

A REVIEW OF THE USE OF ANALOGY IN TAFSIR AL-AZHAR THROUGH SURAH AL-FATIHAH

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Abstract

Analogy is a vital tool in pedagogy and hermeneutics, enabling abstract concepts to be communicated through familiar images. In Qur'anic exegesis, HAMKA's *Tafsir al-Azhar* is distinctive for its consistent use of analogical reasoning, particularly in Surah al-Fatihah. The main problem this study addresses is how to bridge the gap between the Qur'an's profound theological teachings—such as divine mercy (*rahmah*), servitude (*'ubudiyah*), and divine displeasure (*ghadab*)—and the comprehension of a modern Malay-Nusantara audience. Using a qualitative, descriptive-analytical approach, the study identifies and interprets analogies in HAMKA's tafsir, following the *manhaj tahlili* (verse-by-verse method) and *al-adabi al-ijtima'i* (literary-social) style. Six analogies were highlighted: electricity and water, showing neglect of blessings until loss; a mother hen and her chicks, symbolizing sacrificial compassion; a pair of birds, representing shared responsibility; HAMKA's account of his father's affection for a cat, underscoring mercy in domestic life; misplaced gratitude in *Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'in*, warning against associating others with God; and the royal court suicide tale, dramatizing the severity of divine wrath. The findings show that HAMKA's analogies are deliberate hermeneutical and pedagogical devices, making scripture both accessible and relevant. His approach affirms fidelity to revelation while ensuring contextual resonance, situating him as both exegete and educator.

Keywords : Tafsir al-Azhar, HAMKA, Analogy, Surah al-Fatihah and Qur'anic Exegesis

Introduction

The Qur'an, as the foundational text of Islam, has been the subject of interpretation across centuries, with exegetes (*mufasssirin*) developing diverse methodologies to understand its meanings. Among these methodologies, analogy (*tamthīl*) and metaphor (*tashbīh*) play a significant role in bridging abstract theological concepts with human experience. Classical and modern exegetical traditions alike have employed analogies to make the Qur'an accessible to its audience, reflecting the pedagogical nature of revelation itself¹. This study situates itself within this hermeneutical trajectory by examining how HAMKA, a leading scholar of the Malay-Nusantara world, creatively employed analogies in his *Tafsir al-Azhar* to communicate the message of Surah al-Fatihah.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (1908–1981), known as Buya Hamka, occupies a unique position in Southeast Asian intellectual history. As both a religious scholar and a social reformer, HAMKA combined classical Islamic learning with a deep awareness of the cultural and social contexts of the Malay world². His *Tafsir al-Azhar*, composed during the politically turbulent mid-twentieth century, represents an effort to make the Qur'an intelligible and relevant to contemporary audiences. Written in an accessible style, it reflects not only scholarly rigor but also pastoral concern, shaped by his background as preacher, teacher, and community leader. This tafsir was distinctive in its attention to the realities of modernity, colonialism, and nation-building, which made HAMKA's work resonate strongly with his audience³. One of the central features of *Tafsir al-Azhar* is HAMKA's use of analogy to interpret the Qur'an. Unlike exegetes who relied heavily on philological or theological argumentation, HAMKA employed culturally familiar analogies that connected abstract concepts such as divine mercy (*rahmah*), servitude (*'ubūdiyyah*), and divine displeasure (*ghadab*) with everyday experiences of the Malay-Nusantara people. Analogies involving electric-ity, water supply, animals, and personal stories served as interpretive bridges, transforming distant theological abstractions into concrete realities.

1 Ibn Ashur, *At-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*, vol. 1 (Tunis: Dar al-Tunisiyyah li al-Nashr, 1984), pp. 45–46

2 A. Darmawan, *Buya Hamka: Pemikiran dan Perjuangan* (Jakarta: Republika, 2020), pp. 14–20.

3 Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), pp. 85–87.

This literary-social (*al-adabī al-ijtimā'ī*) style demonstrates HAMKA's methodological innovation and his commitment to rendering Qur'anic teachings pedagogically effective⁴.

Surah al-Fatihah, known as the "Opening" chapter of the Qur'an, occupies a central role in Islamic life and worship, being recited in every unit of daily prayer. Its themes—praise of God, recognition of His mercy, acknowledgment of servitude, and supplication for guidance—are foundational to Islamic theology and spirituality. Yet, these themes can appear abstract and remote without explanatory strategies that engage the believer's lived experience. HAMKA's analogical approach to Surah al-Fatihah demonstrates how exegesis can bridge this gap, making Qur'anic meanings accessible to ordinary believers without diminishing their theological depth⁵. By analyzing HAMKA's use of analogy in this surah, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of his exegetical method and, more broadly, to the role of analogy in modern Qur'anic pedagogy.

Hamka And Tafsir Al Azhar.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (1908–1981), better known as Buya Hamka, was one of the most influential Muslim intellectuals of the Malay-Nusantara region in the twentieth century. Born in Nagari Sungai Batang, West Sumatra, he was the son of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, a reformist ulama who played a central role in introducing modernist Islamic thought in Minangkabau⁶. The honorific *Buya*, derived from the Minangkabau word for "our father," reflects the reverence with which he was regarded by his community. Educated both formally and informally, HAMKA immersed himself in traditional Islamic learning, while also being exposed to modernist reform movements such as Muhammadiyah, which shaped his intellectual outlook⁷.

4 Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub, *Analisis Surah al-Fatihah dari Sudut Ilmu Bahasa* (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2022), pp. 102-105

5 HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, vol. 1, chap. "Surah al-Fatihah" (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1990), pp. 23–28.

6 A. Darmawan, *Buya Hamka: Pemikiran dan Perjuangan* (Jakarta: Republika, 2020), pp. 14–18

7 Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), pp. 85–87.

8 Audrey R. Kahin, *Islam, Nationalism and Democracy: A Political Biography of Mohammad Natsir* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), pp. 112–115.

HAMKA's intellectual journey was deeply intertwined with his social and political activism. He was not only a scholar but also a writer, journalist, and public intellectual who actively contributed to debates on nationalism, education, and religious reform in Indonesia. His works spanned a wide range of genres, including novels, essays, history, and theology. However, his prominence also made him a controversial figure: during the Sukarno era, HAMKA was accused of involvement in a plot to overthrow the president and was subsequently imprisoned from 1964 to 1968. Rather than silencing him, this period of incarceration became one of the most productive phases of his intellectual life, during which he completed and refined *Tafsir al-Azhar* and wrote *Antara Fakta dan Khayal Tuanku Rao*. The origins of *Tafsir al-Azhar* can be traced to HAMKA's early sermons delivered at the Great Mosque⁴ of al-Azhar in Jakarta beginning in 1959. These *kuliah subuh* (dawn lectures) formed the foundation of what would later become his magnum opus. He continued writing diligently, often in the early hours of the morning, shaping his reflections into a comprehensive tafsir⁹. The title itself was given in honor of Cairo's al-Azhar University, whose rector, Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut, had formally named the mosque where HAMKA preached. The tafsir reflects a blend of classical scholarship and contemporary concerns, making it distinct from other commentaries of the time.

Methodologically, *Tafsir al-Azhar* employs the *manhaj tahlili* (analytical method), interpreting the Qur'an verse by verse while drawing upon Hadith, the opinions of earlier exegetes, and HAMKA's own reflections. What distinguishes the work, however, is its *al-adabi al-ijtima'i* (literary-social) style. HAMKA consistently related Qur'anic teachings to the lived realities of the Malay-Nusantara audience, using analogies, metaphors, and everyday experiences to illuminate abstract concepts¹⁰. His refusal to engage in divisive sectarian debates, coupled with his emphasis on moral and social reform, made *Tafsir al-Azhar* accessible to a wide readership. Today, the work is recognized not only as an exegetical text but also as a cultural and intellectual bridge between classical Islamic thought and the modern Malay world.

The Concept of Analogy in Writing and Storytelling

Analogy (*tamthīl*) is a rhetorical and pedagogical device that has long been used in various traditions of knowledge to communicate complex or abstract ideas through more familiar and concrete images. In logic and philosophy, analogy serves as a form of reasoning that draws parallels between two entities on the basis of shared attributes or relations. Within literary and pedagogical contexts, analogy is particularly effective in simplifying abstract concepts, enabling audiences to comprehend meanings that might otherwise remain inaccessible. Modern educational theorists emphasize that analogies function by bridging the gap between the learner's prior knowledge and new information, making them indispensable in subjects such as science, philosophy, and theology¹¹.

In Islamic intellectual history, analogy holds a special place. The Qur'an itself employs numerous analogies and parables (*amthāl*) to illustrate moral, spiritual, and metaphysical truths. For example, the Qur'an compares the fleeting nature of worldly life to rain that brings forth vegetation, which eventually withers (Qur'an 57:20), or likens those who deny revelation to animals that hear sounds but do not comprehend meanings (Qur'an 2:171). These parables exemplify the Qur'an's divine pedagogy, whereby abstract truths are grounded in observable realities, making them comprehensible to all levels of society. Classical scholars such as al-Qurtubi highlighted the Qur'an's use of *amthāl* as a means of moral persuasion and spiritual reflection, noting that they embody both clarity (*bayān*) and wisdom (*ḥikmah*)¹².

Beyond scripture, Muslim scholars and preachers have historically used analogy as an interpretive and teaching tool. In the field of *usūl al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), for instance, the method of *qiyās*—legal analogy—became one of the four foundational sources of law, demonstrating the normative role of analogical reasoning in deriving rulings. Similarly, in tafsir, analogy has been used to illustrate divine attributes and eth-

9 HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, vol. 1, chap. "Surah al-Fatihah" (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1990), pp. 5–7.

10 Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub, *Analisis Surah al-Fatihah dari Sudut Ilmu Bahasa* (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2022), pp. 100–105.

11 F. A. Connolly, *A Rhetoric Case Book* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), pp. 112–114.

12 Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, chap. "Al-Amthāl" (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1964), pp. 48–52.

ical principles, often through references to everyday life and natural phenomena. Ibn Ashur, in *At-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*, stressed that analogy in the Qur'an not only clarifies meaning but also stirs the imagination and emotions of the reader, thereby deepening their engagement with the text¹³. This shows that analogy functions not only as an intellectual tool but also as a spiritual and affective medium.

Contemporary pedagogical studies further affirm the significance of analogy in education, emphasizing its role in active learning and critical thinking. Johansen (2002), for instance, defined analogy as the comparison of two situations or objects that share specific relational structures, thereby aiding comprehension by linking the unfamiliar with the familiar¹⁴. Within modern Muslim societies, this method remains essential for ensuring that Qur'anic teachings resonate with audiences navigating the challenges of modernity. By connecting divine truths to tangible human experiences—whether through natural imagery, social relationships, or everyday practices—analogy fosters deeper reflection and accessibility. In the case of HAMKA's *Tafsir al-Azhar*, the use of analogy reflects his commitment to this pedagogical principle, situating abstract Qur'anic concepts within the cultural and social world of the Malay-Nusantara community.

Introduction to Surah al-Fātiḥah

Surah al-Fātiḥah, literally “The Opening,” occupies a uniquely foundational place in the Qur'an and in Muslim religious life. As the first surah in the canonical order of the Qur'an, it serves as the gateway to the entire text and is recited in every unit of the Muslim daily prayer (*ṣalāh*), rendering it the most frequently repeated chapter in the life of a believer¹⁵. The surah is composed of seven short but profound verses, encapsulating central themes of divine praise, mercy, servitude, guidance, and accountability. Because of its theological depth and its ritual centrality, classical scholars regarded it as a summary of the Qur'an as a whole, earning it honorific titles such as *Umm al-Kitāb* (Mother of the Book) and *As-Sab'ul-Mathānī* (The Seven Oft-Repeated Verses)¹⁶.

From a linguistic perspective, the term *al-Fātiḥah* derives from the triliteral Arabic root *fataḥa* (ح ت ف), meaning “to open” or “to begin.”¹⁷ This etymological connection highlights the surah's role as both the opening of the Qur'an and the opening of a believer's dialogue with God in prayer. Classical lexicographers such as Ibn Manẓūr in *Lisān al-'Arab* emphasized that the derivative noun *miḥtāḥ* (key) denotes an instrument of opening, signifying that al-Fātiḥah functions as the “key” to the Qur'an¹⁸. Beyond linguistics, its titles—such as *al-Ḥamd* (The Praise), *Ash-Shifā'* (The Healing), *al-Kāfiyah* (The Sufficient), and *Asās al-Qur'an* (The Foundation of the Qur'an)—reflect the exegetical consensus that the surah encapsulates the Qur'an's spiritual and ethical core.

13 Ibn Ashur, *At-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*, vol. 1 (Tunis: Dar al-Tunisiyyah li al-Nashr, 1984), pp. 75–78.

14 Johansen, L. (2002). “Analogical Reasoning in Education: Bridging the Known and the Unknown,” *Journal of Pedagogical Studies*, 14(2), pp. 33–36.

15 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1981), pp. 115–117.

16 Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, chap. “Surat al-Fātiḥah” (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), pp. 116–118.

17 Almaany Dictionary, “ح ت ف,” accessed August 2, 2023, <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/ح ت ف/>

18 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar Ṣādir, 1993), pp. 320–321.

Exegetically, Surah al-Fātiḥah has been central to both classical and modern tafsir traditions. Al-Ṭabarī described it as a comprehensive summary of revelation, combining the affirmation of God's oneness, His attributes of mercy, and the human need for divine guidance¹⁹. Similarly, al-Qurṭubī highlighted its status as a nec-essary component of ritual prayer, noting that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is no prayer for the one who does not recite the Opening of the Book." (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh)²⁰. Modern commentators, including HAMKA in *Tafsir al-Azhar*, continue this tradition, but with an emphasis on contextual interpretation that makes its themes resonate with contemporary social realities. By presenting analogies and cultural references, HAMKA framed al-Fātiḥah as a surah that not only guides ritual devotion but also informs moral and social conduct.

al-Fātiḥah frames the relationship between God and humankind. The surah begins with praise of God as *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn* (Lord of the Worlds), highlighting His sovereignty, and continues with the attributes *al-Raḥmān* (The Most Merciful) and *al-Raḥīm* (The Most Compassionate), emphasizing His boundless mercy. The declaration *īyyāka na‘budu wa īyyāka nasta‘īn* (You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help) situates the believer in a position of servitude and dependence. The closing verses, supplicating for guidance upon the straight path while avoiding the path of divine wrath and misguidance, establish the moral orientation of the believer's journey. This combination of praise, servitude, and supplication underscores why al-Fātiḥah has been called the essence of the Qur'an.²¹ For HAMKA, these dimensions made al-Fātiḥah not only a theological summary but also a practical guide for living faith within the modern world.

The Use of Analogy in *Tafsir al-Azhar* through Surah al-Fātiḥah

HAMKA's *Tafsir al-Azhar* demonstrates a consistent use of analogy to illuminate the meanings of Surah al-Fātiḥah. His approach reflects both the *manhaj taḥlīlī* (analytical method) and the *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* (literary-social style), combining classical sources with reflections drawn from daily life. By employing culturally familiar analogies, HAMKA translated abstract concepts such as divine mercy, servitude, and divine wrath into forms that resonated with the Malay-Nusantara audience. The following examples highlight six analogies that illustrate his exegetical creativity.

Analogy of Electricity and Water (Verse 3)

In explaining *al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* ("The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate"), HAMKA likens divine mercy to electricity and water supply in a modern city. He notes that people often take for granted the convenience of light and running water, only realizing their importance when a power outage or a broken pipe occurs²². This analogy makes the abstract idea of divine mercy concrete: just as people forget the blessing of utilities until they are deprived, so too they often neglect God's mercy until calamity strikes. The choice of electricity and water reflects HAMKA's awareness of the modern urban experience of his readers, demonstrating how revelation speaks to contemporary life.

19 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān ‘an Ta’wīl Āy al-Qur’an*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘ārif, 1954), pp. 115–118.

20 Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, no. 394 (Beirut: Dar Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, n.d.), pp. 112–113.

21 HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, vol. 1, chap. "Surah al-Fātiḥah" (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1990), pp. 20–28.

22 HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, vol. 1, chap. "Surah al-Fātiḥah" (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1990), pp. 23–24.

Analogy of the Mother Hen and Her Chicks (Verse 3)

HAMKA further illustrates divine mercy through the natural imagery of a mother hen protecting her chicks. He describes the hen's willingness to sacrifice herself—breaking food into pieces for her young, shielding them from danger, and even confronting a larger animal such as an elephant to defend them²³. This vivid portrayal captures the instinctive selflessness instilled by God in His creatures, serving as a reflection of His greater mercy toward humanity. By drawing on a rural image familiar to Nusantara communities, HAMKA emphasizes that divine compassion permeates even the simplest aspects of nature.

Analogy of the Pair of Birds (Verse 3)

A similar analogy appears in HAMKA's commentary on the relationship between a pair of birds. He describes how the female bird incubates the eggs while the male tirelessly brings food, their harmonious cooperation manifesting mercy and love²⁴. This analogy reinforces the Qur'anic teaching that God's attributes are mirrored in creation, allowing believers to perceive divine qualities through observation of the natural world. For a society closely tied to agriculture and the environment, this imagery resonated deeply.

Analogy of HAMKA's Father and the Cat (Verse 3)

In a more personal vein, HAMKA recalls how his father, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, cared for a beloved cat. During his father's final illness, the cat remained near his bedside until, mysteriously, it disappeared and was later found dead in the well on the eve of his father's passing²⁵. HAMKA interprets this episode as an expression of affection between human and animal, itself a sign of God's mercy manifesting in creation. The anecdote provides a moving, intimate example of how divine compassion infuses everyday life, bridging the gap between theological abstraction and lived experience.

Analogy of Misplaced Gratitude (Verse 5)

In interpreting *iyyāka na 'budu wa iyyāka nasta 'īn* ("You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help"), HAMKA introduces the analogy of thanking the wrong person. If one receives help from Ahmad but thanks Hamid instead, the act becomes meaningless. Similarly, worshiping other beings while acknowledging God as the true sustainer constitutes *shirk* (idolatry)²⁶. This analogy makes the exclusivity of divine worship clear and practical, emphasizing that gratitude and servitude must be directed solely to God. HAMKA then distinguishes between *isti 'ānah* (seeking help from God) and *mu 'āwanah* (mutual assistance among humans), citing Qur'an 5:2 to stress the balance between divine reliance and social cooperation.

Analogy of the Nobleman's Suicide (Verse 7)

Finally, in his commentary on *ghayril-maghḍūbi 'alayhim wa laḍ-ḍāllīn* ("not of those who incur [Your] anger, nor of those who go astray"), HAMKA recalls a tale of a nobleman who, feeling overlooked by his king,

23 Ibid., pp. 24–25.

24 Ibid., pp. 25–26.

25 Ibid., pp. 26–27.

26 Ibid., pp. 40–41; see also Qur'an 5:2.

drank poison and died in despair²⁷. This analogy dramatizes the anguish of divine displeasure: just as human beings cannot endure the disfavor of an earthly ruler, how much more unbearable must be the wrath of the Lord of the Worlds. By invoking an emotional narrative, HAMKA impresses upon readers the urgency of seeking God's guidance and avoiding His anger.

Analysis of Analogies in Surah al-Fātiḥah

HAMKA's consistent use of analogy in his tafsir of Surah al-Fātiḥah illustrates his commitment to making the Qur'an accessible to the Malay-Nusantara audience. Unlike classical tafsir works that often emphasize philological precision or theological disputation, HAMKA integrates familiar cultural references, natural imagery, and personal anecdotes to connect abstract theological themes with everyday realities. This method demonstrates the literary-social (*al-adabī al-ijtimā'ī*) style of interpretation, which seeks not only to explain the Qur'anic text but also to address the spiritual and moral needs of a modern Muslim society²⁸. By situating divine mercy, servitude, and wrath within contexts such as electricity, motherhood, and personal relationships, HAMKA ensures that readers encounter the Qur'an as a living text rather than a distant scripture.

In contrast, classical exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 923 CE) employed a more traditional approach, relying heavily on chains of transmission (*isnād*), narrations from the Prophet's companions, and linguistic analysis. For example, in his interpretation of *iyḡāka na 'budu wa iyḡāka nasta 'īn*, al-Ṭabarī focused primarily on linguistic nuance and theological affirmation of tawḡīd, without resorting to analogies drawn from daily life²⁹. Similarly, Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373 CE) emphasized the intertextual relationship between verses and hadith, reinforcing doctrinal clarity, but rarely used analogical illustrations³⁰. While these methods preserved the scholarly rigor of tafsir, they were less accessible to lay audiences untrained in philology or hadith sciences. HAMKA's distinctive contribution lies in bridging this gap by employing analogy as a pedagogical tool, making Qur'anic truths relatable without compromising orthodoxy.

Al-Qurṭubī (d. 1273 CE), however, represents an exegete who occasionally employed analogies and parables in his commentary, though primarily in the context of legal and moral exhortation. For example, in his commentary on the parables of the Qur'an, al-Qurṭubī noted that God used analogies to guide both scholars and common people, since "hearts are more moved by parables than by direct statements."³¹ In this sense, HAMKA can be seen as revitalizing a Qur'anic method already recognized by earlier scholars but adapting it to the socio-cultural environment of the twentieth-century Malay world. His analogies involving electricity, urban life, and personal family experiences are particularly innovative, as they speak directly to the realities of his audience in a period of modernization and urbanization.

27 Ibid., pp. 55–56.

28 Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub, *Analisis Surah al-Fātiḥah dari Sudut Ilmu Bahasa* (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2022), pp. 110–113.

29 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'an*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'ārif, 1954), pp. 150–152.

30 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm*, vol. 1 (Riyadh: Dar al-Salam, 1998), pp. 98–100.

31 Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, chap. "Al-Amthāl" (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), pp. 55–56.

The analysis of HAMKA's analogies reveals three important dimensions. First, they serve a hermeneutical function: by drawing connections between divine attributes and human experience, they facilitate a deeper theological understanding. Second, they fulfill a pedagogical role: analogy makes Qur'anic teachings more comprehensible, particularly for audiences less familiar with abstract theological discourse. Third, they embody a cultural dimension: HAMKA's analogies reflect the lived experiences of the Malay-Nusantara world, thereby embedding the Qur'an within the socio-historical fabric of the community. In this way, HAMKA's tafsir demonstrates how the Qur'an can remain both universally relevant and locally grounded. His use of analogy thus represents an exegetical innovation that complements classical methodologies while addressing the specific needs of a modernizing Muslim society³².

Conclusion

The analysis of HAMKA's *Tafsir al-Azhar* demonstrates that the use of analogy is not a peripheral stylistic choice but a central hermeneutical strategy in his interpretation of Surah al-Fātiḥah. By employing analogies grounded in everyday experiences—such as electricity, water, animals, and family relationships—HAMKA sought to make the Qur'an intelligible to the Malay-Nusantara community in a period marked by modernization and social transformation. This approach reflects his commitment to a *manhaj tahlīlī* (analytical method) while enriching it with the *al-adabī al-ijtimā'ī* (literary-social style), positioning analogy as a bridge between abstract divine attributes and lived realities³³.

Theoretically, HAMKA's analogical method underscores the Qur'an's pedagogical nature, where revelation often speaks through parables (*amthāl*) and concrete illustrations. Classical exegetes such as al-Qurṭubī emphasized that parables move the heart more effectively than abstract reasoning, and HAMKA revitalized this principle by adapting it to the socio-cultural context of twentieth-century Southeast Asia³⁴. His work thus contributes to the broader field of Islamic hermeneutics by showing how exegetes can remain faithful to the Qur'an and Sunnah while responding to the intellectual and cultural needs of their time. This positions *Tafsir al-Azhar* as a continuation of the classical tradition and as a reformulation of it for modern contexts.

Methodologically, HAMKA's tafsir exemplifies how analogy can function as both a teaching strategy and a hermeneutical tool. The analogies in Surah al-Fātiḥah clarify theological concepts such as *rahmah* (divine mercy), *'ubūdiyyah* (servitude), and *ghadab* (divine wrath), making them accessible to lay audiences without diluting their depth. This dual role distinguishes HAMKA's approach from exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī or Ibn Kathīr, who prioritized philology and hadith transmission over analogy. By embedding Qur'anic interpretation within familiar cultural experiences, HAMKA not only educates but also empowers his readers to see divine truths reflected in their daily lives³⁵.

Practically, the findings of this study highlight the enduring relevance of analogy in Qur'anic pedagogy. In

32 HAMKA, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, vol. 1, chap. "Surah al-Fātiḥah" (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1990), pp. 20–56.

33 Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub, *Analisis Surah al-Fātiḥah dari Sudut Ilmu Bahasa* (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2022), pp. 115–118.

34 Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, chap. "Al-Amthāl" (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), pp. 55–56.

35 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'an*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'ārif, 1954), pp. 150–152; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azīm*, vol. 1 (Riyadh: Dar al-Salam, 1998), pp. 98–100.

contemporary Muslim societies where believers often face challenges of abstraction, secularization, and disconnection from scripture, analogical reasoning provides an accessible pathway for engagement. HAMKA's method demonstrates that Qur'anic exegesis can be both authentic and contextually resonant, serving the dual purpose of spiritual guidance and social reform. For the Malay-Nusantara community, this made *Tafsir al-Azhar* not only a work of scholarship but also a cultural resource that shaped religious consciousness.³⁶ Ultimately, HAMKA's use of analogy exemplifies a model of tafsīr that is faithful to tradition, sensitive to context, and pedagogically effective, offering valuable lessons for contemporary Qur'anic interpretation and Islamic education.

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