

## MUSLIM SCHOLARS INTERPRETATION OF DISCOURSE RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE VERSES: The Cases of Quraish Shihab, Yusuf Qaradawi, and Khaled Abou el-Fadl in Qur'ān 60: 8-9

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### Abstract

*The discourse of religious tolerance is often overlooked by scholars rather than theoretical. Qur'ān 60: 8-9 is the attitude of the Qur'ān towards tolerance, which is being debated. The discussion revolves around interpreting the verse with its abrogated position (mansūkh), the history of the verses calling for jihād (war) against non-Muslims, and the modern context. The interpretations of these two verses were studied by three different Muslim scholars, from different countries, and with different scientific backgrounds, namely Quraish Shihab (Indonesia), Yusuf Qaradawi (Qatar), and Khaled Abou el-Fadl (United States). Some of the important points of their opinion on the verse are; First, Shihab interprets this verse as the basic principle of interfaith relations between Muslims and non-Muslims with God in human relations. Qaradawi places this verse as a manifestation of tolerance and wasaṭiyyah (moderate) attitude in Islamic law. Meanwhile, el-Fadl considers this verse to function as a counter to the verses of war (jihād) which have been misinterpreted by traditionalists in Islamic thought. Second, Qaradawi and el-Fadl reject the literal and ahistorical meaning of Qur'ān 60: 8-9 by people who, according to them, cannot see dynamic Islam with contemporary issues. Third, from the aspect of interfaith relations, Shihab and Qaradawi have the same voice in inter-religious relations.*

*Keywords: tolerance, interfaith, Quraish Shihab, Yusuf Qaradawi, Khaled Abou el-Fadl, exegesis.*

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## Introduction

Qur'ān 60: 8-9 is one verse of the Qur'ān about tolerance for other religions that are being debated. The discussion around interpreting the verse with Islamic law was debated by 'ulamā' from various disciplines and corrected in history. In contrast to the discourse on terrorism (Tibi, 2007), the debate about tolerance does not seem to have a common understanding among Muslim communities around the world. As Mun'im Sirry said, the debate revolves around the discourse of pluralism and the attitude of the Qur'ān towards other religions (Sirry, 2009). In the contemporary context, the attitude of the al-Qur'ān seems to have been ignored by Western scholars such as that stated by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad who focuses more on the sensationalism of extremist discourses rather than tolerance which is unattractive to Islamic scholars (Haddad, 1995). Göle even highlights that Islamic tolerance in social praxis in the contemporary era requires a reconciliation that connects Islam and modernity (Göle, 2003a).

In the past two decades, Muslims have been questioned for failing to promote a vision of religious tolerance with several terrorist bombings, such as the 2001 World Trade Centre tragedy in New York City, which killed about three thousand people. This was followed by the 2002 and 2005 Bali Bombings, where the victims were foreign nationals (WNA – Warga Negara Asing) in predominantly white countries such as the United States, Britain, and the continents of Europe and Australia. So that its manifestations lead to an increase in Islamophobia, which is supported by several parties in these countries (Poynting & Mason, 2006; Shukri, 2019). It is suspected that Islamic institutions are the trigger in the cadre and produce radical movements among youth (Afrianty, 2012).

A YouGov survey in 2015 revealed a growing hatred among Americans against Muslims. 55% of respondents, who are mostly 45 years or older white Republican voters, resent the growth of Muslims in the United States. The survey also shows that Islam and Muslims are considered the same entity by these respondents (Helbling & Traunmüller, 2020). In a webinar held by the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta, Islamophobia is indeed on the rise in Western society, especially among the elite in the executive and legislative branches where the Western mass media are highly biased (DNK TV UIN Jakarta, 2020). This survey is supported by a 2019 Washington DC Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU) poll, which reports that US citizens' hatred of Muslims continues to increase because of their political leanings (Alhawsali, 2019). For the first time, the report includes the Islamophobia Index, created by ISPU in collaboration with Georgetown's Bridge Initiative. According to the index, 61% reported having experienced religion-based discrimination more than once in the past year, compared to less than 30% of all other

religious groups and the public (Mogahed et al., 2018). In the Indonesian context, Islamophobia spreads through social media (such as Twitter) which finds that Muslim groups have become victims of stereotypes and online violence where Twitter has been used to campaign that hatred (Saputra & Putra, 2022).

This article discusses contemporary Muslim discourse on religious tolerance with particular reference to Qur'ān 60:8-9 by Muslim Scholars. How do contemporary Muslim scholars understand this verse and use it to support their idea that Islam advocates religious tolerance? Do they simply draw from traditional understandings, or do they contextualise these understandings with today's contemporary conditions? To what extent does Islam justify tolerance? This paper discusses two lines of investigation. First, examine the classical interpretation of Qur'ān 60: 8-9 to find the classical authority on tolerance. Second, analyse the verse from a contemporary point of view. The contemporary 'ulamā' examined came from two specific disciplines, namely exegesis (mufasssirin) and Islamic law (fuqaha). The three contemporary 'ulamā' are Quraish Shihab (Indonesia), Yusuf Qardlawi (Qatar), and Khalid Abou el-Fadhl (United States). This paper also describes how the three respond to religious tolerance and describe their different views.

### **Classical Exegeses from Qur'ān 60: 8-9**

The first question that intrigues the classical commentators is that "is the verse abolished (mansūkh) by other verses?" Classical commentators like Abū 'Ubaid say that all verses of the Qur'ān were revealed or addressed to Muhammad and his eternal followers, but they differ on whether they were abolished by others (Rippin, 1990). Al-Ṭabary (d.310/923) explains that this verse is related to two things. The first is narrated by Amir bin Abdullah bin Zubair, who said that Qutillah bin Abdul Uzza bin As'ad bin Malik bin Hasan (who was still a non-Muslim) met Asmā' binti Abī Bakr (given a gift). Both verses were revealed about the Meccan polytheists (non-Muslims) who did not fight against the Muslims or expel them from their lands. This verse has been abrogated after revealing the command to fight polytheists (non-Muslims) who fight against Muslims (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, p. 573). This second opinion is held by Ibn Zaid, who stated that the verse was abolished by a verse that ordered war. Also, Qatada claims it was abolished by the verse ordering war against polytheists.

Al-Ṭabarī emphasised that the correct opinion is the first, where God does not forbid every Muslim to do good and justice to those who do not fight against them regardless of their religion, ethnicity and group as the verse say: "lam yuqātilūkum fī al-Dīn wa lam yukhrijūkum min diyārikum" i.e. "those who did not oppose you and did not expel you

from your country". These reasons and meanings cannot be erased whether they are related. God only loves humans (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, p. 574). In line with other verses in the Qur'ān and the command of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, Muslims are commanded to do good to all people, both humans and animals. Therefore, when slaughtering animals, the Prophet ordered to sharpen the knives to avoid hurting them. Especially for humans who are considered nobler, God forbids killing, disturbing, hurting, making mistakes, being unfair or discriminating between feelings, ethnicity, religion and nation in the presence of justice and goodness (Dahlan-Taylor, 2016). This is because human nature is one and comes from the father and mother who were Adam and Eve. For example, in Qur'ān 49: 13, where Allah created all human beings, they know each other and command them to do good, be just and obey.

Zamakhshary (d. 538/1144) observes that this verse allows Muslims to do good to musyrik (non-Muslims). The prohibition lies solely in electing non-Muslims as leaders or making them close friends. This shows that in Islam, the teaching of compassion should be prioritised (highlighted) rather than being hostile to polytheists (non-Muslims). This is an easy way to forge good relations with friendly non-Muslims, not to be killed or blatantly expelled from their country. Mujahid stated that what is meant by this verse are people who believe in Mecca and have not emigrated. Some say that what is meant is women and their children who are not fighting the Muslims (Zamakhshary, 1998, p. 94).

In contrast to Fakhruddīn Al-Rāzi, this verse relates to non-Muslims who are bound by a peace treaty. They should not be fought, and the Prophet ordered Muslims to do good to them and keep their promises as emphasised by Ibn Abbas, al-Kalbi and Muqatil (d.157/767) (Al-Rāzi, 1981, pp. 304–305). Also, Imam al-Suyūṭī describes a similar story where Asmā' bint Ab Bakr is visited by Qutailah and allowed to do good and receive gifts. Mujahid emphasised that the prohibition of doing good was only for the Meccan polytheists who were fighting against the Muslims (al-Suyūṭī, 2003, pp. 412–413).

Qurṭūby (d. 671 H / emphasises that three things must be understood from this verse (Qur'ān 60. 8-9):

First, this verse makes it easy to have good relations with polytheists who do not oppose Muslims or kill them. Although some classical 'ulamā' disagree with this verse, where Ibn Zaid and Qatada say it is abolished by the verse ordering war (Qur'ān 9:5). Other 'ulamā' claim to have "good relations" reasons. When non-Muslims have good relations and are not fighting wars, they should not fight like after Faḥ Makkah (Opening of Makkah) where the Prophet and his Companions did not fight against the disbelievers even though they were in a strong

position. Therefore, the opinion that this verse was omitted (*mansūkh*) by others is unacceptable because *Asmā' bint Ab Bakr* was allowed by the prophet to do good for an unbelieving mother. The opinion that during the Mecca period, the Qur'ānic revelations were more tolerant of non-Muslims is acceptable. The order to fight the polytheists until they convert to Islam is also unacceptable (Hashmi, 2003, p. 81; Yusuf, 2012).

Second, the expression “*an tabarrūhum*” ((do good to them) God ordered Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the believers to do good and fulfil the promise not to fight them. They are also commanded to be fair, even to those who fight or not. Third, some scholars, such as Qadi Abu Bakar stated that this verse is the reason Muslim children must provide for their non-Muslim parents, although some say that it is permissibility, not an obligation. Meanwhile, Qadhi Ismail bin Ishaq respected non-Muslims who entered the room and other Muslims followed and therefore recited this verse as an excuse (Qurṭūby, 2006, pp. 408–409). Ibnu Kathīr asserts that Qur'ān 60: 8-9 is the basis for not forbidding Muslims to do good to non-Muslims who do not fight them. This tolerance was seen when Prophet Muhammad PBUH married Umm Habibah, whose father, Abu Sofyan, a non-Muslim leader (Pagan Meccan Leader) fought Muslims in 6 Hijriyah (Sodiq, 2010, p. 18).

Ibn Hazam stated that Prophet Muhammad PBUH married Umm Habibah before Faṭḥ Makkah in Habsah, while Abu Sofyan was still a non-Muslim. This generosity eventually made Abu Sofyan convert to Islam in 8 Hijriyah after Faṭḥ Makkah (Kathīr, 1999, p. 517). Here, the Prophet Muhammad exemplifies a very moderate practice, which shows how Islam teaches high tolerance. Based on the previous verse, Ibn Kathir also stated that Allah gave this verse to emphasise that *maḥabbah* (love) must replace anger and enmity. In addition, Allah commands Muslims to treat unbelievers fairly, and the Prophet said “just people will be on the pulpit at the right hand of Allah in the hereafter”.

#### Quraish Shihab and Qur'ān 60: 8-9

Quraish Shihab is one of the most moderate scholars of the Qur'ān in contemporary Indonesian Islam. He is a contemporary Indonesian Muslim scholar who takes religious tolerance seriously. In this sub-chapter, we describe Quraish Shihab from his educational background, political activities, work, and interpretation of Qur'ān 60: 8-9.

##### 1. Education

His full name is Muhammad Quraish Shihab, He was born on February 16, 1944 in Rapang, South Sulawesi. Shibab comes from a fanatical Quraish-Arabic family and is a descendant of Hadhrami or sayyid (Rijal,

2017, p. 12). Shihab also comes from Indonesian Bugis descent. He received his primary education in Ujung Pandang, and after that went to Malang to attend junior and senior high school at Pesantren of Darul-Hadith, where he studied many subjects in Islamic studies. Because in Malang he is known as a habib, so he completed his religious education in a pesantren which has many descendants from Bā'alawi (Alatas, 2011).

In 1958, he went to Cairo and enrolled as a student at the Azhar "preparatory school" (al-madrasah al-i'dadiya) (similar to junior high school in the Indonesian context). Then, in 1967, he graduated from the undergraduate program majoring in Tafsir Al-Qur'ān and Hadith, Faculty of Islamic Theology, Al-Azhar University. He then continued his studies at the same faculty and, in 1969, he completed his master's program in Qur'ānic studies. The title of his master thesis is *al-I'jāz al-tashrī'i lil-Qur'ānāl-karīm*. From 1980 to 1982, he pursued a doctoral program getting his degree in Tafsir Al-Qur'ān and Hadith from Al-Azhar University, Egypt. The title of his dissertation is *Naẓm al-Durar lil-Biqā'i, taḥqīq wa-dirāsa*". Shihab is the author of 15 volumes of Tafsir al-Miṣbah and served as rector of the Alauddin Ujung Pandang (now Makassar) State Islamic Institute (IAIN) between 1972 and 1977. This 'ulamā' was appointed Minister of Religion for approximately two months at the beginning of 1998, and subsequently became the Indonesian Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt and Djibouti.

## 2. Activities in Politics

As a leading Muslim scholar in Indonesia, Shihab is also known as an expert in academic politics and state politics. In academic politics, Shihab was appointed rector of the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta for two terms, namely 1992-1996 and 1997-1998. Previously, he had been a lecturer at the university since 1984. He also was active in a prestigious 'ulamā' institution in Indonesia, namely the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI - Majelis Ulama Indonesia). In early 1998, he was then sworn in as Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia for two months (14 March 1998 – 21 May 1998) during the Soeharto regime. He is also active in several organisations, including Lajnah Pentashih al-Qur'ān (Ministry of Correction for maṣaḥif Al-Qur'ān), Badan Pertimbangan Pendidikan Nasional (BPPN), and the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI - Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia). He was appointed ambassador to Egypt from 1999-to 2002, where he wrote a commentary on the Qur'ān called Tafsir al-Miṣbah.

## 3. Scholar Activities

In Indonesia, Shihab is known as a Muslim scholar in Qur'ānic interpretation. Apart from Tafsir al-Miṣbah 15 volumes, he has also

written dozens of books on various interpretations of the Qur'ān from various representations of contemporary life problems. Among them are *Ayat-ayat Fitnah* (2008), *al-Lubab: Makna Tujuan dan Pelajaran dari Surah-surah al-Qur'ān* (2008), *Fatwa-fatwa Seputar Tafsir al-Qur'ān* (1999), *Kaidah Tafsir* (2013), *Lentera al-Qur'ān* (2008), *MQS Menjawab 101 Soal Perempuan* (2010), *MQS Menjawab 101 Soal yang Patut Anda Ketahui* (2008), *Wasathiyyah* (2019), to the latest *Corona Ujian Tuhan* (2020).

In 2004, Shihab developed his expertise by promoting the “Embracing the Al-Qur'ān” movement through the institution he founded, namely the Centre for Al-Qur'ān Studies (PSQ – Pusat Studi Qur'ān) in South Jakarta. In particular, this institution extends Shihab's idea to promote a moderate and tolerant Islam. PSQ has a mission to “cadre Mufasssir” with several programs including the Post-Tahfidz Pesantren (Bayt al-Qur'ān) which educates the memorisers of the Qur'ān (huffaz) to deepen their understanding of the Qur'ān after their memories 30 juz. Through PSQ too, Shihab propagated of Islam in a moderate and tolerant manner (Islam Wasaṭiyyah) through a digital platform called CariUstadz.id.

As a Muslim scholar who contributes to Islamic scholarship in the world, Shihab is a member of the *Majlis Hukama' al-Muslimin*, the world's leading 'ulama'-‘ulamā’ association comprising 15 ‘ulama’, and led directly by Grand Shaykh Al-Azhar University Egypt, Dr Ahmed el-Tayeb.

#### 4. His interpretation of the Qur'ān 60: 8-9

In interpreting Qur'ān 60:8-9, Shihab asserts that the previous verses can give a wrong impression (and lead to misunderstandings). It is stated that this verse clearly outlines the basic principles of interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims, and God does not forbid doing good or forbidding justice. When they conflict with each other, they have to stand up for non-Muslims because Allah prefers those who are on the side of justice. According to Shihab:

“God only forbade you to be friends with those who fought you in religion and those who expelled you from your country and assisted others in your expulsion. God also forbade you to make them close friends, keep your secrets, or rely on them. Whoever heeds this guide, then he is the lucky one and whoever makes them close friends, then he is the one who loses” (Shihab, 2008, p. 164).

Based on his explanation, Shihab stated Muslims should fight only those who incite war or against Islam as a religion. At the time of the Prophet, there were residents of Khuza'ah and members of the dhimma (non-Muslims who lived in peace with the Muslim community and paid taxes regularly). Being kind to them is commendable. In

addition, the word *birr* in this verse has various meanings, as described by al-Biqā'i (d. 558/1480). Shihab also agrees with Sayyid Qutūb (w. 1966) who argues that these verses show Islam as a religion of peace with the faith of love. It is a system that protects the universe with peace and love, in which all human beings are expected to obey God, and know and love one another. Therefore, there is no opposition to this system except for those who are enemies of God and Islam. When non-Muslims are at peace, Islam never encourages hostility towards them. Even in a state of hostility, Islam still protects the soul, harmonious relations, honest behaviour, and fair treatment. Also, hope is a permanent quality of Islam, because the human heart can always direct its owner in the right direction (Shihab, 2008, p. 164).

Shihab shows how Islam highly values peace, love, and justice, which transcends ethnicity, race, and religion. They take precedence over enmity, and Mahmoud Ayoub emphasises that therefore the Qur'ān advocates mutually beneficial cooperation between Jewish, Christian and Muslim scribes. They are also called scribes because they belong to the "religion of the children of Abraham" (Boyd, 2019; Hughes, 2012). God will defend the persecuted people regardless of their race, ethnicity, and religion. When non-Muslims are persecuted, God will also defend and punish the Muslims who persecute them. Prophet Muhammad said: "Beware of the prayers of those who are wronged, even non-Muslims. Verily there is no barrier to their prayers (to be granted by Allah)" (HN Ahmad No. 12549). Thus, Muslims must also defend non-Muslims who are persecuted and oppressed. Allah also loves justice and considers a just person to be more pious.

Yusuf Qaradawi and Qur'ān 60: 8-9

Yusuf Qaradawi is a contemporary Islamist and 'ulamā' born in Egypt and based in Qatar. Qaradawi was chosen in this study for four main reasons. First, he is a contemporary 'ulamā' who has produced impressive work (in terms of both quality and quantity), offering deep insights into contemporary Islamic discourse in a global context. Second, Qaradawi represents the largest denomination in Islam, namely Sunni Islam, which is most Islamic groups that adhere to tolerance and moderate Islam. Third, he is certainly a 'moderate Muslim' who proclaims to advocate dialogue among Muslims of various denominations and faiths, and especially with the West. Fourth, Qaradawi uses the meaning of *al-wasaṭiyya* by borrowing from the Qur'ān to articulate and unravel the relationship between Islam with the wider international world.

In this sub-chapter, we describe Qaradawi on his educational background and scholarly activities, religious political movements, and his interpretation of the Qur'ān 60: 8-9.



## 1. Education and scholarly activities

Qaradawi was born in 1926 in a small village called Shafth in the middle of the Nile Delta, Egypt. He was born into a poor Egyptian family and was orphaned at two. Qaradawi received his traditional religious education at a kuttab in his native village called the Azhar Institute in Tanta, before joining the Faculty of Theology, Azhar University in Cairo (Gräf & Skovgaard-Petersen, 2009). At a very young age, he became a Muslim scholar who was influenced by the ideas of the Ikhwanul Muslimin, which led him to join the movement in 1943 (Skovgaard-Petersen, 2009, p. 32).

When the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, the Ikhwanul Muslimin semakin memburuk, and Qaradawi was imprisoned twice between 1954 and 1956 (Esposito & Shahin, 2018, p. 169). In prison, the spirit of Qaradawi's opposition to Egypt's new rulers grew stronger, as secular pan-Arab-Nationalist ideologies clashed with those of Qaradawi and the Muslim Brotherhood. Qaradawi's relationship was troubled with the Egyptian regime under President Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir [Nasser] (1954–1970) which led to him moving to Qatar in 1961 and becoming a citizen living in Doha (Sheline, 2020). Qaradawi has written over 100 books, although not commentaries on the Qur'ān, and with little expertise in *usūl al-Dīn*. In addition, Qaradawi has extensive knowledge of Islamic sciences, thus becoming an authoritative scholar on various topics, including religious tolerance. This broad-minded scholar discusses quite a lot about Fiqh Jihad and Aqalliyat Diniyah, and criticises radical interpretations.

## 2. Religious Political Movement

After moving to Qatar, an oil-rich country, Qaradawi made this country his new base. Qaradawi started his career as a preacher, educator, and consultant for Islamic financial institutions. Especially after the emergence of Pan-Arab satellite television and the development of the internet in the 1990s, helped Qaradawi's access to the Muslim public around the world. His name became more and more famous after the existence of a program called *al-Shar'ia al-Hayat* on Al-Jazeera television, and Qaradawi was a regular star on the show (Bahry, 2001). After his activities became known, Qaradawi then contributed his thoughts and presence to a popular Islamic site called Islamonline, and set up his website to express all his thoughts on the Qardhawi.net. In this portal, Qaradawi provides information on his personal life and intellectual activities in religious politics. Visitors are given free access to everything available on the portal, such as his fatwas and thoughts, speeches and sermons, electronic versions of books, and transcripts of his lectures on *al-Shar'ia al-Hayat*.

After spending most of his adult life in the public arena, Qaradawi has become an activist, Islamist, and Muslim scholar who is valued by the world, especially the West. As a Muslim activist, he lobbied for curriculum reform at Azhar University, taking part in the popular struggle against the British military presence in Egypt, which resulted in him being imprisoned and tortured by the Egyptian regime authorities. With the help of Al-Jazeera television and the internet, Qaradawi could promote moderate Islam and eradicate radical Islamic understandings that were deliberately manipulated by the Western world.

His thoughts have reached audiences around the world, including the world of politics and statehood in a global context. Including when he protested the Danish cartoonist who harassed the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and Paus Benedict XVI's statement in his lecture on September 12, 2006, at the University of Regensburg in Germany, which was offensive to Islam. In the scientific realm, he has played a major role in the Union of Islamic Scholars and Muslim Scholars (IUMS) and has voiced at the European Council for Fatwas and Research (ECFR) to ensure the existence of European Muslims amid growing hatred of Islam (Kugle & Hunt, 2012; Tottoli, 2022, p. 343).

Not only Islam in the West, but Qaradawi has also tirelessly campaigned for Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chechnya, to Afghanistan and Iraq. Especially in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict where he gave full criticism, as seen from his efforts in various moments at world events. His views have had a major influence on the Muslim public around the world why the war against Israel is so important in the Islamic world (Bartal, 2016). Qaradawi is a Muslim scholar who's thinking and involvement transcend national boundaries, especially the conceptualisation of Muslims as a massive "transnational community" (Gräf & Skovgaard-Petersen, 2009, p. 12).

### 3. His interpretation of the Qur'ān 60: 8-9

Based on the Qur'ān 60:8-9, Qaradawi asserts every Muslim must treat all human beings with benevolence and justice, even when they do not embrace Islam. Muslims must treat non-Muslims fairly as long as they do not hinder the spread of Islam and fight or oppress them. Therefore, the relationship between citizens is fully enforced based on tolerance, justice, benevolence and compassion.

There are several reasons Islam commands tolerance to non-Muslims, namely:

a. Islamic belief is that humans are creatures that are glorified by God. In fact, Muhammad stood up as a sign of respect while a dead Jew was being carried.

b. The Islamic belief is that human religious differences are the will of God. Humans may be different and choose their own religion, and God can decide to make everyone a Muslim, as explained in Qur'ān 11:118 and Qur'ān 10:99.

c. Muslims are not prosecuted or judged for the sins of non-Muslims and are not tortured for the misguidance of misguided people. Their calculation is up to Allah, as stated in Qur'ān 22:67-69 and Qur'ān 42:15.

d. Muslims must believe that Allah commands them to be fair, have good morals even to the polytheists, hate injustice and punish injustice by Muslims to non-Muslims according to Qur'ān 5:7. Muhammad also ordered justice and avoiding injustice as people's prayers. Those who were wronged were granted without hindrance even if they were non-Muslims (HN. Ahmad in Musnad) (Qaraḏāwī, 1992, pp. 55–56).

Qaradawi emphasised Islam teaches Muslims to be moderate (tolerance, in the middle position) in their lives, thoughts, and daily activities. Therefore, Allah refers to Muslims as Ummah Wasaṭa (moderate citizens) as explained in Qur'ān 2:143. Moderate Islam is also meant to be balanced and free from arbitrariness or injustice. In addition, Qaradawi explained that there are three types of tolerance practised by Muslims in history, namely:

The first is low tolerance. That is giving to people who do not believe and not forcing them to embrace Islam. When they refused, there shouldn't be any punishment. Here, tolerance is by giving freedom to embrace a belief but not allowing carrying out religious obligations.

The second is middle tolerance. That is to give someone the right to adhere to a religion, and not be forced. For example, while Christians believe they must go to church on Sundays, it is not justified to forbid them from going on that day.

Third, high tolerance. Namely, higher tolerance is by not limiting the movement of other religions. For example, eating pork is prohibited in Islam, but in other religions, it is not. Therefore, Muslims give freedom to others to eat pork, dogs and drink liquor.

That is the practice of tolerance practised by Muslims in the past towards non-Muslims. Therefore, they have practised the highest level of tolerance. They don't interfere with what non-Muslims believe to be lawful according to their religion and don't pressure it with prohibitions, even though they can. For example, although the Magian religion allows marrying a mother or sister, they can marry someone other than the two. Therefore, there is no need to embarrass Muslims. Although Christianity allows pork, the faithful can live without eating it, considering that they can eat beef, lamb, birds, and others freely.

Similarly, wine, although the Bible allows Christians to drink, it is not included in the requirements of their religion.

This graceful and generous attitude is also seen in the Prophet's treatment of the People of the Book (ahl kitab), both Jews and Christians. Sometimes the Prophet visited and respected them, gave good warnings, visited those who were sick, and received and also gave them. Ibn Ishaq asserts in the book Sirah that when the Christian delegation from Najran visited the Prophet in the City of Medina, they entered the mosque after the time of Aṣr (Ṣalat Aṣr). They stood up to perform their worship, and when some of the Muslims wanted to stop them, the Prophet saw and said, "Leave them". Facing the East, they began their worship. Therefore, Ibn Qayyim's comment above concludes that Regarding Islamic law in the article "al-Hadyun Nabawi", it is stated that, "Allowing the People of the Book (ahl kitab) to carry out worship in the mosque is a coincidence and should not be made a habit.

Qaradawi stated that the traditional fiqh understanding of the land of peace (silmi) and war (harb) is outdated. Qaradawi considers it forbidden to fight non-Muslims who do not fight them, based on several verses and hadiths, including Qur'ān 60:8-9. The term dhimmi (non-Muslims who are bound by a peace treaty with Muslims) in traditional fiqh is also interpreted through verses and hadiths that oblige us to be fair to all humans and do good. Abu Daud and al-Baihaqi narrated that Muhammad said, "Whoever persecutes someone who is bound by a peace treaty with the Muslims (dhimmi), violates their rights, burdens them and takes something from them by force, I will fight those who wrongdoer on the Day of Resurrection." Likewise, Qaradawi considers that the verses advocating war against non-Muslims are always conditional, only applicable to those who fight Muslims, not those who live peacefully side by side with them, as explained in Qur'ān 2:191-193 (Qaraḍāwī, 2009)

Based on this explanation, of course, the highest tolerance mentioned by Qaradawi is a practical choice that can be taken and imitated by Muslim-majority countries, especially minorities, so that tolerance will be better. It is not natural for the government or Muslim citizens to prohibit what is allowed by followers of other religions, such as eating pork, dogs, and others. Eating it will not harm or interfere with, the security of the country and pluralistic society. In Islamic teachings, justice and love for humans must take precedence over hostility and fights, which will become the seeds of war and destruction. Also, hatred and war will only bring great misery to humanity and disturb the peace of human life on earth. Therefore, tolerance must be encouraged and embraced.

Interpreting Qaradawi is strengthened by the commentary of Wahbah Zuhaily, one of the great ‘ulamā’ (mufassir) from Syria. Based on Qur’ān 60:9, Wahbah states that Allah only forbids Muslims from appointing non-Muslims who fight, and their enemies to become leaders in the Muslim community, such as the pagan people of Mecca and their allies who promised to fight against the Muslim population and expel them. From their country. This kind of community is forbidden by God to be a leader, nor is it allowed to be helped or assisted. Every Muslim who is allied, makes a deal with or helps them to attack Muslims, is also considered a crime against humanity, because they have opposed the religion of the Prophet and his followers (Al-Zuhaily, 2009, p. 512). Although there are some ‘ulamā’ who say this verse has been deleted by other verses that command war, such as Qur’ān 9:5. Wahbah Zuhaily does not agree because most of the commentators say this verse is not deleted by any verse and Asmā’ bint Abī Bakr it is permissible to do good to an unbelieving mother. Wahbah Zuhaily said that some scholars have made this verse a proof of a child’s obligation to provide for their parents even though they are of different religions, while others say that ability alone is not mandatory (Al-Zuhaily, 2009, p. 523).

Therefore, Qaradawi can be classified as a moderate Muslim scholar who mandates religious tolerance. These ‘ulamā’ have interpreted the verses contextually after understanding the traditional meaning of the verses of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. Qaradawi also rejected Ulyani’s statement in her dissertation entitled *Ahammiyah al-Jihād* which claimed that Islam was spread by the sword (Sizgorich, 2007). Offensive jihad is the preference for militant groups, which must be rejected. Also, war is only waged against those who fight Muslims, and it is forbidden for those who live in peace with Muslims. Non-Muslims who live peacefully in Muslim-majority countries are called *dhimmi* (Anjum, 2016; Olivier, 2020), and they have rights and should be treated with kindness, justice, beauty and compassion as commanded by the Qur’ān and Prophet. Qaradawi grants the *dhimmi* status as a ‘citizen minority’ where Qur’ān 60:8-9 serves as a protector in its role as *Wasāṭiyya* transnational intellectualism (Warren & Gilmore, 2014).

Based on these arguments, Qaradawi is not like the Salafis, who advocate a strict and literalist understanding of the Qur’ān (Hellmich, 2008; Wahib, 2017). The prophetic tradition holds that Allah and the Prophet commanded believers to maintain their love or friendship with Muslims and separate themselves from the unbelievers, hate them and avoid imitating their beliefs or customs. The pillars of the salaf approach justify its call to minimise interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims and limit the integration of Western norms (Shavit, 2014, p. 68). This is because Muslims may not imitate bad

things from anywhere, both from the West and the East (Muslim Countries in the East).

Many other classical understandings that are not by the contemporary context are opposed by Qaradawi. Because an opinion is always influenced by conditions, circumstances, time and the mainstream of society, changes in time and conditions can change the law, opinion or conclusion of the analysis. Because of this change and flexibility, Islamic teachings are considered by its adherents to deal with changing times and circumstances.

Khaled Abou el-Fadl, Qur'ān 60: 8-9 and Tolerance

Khalid Abou el-Fadhl is a contemporary 'ulamā' as well as an Islamic reformer in the West, especially in the United States. The main reason for choosing el-Fadhl is because he proposes a coherent method for an Islamic law that is sourced from the Qur'ān. It is important to note that el-Fadhl was actively opposed to the sublimation of authoritarian fundamentalism and liberal relativism. In this sub-chapter, we describe el-Fadl from his educational background and work, and some arguments for his interpretation of the Qur'ān 60: 8-9.

#### 1. His Education and Works

El-Fadhl was born in Kuwait in 1963, studied in the United States, and earned his bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1986. El-Fadl earned another degree at the University of Pennsylvania in 1989 and graduated from Princeton University with master and doctoral degrees in Islamic Law. Currently, Fadl is a professor of Islamic Law at the UCLA School of Law, specialising in Islamic Law, Human Rights, Immigration, and National Security (Hammer & Safi, 2013, p. 24).

Besides being active in human rights and immigrant activities, as a member of the Board of Directors of Human Rights Watch and the Commission on International Religious Freedom in the United States (K. El-Fadl, 2009), el-Fadhl has also taught at Princeton, University of Texas, and Yale University. El-Fadhl's books include: *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2004), *The Place of Tolerance in Islam* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2001). Others include: *Speaking in God's Name, Islamic Law, Authority, and Woman* (One world Publication, 2001), *God know the Soldiers*, which includes *Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse* (2001), *serta Conference of The Books: The Search for Beauty in Islam* (2001).

Since the September 11 tragedy, discussions about Islam in the West have had their worst period. Westerners are concerned about Islam, especially its dangers, and not its tolerance. Also, the Islamic concept of public life in a country is known as a liberal country (countries in the

West). El-Fadhl was forced to work hard to understand and interpret the verses of the Qur'ān about Islam's treatment of women and non-Muslims in terms of verses that command love, kindness, and justice. This is represented in several of his published books and writings (El Fadl, 2017; K. A. El-Fadl, 2014a, 2014b). El-Fadl also emphasises the undeniable plurality of the human community in life (Abou El-Fadl, 2002, pp. vii–viii).

## 2. Qur'ān 60: 8-9 manifestations of puritanical and moderate Islam in El-Fadl's view

El-Fadl classifies the current school of Islamic thought into two major groups, namely puritans and moderates. It was explained that the moderate group prioritised dialogue, while the puritan group prioritised truth claims. Puritans are considered having covered the meaning of Islam, which is peaceful, universal, and modern. Meanwhile, the political exploitation of Islamic symbols and social stagnation have driven the emergence of puritan groups, whose main feature is the literal and ahistorical interpretation of the Qur'ān (El-Fadl, 2002, hal.viii).

Puritan groups underestimate tolerance and always use Qur'ān 3:85 and Qur'ān 8:39 as their inspiration for dealing with non-Muslims. They regard Muslims as inheritors of divine truth, and although Jews and Christians are among the *ahl kitab* (Arkoun, 1988), they should not be helped. For them, non-Muslims must be weakened and forced to pay taxes (*jizyah*). In addition, arrogance and hierarchies that easily lead to a loss of respect and concern for the welfare of non-Muslims are because of their ahistorical understanding that encourages radical violence (Abou El-Fadl, 2002, p. xii).

This puritan understanding is rightly called ahistorical, denies history, interprets it subjectively, and refuses to see God's verses from their context, such as the conditions in which the verses were revealed. These verses show the attitude of Muhammad and the early Muslims (companions), who always refused to fight against the Quraysh infidels who oppressed the Muslims in Mecca. Meanwhile, Hamza was furious with the Quraysh and begged Muhammad to fight them because of their torture and oppression of those who embraced Islam.

When Islam flourished in Medina, Muhammad made peace with non-Muslims by issuing the Charter of Peace Treaty, known as the Medina Charter. The Prophet is reported to have given food to a blind Jew every day. Once, Abu Bakr was feeding the Jew, and he was asked, "Who are you? Why are your actions different?" Abu Bakr replied, "I am the one who feeds you every morning". The blind Jew replied, "No way, because you feed me more roughly, unlike the people who used to feed me". Abu Bakr answered honestly, "The person who used to

feed you have died. He is Muhammad, and I am his friend who wants to continue his good work.” The blind Jew was shocked, wept and finally embraced Islam even after previously cursing and discrediting Muhammad.

### 3. El-Fadl and interpreting the Verses of War

El-Fadl emphasised that moderation was instilled by Prophet Muhammad PBUH, who always chose the middle way when faced with two extreme choices. Violence against non-Muslims stems from a misinterpretation of the Qur’ān. According to El-Fadl, jihad is not the basic foundation of Islam, its theology, or Islamic law, but because of social and political conflicts (El Fadl, 2001; K. A. El-Fadl, 2001, 2014b; Pipes, 2004). According to El-Fadl, the actual jihad in Islam, as recommended by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH (jihād al-akbar or the great jihad) is jihad against lust (jihād al-nafs) (El Fadl, 2017).

Some verses can be intolerant because they were revealed during the war. However, el-Fadl said these verses cannot be fully understood without considering the verses that command goodness (ihsan), justice, benevolence and generosity towards others (Abou El-Fadl, 2002, p. 13). For example, Qur’ān 8:39 contains an order for war. This verse was revealed when Muslims were fighting oppression and then expelled by the non-Muslims of Mecca. Therefore, Allah ordered the Muslims to fight to withstand their attacks. It makes no sense for God to tell Muslims to shut up and give their lives to criminals. From this, it can be seen that the puritan interpretation of God’s verses is often ahistorical. They forget the history and context of the verse when it was revealed. Therefore, it is natural for el-Fadl to call their interpretation inconsistent with historical facts.

In terms of justice, the Qur’ān 4:35 says: “O you who believe, be you as those who uphold justice, be witnesses for Allah even if it is for yourself, your father, mother and relatives”. The Qur’ān supports the ethics of difference. Qur’ān 49:13 says: “O humanity, you were created from a man and a woman, also made you into nations and tribes so that you might know each other. Verily, the most honourable of you is the most pious”. El-Fadl further stated that although the Qur’ān claims the truth of Islam and demands people to believe in Muhammad (SAW), as the last prophet, it does not block other paths to salvation. For example, in Qur’ān 5:48, it is understood that non-Muslims can receive salvation. In addition, the Qur’ān prohibits coercion by embracing Islam (Qur’ān 2: 256).

Even on jihad, el-Fadl rejects the theory of holy war as understood by puritans (Johnson, 2010, p. 46; Malbouisson, 2007, p. 29). Jihad is the pursuit of justice, and the Prophet Muhammad PBUH has said that the greatest jihad is fighting lust. It is possible that Muslim groups fought



because of conflict and politics. Although Muslims are commanded by the Qur'ān to fight, those who fight them they are prohibited from going beyond the limits, as seen in Qur'ān 2: 190 and Qur'ān 5:2. Therefore, Muslims are restricted by the conditions of fairness or propriety even though the cause is to uphold justice according to Qur'ān 2: 194.

El-Fadl claims that Qur'ān 60:9 rejects the traditionalist opinion that encourages unlimited war. Some traditional opinions divide Muslim areas into two, namely Islamic areas and widespread war zones. This rejection is like the rejection of Yusuf Qaradawi, as explained earlier. For people who are inclined towards peace, the Qur'ān commands Muslims to make peace with them according to Qur'ān 8:61.

As for the tax, el-Fadl said it is obligatory for non-Muslims living on Muslim lands as compensation for maintaining their security or paying for state protection. Therefore, when Muslims or their government cannot protect non-Muslims, it is not advisable to collect taxes from them. Umar bin al-Khattab (second caliph) who succeeded the prophet Abu Bakr, returned taxes collected from the Arab Christian community for their inability to protect them from the Byzantine attacks. Therefore, el-Fadl concludes that the Qur'ān speaks through its readers.

The ability to interpret Allah's verses is also a blessing and a burden for Muslims. This is a blessing, as it provides flexibility in adapting the text to different or changing conditions. Meanwhile, it becomes a burden because Muslims handle the normative values in the text, which have possible meanings. Therefore, Islamic civilization led to a moral and human tradition that defended Greek philosophy and gave birth to many arts and ideas full of social virtue. However, puritans discard this enlightening moral tradition.

El-Fadl's explanation was rational and reasoned, and during times of peace, Muslims were strictly prohibited from starting wars. Also, insulting other people's religion is strictly prohibited by Islam. El-Fadl and Yusuf Qaradawi rejected the idea of a war zone, which was untenable because it contradicted the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, and the Declaration of Human Rights, in which colonialism was rejected by most delegates, moreover war was not the solution.

Dialectic Between Classical and Modern Context (Tolerance, Love and Humanity)

In the modern concept of the Qur'ānic sciences ('Ulūm al-Qur'ān), some hermeneutics state that every time a verse is revealed, it is necessary to look at the reasons behind the text concerning whom and in what context it is disclosed. This is to see the original meaning (first meaning) as an interpretation methodological concept proposed by

Fazlur Rahman (Rahman, 1979, p. 41) and Abdullah Saeed (Saeed, 2005, 2013) or able to reconcile with the context (Göle, 2003b, p. 13). Therefore, it would not be correct to say that the verse was abolished, regardless of the background.

Some scholars, whom El-Fadl calls a puritan group, always interpret the text of the Qur'ānic verses literally, without paying attention to the context. Therefore, they cannot interpret the Qur'ān in modern life. Some verses are based on the socio-cultural context when they were revealed. Thus, these verses cannot be separated from the social order when they were revealed. For example, what is revealed during the war differs from what is revealed during peace. During the war, the verse was revealed as Qur'ān 2:191, God said:

“Kill them wherever you catch them and drive them from where they drove you, for commotion and oppression are worse than slaughter, but fight them not in the mosques unless they first fight you there, but when they fight you, kill them. Such is the reward of those who oppress faith.”

Takim asserts that this verse describes the events that took place in Hudaibiyah in the sixth year of Hijriyah. Some Muslims were exiled from Mecca, where the Pagans had formed an intolerant autocracy, persecuted Muslims, prevented them from visiting their homes, and forcibly prevented them from making pilgrimages during the period of the universally recognised truce (Takim, 2011, p. 10). This is intolerance, oppression, and autocracy to the last degree, and the readiness of Muslims to uphold their rights as Arab citizens without bloodshed.

Some verses were revealed in a peaceful state like the Qur'ān. 60. 8-9: “Allah does not forbid you, against those who fight against you out of faith (you) and does not drive you out of your homes, from treating them well and justly, for Allah loves those who are just (8). Allah only forbids you, against those who fight you for faith (you) and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in expelling you, from turning to them (for friendship and protection)”. This is like turning to them (in this state), the wrongdoers (Yusuf Ali, 1978, p. 398). Even with Kafir, Muslims must be kind and just, as the Prophet pointed out. Unless they are out to destroy the Muslims by activating the war flag.

In contrast to puritan 'ulama', some Muslim scholars who are experts in commentary or fiqh have interpreted verses and ḥadīth contextually. For example, Umar bin Khattab increased the lashes from 40 times (in the Qur'ān 5:90) to 80 times for those who were drunk. This was done because this drunkard was not afraid of the 40 whips. After the companions of the Prophet (ṭabī'in and ṭabī'at ṭabī'in) such as Imam Shāfi'i who were experts in Islamic legal philosophy, faced a

similar condition that gave rise to two different legal meanings known as: first (Qaul Qadīm) when Imam Shāfi'i in Iraq and second (Qaul Jadīd) when Imam Shāfi'i was in Egypt. This different reality forces a re-examination, adjusting to new realities and conditions. For example, in Baghdād as-Shāfi'i, it is said that someone (both male and female) who kills or injures another person is not intentionally given the same punishment, so after arriving in Egypt, the punishment for women is half that of men. This may be because of the different conditions of Baghdad and Egypt in terms of their culture and society (Sirāzi, 2016, p. 202).

In addition, the general concept of the Qur'ān is that God created humans to know each other and help each other and build a civilised, peaceful, and harmonious world. Although in the Qur'ān there is an order to invite people to embrace Islam, the invitation itself must be based on patience, love and compassion (Qur'ān 90:17 and Qur'ān 103:3). As Ibn Kathīr previously stated, love for humans must overcome hatred and enmity, and unity (in building world civilization) must take precedence over strife. Justice, love and compassion must take precedence over hostility and war regardless of religion, race, ethnicity and nation. Therefore, humans are called humanists (having human nature), unlike animals.

Shihab, Qaradawi, and el-Fadhīl also assert that they have contextualised these verses, comparing them with the past and the present. Therefore, both Qaradawi and El-Fadl reject the traditional opinion groupings of states, such as silmi states (Islamic states) that apply Islamic law and cannot be attacked, as well as harb states (non-Islamic states or Islamic states). majority of Muslims who do not enforce sharia). For them, this grouping of opinions is outdated because it is impossible to fight nations that do not actualise Sharia (Islamic Law). In addition, Shihab rejects the differential treatment of non-Muslims in Indonesia despite being amid a Muslim majority and allows non-Muslims to be leaders as long as they are fair, regardless of their religion.

## Conclusion

From this comparative study, we can conclude the following aspects. First, Quraish Shibah, Yusuf Qaradawi, and Khaled Abou el-Fadl are interested in interpreting Qur'ān 60: 8-9 because of their scientific background, although with different interpretations. Shihab interprets these two verses as the basic principles of interfaith relations between Muslims and non-Muslims with God in human relations that are embedded in him as a creature who loves peace, is just, and does well to fellow human beings. Meanwhile, Qaradawi places the Qur'ān 60: 8-9 as a manifestation of tolerance and wasaṭiyyah (moderate)

attitude in Islamic law. Qaradawi is more complex in dealing with these two verses than Shihab. Qaradawi divides tolerance into three parts, being moderate in state life, maintaining good relations between religions, and rejecting the literal and ahistorical understanding of the Qur'ān by Salafi and fundamentalists. In contrast to el-Fadl, where Qur'ān 60: 8-9 functions to counter the verses of war (jihād) which have been misinterpreted by traditionalists. The context that el-Fadl brings from the perspective of Islamic thought on interpreting the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth about tolerance. El-Fadl also rejects the theory of holy war promoted by puritans. Both Shihab, Qaradawi, and el-Fadl agree that Qur'ān 60: 8-9 is the basis for religious tolerance, but the three have different meanings. Shihab is an Indonesian mufassir (interpreter of the Qur'ān) who is influenced by his scholarly activities who are focused on this field. Meanwhile, Qaradawi is known as a contemporary Islamist in Islamic law who is more active in religious politics in Egypt, especially in Qatar, so his movement influences the Western understanding of Islam. Meanwhile, el-Fadl is known as an Islamic reformer in the United States who is more inclined to Islamic thought which he devotes more to promoting moderate Islam during the onslaught of Western stereotypes about Islam after the September 11 attacks, and rejects puritans and traditionalist thoughts in interpreting the jihād verse. in a literal and ahistorical manner. There are similarities between Qaradawi and el-Fadl where the meaning of Qur'ān 60: 8-9 is letterlijk and ahistorical by people who, according to him, cannot see dynamic Islam with contemporary issues. Meanwhile, from the aspect of interfaith relations, Shihab and Qaradawi have the same voice to maintain good relations with the terms and conditions that have been mentioned in the Qur'ān and the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

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