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Reading Al-Azhar's Interpretation of Al-Baqarah: 177 and 272 through a Marxist Hermeneutical Lens

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Abstract

In general, Karl Marx's discussion is framed in socio-political aspects. However, Buya Hamka chose Karl Marx as an influential figure in the modern century and mentioned him in the Al-Azhar interpretation. This article was written to analyze Karl Marx's position in Buya Hamka's Al-Azhar interpretation. This research is framed qualitatively with a descriptive-analytical approach to realize primary data and reveal Hamka's argumentative description related to Karl Marx. This research is based on two primary sources, the Al-Azhar interpretation and research relevant to the discussion. To reveal the representation of Karl Marx in Surah Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272, this study theoretically adopts Stuart Hall's theory of representation to comprehensively reveal the role and position of Karl Marx. Preliminary results show that at the reflective representation level, Marxism is often portrayed in mainstream media as a dangerous ideology. Also, at the intentional representation level, the political bias of the old order, which tended to be anti-communist, colored Hamka's interpretation and positioned Marx as its figurehead. And at the constructional representation level, Hamka compared Marxist teachings with the Islamic justice system. In this case, Hamka's interpretation shows the results of social and cultural construction in the anti-communist era. Ultimately, this study bridges the understanding of Karl Marx's socialism and Islamic social teachings with nuances of interpretation, as well as offering a critical study of non-Muslim figures who have made significant contributions to Islamic discourse.

Keywords: Interpretation; Representation; Al-Baqarah 2: 177 and 272; Al-Azhar Exegesis.

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Introduction

Discourse on Karl Marx's thinking has generally been limited to the realm of social science studies. Contrary to this general trend, Hamka took a more integrative approach by discussing Marx's ideology in the context of a constructive interpretation of the Quran. In Hamka's perspective, Karl Marx is seen as a figure who has contributed significantly to the struggle for Western-style humanist values. Meanwhile, according to Hamka, the concept of humanism in Islam is manifested in its most fundamental forms, such as almsgiving, zakat, and other practices related to the socio-humanistic dimension [1]. Parallel to this, Marx's perspective also shows concern for humanity through his defense of the proletariat oppressed by the bourgeoisie. As stated in Tafsir Al-Azhar, there are substantial similarities between Marx's concept of class struggle and the institution of zakat in Islam in terms of values and objectives to be achieved. However, the two concepts cannot be equated epistemologically given the fundamental differences in their underlying philosophical and methodological foundations [2]. Nevertheless, the Marxist and Islamic concepts in defending humanity cannot be compared and are not in total opposition. This is because Marx did not fully embrace religion and religious concepts.

Hamka, in Tafsir Al-Azhar, does not outright reject Marx's criticism of social inequality, but rather appreciates the spirit of humanism contained in Marx's struggle to defend the proletariat class [3]. However, Hamka still emphasizes that the philosophical and epistemological foundations of the two are fundamentally different. Marx is based on historical materialism and scientific atheism, which negates the transcendental role and divine values in the social structure [4]. Therefore, it is very important to place Karl Marx's discourse in interpretation and see his position from various aspects. Quantitatively, discussions of Karl Marx in authoritative interpretive works, both classical and contemporary, are minimal and do not receive significant attention. Even in the context of modern interpretations, references to Marx are generally superficial and not in-depth. This is understandable considering that Marx's ideas were born in the socio-historical context of Europe, which was marked by widespread oppression of the working class (proletariat) and the strengthening of the discourse of socialism, capitalism, and materialism as a response to social inequality resulting from the Industrial Revolution. Therefore, interpretations that mention Marx usually appear as a response to similar social dynamics, especially when issues of social justice become hot topics in the modern Islamic world [5]. Thus, it is very easy to predict Karl Marx's ideology in these interpretations.

As Basri and Muhammad said, he placed Karl Marx in Al-Azhar's interpretation as a propagator of Jewish ideology [6]. He assumes that Karl Marx, as a representative of Jewish ideology, easily entered Islamic thought, potentially weakening faith. Although seemingly contradictory, Elfi and Ghazali Siregar's views on Tan Malaka's thinking show the potential complementarity of Islam and Marxism in the struggle for social justice and equality, indicating a dynamic and contested relationship between the two ideologies [7]. Meanwhile, Roma Wijaya examines Hamka's criticism of communism based on his interpretation of verses from the Qur'an, which implicitly show a firm rejection [8]. On the other hand, Isfihani is more critical of Marx's concept of economic determinism, arguing that Islam rejects the reduction of society to economic factors alone, as Marx does, and juxtaposes it with Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiyyah* [9]. Meanwhile, Eko Bahtiyar's article entitled "Islamic Criticism of Marxism's Concept of Poverty Alleviation" analyzes the contradictions between Marxism and Islam. Bahtiyar asserts that Marx advocated the abolition of social classes and private property, and viewed religion as an oppressive institution. In contrast, Islam offers solutions to poverty through a work ethic for the poor and the obligation of *zakat* for the rich [10].

However, Ronald Adam's review of Hongzuan's work "Ummah Yet Proletariat" reveals a contrasting perspective: Islam and historical Marxism interact, compromise, and even form a unique synthesis due to their shared goals of opposing capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism [11]. In line with this, Elfi and Ghazali Siregar's research on Tan Malaka's thinking shows the potential complementarity of Islam-Marxism in the struggle for social justice and equality, indicating a dynamic and contested relationship between the two ideologies [12]. Although various studies have explored the relationship between Islam and Marxism from ideological and historical perspectives, no research has specifically analyzed the hermeneutic response of an exegete to Karl Marx's thoughts in his exegesis, as Hamka did in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. Therefore, such a study requires in-depth exploration.

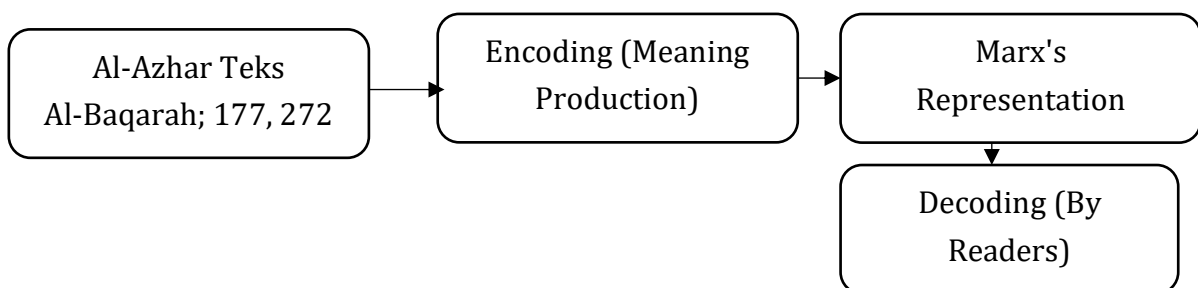
Meanwhile, this study aims to fill the gap in research that has not been revealed in the literature discussing Karl Marx in Al-Azhar's interpretation. This study will also examine Karl Marx's position and influence in the construction of Al-Azhar's interpretation. Specifically, this study will answer several questions. **First**, it will describe the biography and background of the writing of Al-Azhar's interpretation. **Second**, it will explain the *asbabun nuzul* of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272. **Third**, it will reveal the representation of Karl Marx in Al-Azhar's interpretation as a constructive synthesis in the form of justice, social solidarity, and humanism. More deeply, this study explains Karl Marx's ideology by considering several arguments constructed by Buya Hamka. This study

assumes that Hamka's tendency towards Karl Marx was a response to the social conditions at that time. Considering that this interpretation was written in a colonial context, the social construction forced Hamka to reflect his understanding through writing. This was because it was unlikely that expressing Karl Marx's position verbally would not potentially lead to controversy. Therefore, this study makes an important contribution to the study of the Qur'an and tafsir, especially the dimension of Nusantara tafsir in Indonesia. This study also has implications for the construction of the understanding of the living Qur'an during the colonial period, to the extent that Nusantara mufasssir positioned the Qur'an as a confirmation of faith during the chaotic conditions at that time.

Method

The main focus of this study is to trace the portrait of Karl Marx's ideology in Al-Azhar's interpretation, specifically in the letter Al-Baqarah. Hamka's assumptions about Karl Marx are crucial in understanding reality. Therefore, the study is systematically designed in a qualitative form to explore Hamka's arguments related to Karl Marx in Al-Azhar's interpretation. Meanwhile, the discussion is conducted descriptively and analytically to reveal the representation of Karl Marx's ideology. The interpretation of the text is presented with the results of the selection of interpretations of verses and Surah Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272 in Al-Azhar's interpretation which mentions Karl Marx as an influential figure. The text is then analyzed by referring to the keywords "Karl Marx, socialism, materialism, and Islam." Thus, these surahs and verses emerge. Therefore, theoretically, this study adopts the theory of representation proposed by Stuart Hall [13]. to reveal how Karl Marx is expressed, communicated, and understood in Al-Azhar's interpretation through certain symbols and signs. In general, this study has two sources: first, the Al-Azhar interpretation as the primary source, and second, research that is relevant to the topic of discussion.

Theoretical concept flowchart:



Result and Discussion

Karl Marx and Surah Al-Baqarah Verses 177 and 272 in Tafsir Al-Azhar

To clearly understand the meaning behind the verses of the Qur'an, exegetes do not merely interpret them literally. They analyze the reasons behind the revelation of the verses or examine their historical context, considering the interconnected meanings of the verses, the hadith, and the opinions of scholars with expertise in the field. In this case, the asbabun nuzul or reasons for the revelation of Surah Al-Baqarah Verses 177 and 272 will be reviewed from several relevant interpretations, primarily those referenced by Buya Hamka.

1. Al-Baqarah Verse 177

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَأَبْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

177. *Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.*

This verse explains the praiseworthy morals taught by Islam to its followers in a dogmatic-applicative manner. In the Al-Munir interpretation, Wahbah Zuhaili explains the asbabun nuzul (reasons for revelation) of this verse. Namely, Abdurrazzaq narrated from Qatadah, who said: The Jews used to pray facing west, while the Christians faced east. Then this verse was revealed: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces toward the east and the west." Ath-Thabari and Ibnul Mundzir narrated from Qatadah, who said: It was narrated to us that a man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about virtue, so Allah revealed this verse: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces toward the east or the west." Then he called the man and recited it to him. And in the past, before the establishment of obligatory acts of worship, if someone testified that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, then died in that state, there was hope that in the hereafter he would receive goodness. Then Allah revealed the verse: "It is not righteousness that you turn

your faces toward the east and the west." The Jews used to face west and the Christians east [25].

When viewed critically, the Asbabun Nuzul emphasizes that true virtue does not lie in the direction of the qibla or outward rituals alone, but in the substance of faith and righteous deeds. Furthermore, the author assumes that this verse was revealed to show the glorification of Islam as a comprehensive teaching. This is because Islam does not only exemplify symbolism, but also the substance of religion. However, Quraish Shihab is more moderate in saying that this verse does not favor one religion alone, but all religions [26]. Then, the essence of religion is actually in the heart in the form of faith. So, the verse above also touches on social aspects as examples of faith, namely righteous deeds that educate the soul, correct social relationships, and become the foundation of love, friendship, unity, and mutual assistance or solidarity sosial. The verse clearly states "*giving away beloved wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, travelers, beggars, and (freeing) slaves*" [27].

Meanwhile, Imam Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Shawi assumes that there are two views regarding the asbabun nuzul of this verse. First, he says that this verse was revealed to refute the assumptions of the Christians who believed that virtue was to face the direction of the rising sun, and the Jews who believed that virtue was to face Bait al-Maqdis. Second, it states that the verse was revealed to refute the notion that in the middle of Islam, they were only commanded to believe and pray [28]. Buya Hamka also commented on this verse as the embodiment of faith as a process of submission to Allah SWT. Hamka elaborated further on "social faith," which refers to the meaning of giving wealth to the poor and so on. He analogizes the Asbabun nuzul with contemporary humanitarian issues, such as in Sudan, where even though many people live in poverty, they still maintain their dignity because of their strong faith. In contrast to modern times, Hamka says that faith is being compromised by materialism, so that the poor become unbelievers. Women become prostitutes and men live as bridge dwellers who are negligent of the teachings of Islam [29].

For Hamka, this is a form of faith that is implemented through social relations. In line with Aristotle's term *zoon politicon*, which explains that humans cannot live in isolation and have the need and instinct to live together in a society [30]. However, this social form cannot be separated from culture. If culture continues to evolve and become more modern, then the social aspect will also do the same. Therefore, Hamka compares the teachings of Islamic socialism with the concept of modern socialism theory initiated by Karl Marx [31]. For Islam, before creating a just society and individuals, it is necessary to instill social awareness through faith in Allah and His creation. This means that Hamka prioritizes the spiritual aspect [3]. This spiritual dimension serves as a catalyst that produces

behavioral manifestations in the form of altruism and philanthropy. Thus, faith is not only understood as an abstract theological construct, but as a foundation that produces practical implications in social interactions. Meanwhile, zakat, alms, infaq, and other humanitarian distributions, or what is known as Islamic philanthropy, have their own comprehensive concepts based on spiritualism [32].

Meanwhile, Hamka's concept of Karl Marx's socialism is as follows: *Socialism does not recognize the existence of God. Therefore, it also does not recognize the existence of the human soul or spirit. For them, the individual or the private person does not exist. What exists is society, the social. High or low morals are not the issue; the issue is that all the needs of every person should be regulated by society. Society is the holder of power, or the government of the state. Individuals will be happy in their lives if the important means of production are controlled by the state* [29].

It can be said that the role of the state is quite central to creating Marxist-style socialism. The operationalization of the Marxist socialist system centers on the principle of collective determinism, in which all individual needs and aspirations are subordinated to the authority of society as manifested in state institutions [33]. The state, in its capacity as a collective representation, monopolizes distributive and regulatory functions over all aspects of citizens' lives [34]. The theory of welfare in this paradigm is based on the assumption that the optimization of individuals' existential conditions can be achieved through the nationalization of strategic means of production. Thus, state control over the production sector is seen as a fundamental mechanism for realizing collective welfare, which will automatically result in individual satisfaction as a derivative of social satisfaction [35].

2. Al-Baqarah Verse 272

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا
أَنْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

272. *Not upon you, [O Muhammad], is [responsibility for] their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever good you [believers] spend is for yourselves, and you do not spend except seeking the countenance of Allah. And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.*

In this verse, the majority of exegetes provide consistent explanations regarding its cause of revelation. Nasa'i, al-Hakim, al-Bazzar, ath-Thabrani, and others from Ibn Abbas r.a., said, "Muslims did not want to give alms to their

polytheistic relatives (then their polytheistic relatives asked them for alms, so they were given permission to give alms to their relatives)," and this verse was revealed. Various exegetes understand this verse as one of the concepts of infaq in Islam. According to Al-Maraghi, the essence of giving infaq is not to obtain social status or recognition from the beneficiaries, but solely to attain the pleasure of Allah SWT [36]. In this context, there is no differentiation between one poor individual and another, as long as they meet the criteria as legitimate mustahik. The orientation of giving alms should be directed at efforts to get closer to Allah through the elimination of the basic needs of the beneficiaries. Therefore, a person's religious beliefs or affiliations should not be a determining factor that hinders their access to social assistance. This concept emphasizes the universality of humanitarian principles in Islamic philanthropy, where economic needs are the main parameter in the distribution of infaq, not the religious identity of the recipients [37].

Meanwhile, Buya Hamka revealed that based on accounts quoted from Ibn Abi Hatim and other narrators through Ibn Abbas, there were indications that initially there was a restrictive understanding in the practice of giving alms, which limited the beneficiaries to fellow Muslims only. However, the revelation of this verse served as a correction to that understanding. Another account from Ibn Jarir through Ibn Abbas also reveals the social dilemma faced by the Ansar, who had non-Muslim relatives and family members but were hesitant to provide assistance due to religious differences, even though these relatives showed potential to convert to Islam. In addition, it can be said that the distribution of zakat, alms, and zakat al-fitr is not exclusively limited to the Muslim community. The scope of recipients includes non-Muslim individuals who show a tendency to embrace Islam, as well as Ahlul Kitab who are good neighbors but are in poor economic conditions. This principle reflects the universal essence of Islamic teachings that prioritize humanity in philanthropic practices [3].

Concern for others in terms of humanity does not take social classification into account. Hamka described the existence of socio-economic inequality in Indonesia, between the rich or bourgeoisie, who are capitalist in nature, and the lower classes or proletariat. He refers to Karl Marx as a catalyst for change, a thinker who identified and criticized the injustices of the early capitalist system, which ultimately drove the evolution of capitalism towards a more equitable form that took into account the welfare of workers. Although he does not explicitly praise Marx, Hamka acknowledges that his criticism and teachings have contributed to the improvement of socio-economic conditions in modern capitalist countries. Thus, indirectly, Hamka underlines the role of Karl Marx and his thinking as a form of criticism of the social classification system.

The Representation of Karl Marx in Al-Azhar's Interpretation

The study of the representation of an object in the linguistic paradigm has been carried out by Buya Hamka by describing Karl Marx as an influential figure. At least several points of Marx's representation can be observed in the interpretation of al-azhar. First, Hamka made the text of the Qur'an central to maintaining social balance at that time. For him, the Qur'an was the main solution in dealing with various issues. Not only that, Hamka also viewed reality as a text that must be juxtaposed with religious texts in a dialogical manner, so that the linguistic aspects in the text of the Qur'an provide constructive vibrancy. Second, Hamka paid attention to the universality of social and humanitarian issues with a broad understanding. He then integrated this into the verses of the Qur'an with a phenomenological perspective and chose meanings that did not reduce the meaning of the Qur'an. Thus, the social dynamics at that time had relevance to the rise of Karl Marx's socialist teachings. Third, Hamka saw Marxist philosophy not as something contrary to Islam, but as a way to perfect the understanding (interpretation) of Islamic teachings. Hamka's contribution, which brought a new perspective, can also be correlated with the attitude of Indonesian society, which lives in plurality and tends to be socialist. These three points explicitly reveal that Hamka's reading of Karl Marx's social and teachings at that time was massive. Therefore, Hamka often maintained his theological aspects with his understanding of the Qur'an.

The study of the representation of Karl Marx in Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar shows a complex interdisciplinary approach between Quranic interpretations, Islamic theology and modern social discourse. Hamka did not merely place the Qur'an as a normative source in facing the socio-political challenges of his time, but also made it a hermeneutic framework of [38] that was capable of dialoguing with radical thoughts such as Marxism. The representation of Karl Marx in this interpretation is not entirely antagonistic, but rather approached with epistemological caution, where social reality is read as a text that must be interpreted alongside religious texts. This shows that Hamka did not reject the idea of socialism outright, but rather placed it within the framework of Qur'anic values that were cultural and more transcendental in nature [39]. In the 1940s, many Muslim intellectuals were looking for ways to respond to modernity and new ideologies. Hamka seemed to take a synthetic approach, in which he tried to integrate progressive elements of Marxism (especially related to social justice and liberation) with Islamic values [40]. This step not only reflects Hamka's methodological sophistication in reading the context, but also makes an important contribution to the development of inclusive and progressive scriptural studies [41]. In the context of Indonesia's pluralistic society with socialist tendencies, Hamka's approach is relevant as an interpretive model that

avoids ideological dichotomies, instead prioritizing the balanced integration of divine values and historical realities.

Then, the discourse surrounding representation theory will receive wider attention regardless of the object of research. Because representation always goes hand in hand with life, and for Hall, representation will always be attached to language and culture [42]. Meanwhile, when applied to the interpretation of Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272 in the Al-Azhar interpretation, Karl Marx has several representations based on Stuart Hall's theory of representation [43]. *First*, at the reflective representation level, Hall emphasizes the presence of new meanings to interpret existing objects. Marxism is often portrayed in mainstream media as a dangerous or utopian ideology, with negative associations with communism and totalitarianism. Meanwhile, Islamic economics is often represented as an exotic alternative or solution to the crisis, but often with the stereotype that Islam is anti-economic modernity. This representation reflects the ideological bias of the media, which is dominated by a liberal capitalist perspective. *Second*, at the level of intentional representation, the political bias of the old order, which tended to be anti-communist, influenced Hamka's interpretation and positioned Marx as its figurehead. Media controlled by big capital tends to construct Marxism as a threat to freedom and prosperity, while Islamic media constructs Islamic economics as the perfect solution to all economic problems. In other words, Hamka legitimizes Islamic teachings that have already regulated social justice holistically, rather than the teachings of Karl Marx. *Third*, at the level of constructionist representation, Hamka compares Marxist teachings with the Islamic justice system. In this case, Hamka's interpretation shows the results of social and cultural construction in the anti-communist era. Thus, he affirms justice according to Islam, which is representative in Indonesia.

In addition, Al-Baqarah 177 and 272 offer an economic vision that transcends the capitalism-socialism dichotomy by integrating spiritual, moral, and material dimensions into a holistic framework. Unlike Marx, who emphasized class struggle as the engine of transformation, Islam emphasizes individual moral transformation that impacts social transformation. Also different from capitalism, which prioritizes accumulation, Islam prioritizes spiritually-based redistribution with the motivation of seeking Allah's pleasure. Meanwhile, in the Indonesian context, the implementation of Islamic economic values still faces representational and structural challenges that require the deconstruction of dominant discourse and the development of constructive alternatives. Globally, the crisis of contemporary capitalism has opened up space for the exploration of more equitable and sustainable alternatives [44]. The challenge ahead is to transform normative ideals into real and effective economic practices in the face of global complexity, while maintaining the authenticity of

the spiritual values that are the transformative power of Islam. Meanwhile, social inequality in Indonesia, with a Gini ratio of 0.38 in 2023, shows that the issue of wealth distribution remains crucial [45]. From the perspective of Al-Baqarah 177 and 272, this inequality should be addressed through voluntary spiritual-based redistribution mechanisms such as zakat and infaq. It has been proven that zakat can support poverty and income gap data in Indonesia in 2007-2019 [46].

Furthermore, data on the development of the Islamic economy in Indonesia shows a positive trend, with Islamic banking growing at 15% per year and the development of sukuk (Islamic bonds) as a means of financing development. The potential of ZISWAF (Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, Wakaf), which reached IDR 23 trillion in 2023, shows the enormous potential for redistribution based on Islamic values of [47]. However, the implementation of Islamic economics still faces challenges because it is often trapped in institutional formalism without substantive value transformation. Criticism of the dominant representation in the Indonesian context points to the hegemony of capitalist discourse that prioritizes economic growth over equity. Consumerism is promoted as an indicator of progress [48], while value-based economic alternatives such as Islamic economics are often marginalized or reduced to merely the banking sector. Islamic social values such as ta'awun (mutual cooperation) and takaful (mutual responsibility) are under-explored as a basis for more fundamental economic transformation. Therefore, the concepts of socialism and Islamic economics framed within Islamic philanthropy have relevance in the context of poverty issues in Indonesia. This paradigm does not legitimize or glorify Islamic teachings as central to any matter, because in practice, social theories born from the thinking of Karl Marx are also often used as a methodological basis and are combined with each other.

Therefore, this study shows that interdisciplinary sciences can be collaborated to respond to the challenges of the times. For example, interpretations of the Qur'an, which have become the basis for understanding how to live life, can go hand in hand with other social theories in a harmonious combination. In addition, there are many other aspects that need to be explored by other researchers, such as methodology, hermeneutic reasoning, and Karl Marx's position, which has not yet appeared in modern interpretations. This is because an interpretation is born to respond to the social conditions of its respective era. This study can be said to be limited and micro, because it only revolves around one interpretation, namely the Al-Azhar Buya Hamka interpretation. This rationalization does not rule out the possibility that interpretations contemporary with the Al-Azhar interpretation will mention Marx as a different object, or a similar one, or even a more complex one. Although in other Islamic studies, the author assumes that Karl Marx's position will

continue to be relevant when examining aspects of humanity, poverty, society, and materialistic hegemony. The exploration of this study is very broad when viewed from various aspects. Therefore, the author's proposal is considered inspiring enough to continue a more comprehensive study.

Conclusion

Buya Hamka produced a work of interpretation that became a magnum opus in 19th century Indonesia, providing broad insights that remain relevant to this day. This interpretation is said to contain complex cultural, social, movement, and local aspects of the archipelago that do not reduce the meaning and message of the Qur'an in any way. His interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272 shows Hamka's understanding transcending the scientific horizon, making his explanations full of social enthusiasm and revolutionary spirit. He explained the *asbabun nuzul* (reasons for revelation) of the surah and verses without discrediting other authoritative interpretations that are often used as primary references. Thus, Hamka's interpretation is automatically wrapped in his understanding of the text, social conditions, and his own abilities. Revealed in his interpretation, Hamka involves contemporary issues broadly and fairly. He does not choose one case to describe the message of the Qur'an, but rather uses his social instincts more broadly in formulating an interpretation. Like Karl Marx, one example of a figure who holds many positions in Al-Azhar's interpretation. In Surah Al-Baqarah verses 177 and 272, based on Stuart Hall's theory of representation, Karl Marx has several representations, namely, at the reflective representation level, Marxism is often portrayed in the mainstream media as a dangerous ideology.

Also, at the level of intentional representation, the political bias of the old order, which tended to be anti-communist, colored Hamka's interpretation and positioned Marx as its figurehead. And at the level of constructional representation, Hamka compared Marxist teachings with the Islamic justice system. In this case, Hamka's interpretation shows the results of social and cultural construction in the anti-communist era. The selection of figures in contemporary modern interpretations rarely receives deeper attention, so this study offers a gap to fill that void. However, it cannot be denied that many aspects still require further study. Ultimately, the limitations of this study not only emphasize the importance of further exploration but also open up opportunities for a richer understanding. This study only analyzes two verses from Surah Al-Baqarah in the Al-Azhar interpretation. It is highly likely that there are other verses that discuss Karl Marx and the concept of Marxism more comprehensively. In addition, this study only adopts the theory of representation. Future researchers can explore it with other multidisciplinary

approaches. Ultimately, the limitations of this study not only emphasize the importance of further exploration, but also open up opportunities for a richer understanding.

Author Contributions

Achmad Sofiyul Mubarak: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision. **Natasya Alvira Damayanti:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing, and translation language. **Hasan Aly Murtadlo & Nourelhuda Elmanaya:** Conceptualization, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

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