarifies and filters it with Islamic principles. Buya Hamka does not explicitly discuss or support the practice of "white fasting" in his works, including his Tafsir Al-Azhar, Modern Sufism, or his lectures.

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