



Exploring Tauhid as The Balance of Faith, Reason, and Worship in Hamka's Intellectual Thought

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Abstract : In today's complex modern life, many individuals face challenges in maintaining a balance between the spiritual, rational, and devotional dimensions of religion. This study explores Hamka's thought on tawhid and its role in harmonizing faith, reason, and worship. The primary sources of this research are Hamka's works *Studi Islam*, *Filsafat Ketuhanan*, and *Dari Lembah Cita-Cita*, supported by secondary sources such as books, documents, and scholarly writings on Hamka's thought. Using a qualitative method with a thematic analysis approach, this study examines how Hamka views tawhid not merely as a theological doctrine but as a dynamic principle that unites belief, rational thinking, and worship practices. The findings show that tawhid serves as a fundamental foundation guiding individuals to develop firm faith, critical reasoning, and sincere devotion to God. Through this integration, tawhid enables humans to live harmoniously and to build meaningful relationships with God, fellow human beings, and the universe. This research affirms the relevance of Hamka's perspective on a holistic understanding of religion in responding to contemporary challenges related to spirituality, rationality, and morality.

Keywords: Intellect; Hamka; Hamka's Theology; Faith; Tawhid

INTRODUCTION

The idea of divinity in Islam is the most fundamental discussion because by understanding the importance of this idea, Muslims can recognize their own person along with their beliefs. In the science related to the idea of divinity, Muslims recognize it with the term tawhid. Tawhid is one of the main reasons the prophets were sent to humans in order to be able to recognize and worship the one God, namely Allah SWT. Then Muslims also have the same agreement that *Laa ilaha ilallah* is a sentence that defines tawhid which means that Allah SWT is the only God who deserves to be worshiped (Negara & Muhlas, 2022, p. 134).

Tawhid, as the main teaching in Islam, emphasizes the belief in the oneness of God, which then becomes the basis of the entire system of Islamic teachings. In the view of the scholars, tawhid is not just a testimony to the One God, but at the same time is a principle that regulates all dimensions of a Muslim's life. Not only the dimension of worldly life but also a determinant of whether the deeds we do can be counted for the afterlife. as described by Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab in his work, namely Kitab at-Tauhid al-Ladzi Huwa Haqqullah 'ala al- 'Abid that tawhid is the main and very decisive foundation for the life of creatures, namely humans, because tawhid is a fundamental aspect for every deed done. (Wahhab, 2010, p. 2)

One of the great scholars who lived in contemporary times and made a major contribution to the understanding of tawhid is Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, people often call and know him as Buya Hamka. As an intellectual, scholar, literary figure and ulama (Hamka, 2017, p. 4), Hamka has a deep view of tawhid that is not only limited to theological aspects, but also relates it to the three main dimensions of a Muslim's life that connects faith, reason, and worship. In Hamka's view, these three dimensions must go hand in hand in order to create a balanced and harmonious life. Both faith, reason and worship all three provide a very important role in realizing true Islam. This reflects that Hamka's view regarding tawhid is a principle that directs not only spiritual life but also touches other lines of life. Hamka's approach also has great relevance in the modern world, amidst the increasing challenges of secularism, materialism and moral crisis.

This concept of balance will help Muslims in strengthening their monotheism in order to be able to face all the challenges of the times that come to them, this is not only related to spirituality but also has a relationship with intellectual aspects as humans who have religion. This research has a goal to be achieved, namely to examine Hamka's thoughts on the concept of tawhid and how tawhid becomes the basis for the balance between faith, reason and worship. This research is expected to contribute in depth to understanding Hamka's thoughts, especially those related to tawhid.

Several previous studies have made Hamka the object of study, one of which is a research conducted by Muhammad Yusuf with the title *Doors to God: A Study of Hamka's Thought*. In this study, Muhammad Yusuf concluded that monotheism is a teaching that has a massive influence in galvanizing the soul to have strong and firm strength. The teachings of monotheism, according to Hamka, can provide personal independence, spiritual freedom, and are also able to eliminate fear in overcoming all difficulties in life. Thus, an individual can have the courage to face life's challenges, so that there is no difference between life and death, if everything is done to achieve His pleasure. This is the impact of the teachings of monotheism which are currently not found in the struggle of human life. Hamka then stated that to reach God, there are various paths that can be taken, including through philosophy, art, Sufism, the path of fitrah, and the search for the essence of life. (M. Yusuf, 2014, p. 1).

The next research is a research conducted by Muhammad Dwifajri with the title *Philanthropic Theology of the Buya Hamka Perspective*. In this study, Dwifajri concluded that aqidah (belief/faith) is closely related to actions, including in the practice of philanthropy

or generosity. Buya HAMKA said that the proof of our faith is charity, and the relationship between faith and charity is the relationship between mind and temperament, which must always be practiced. A person who claims to be a philanthropist, tries to find a hole to provide his property to someone who deserves help.(Dwifajri, 2020).

The next research was conducted by Luthfi Maulana with the title *Women's Theology in Tafsir Al-Qur'an: Hamka's Thought Perspective*. In this study, Luthfi reveals how the relationship between theology and women in Hamka's thought. Based on the analysis conducted, Luthfi concluded that in his interpretation, Hamka paid great attention to the rights and obligations that exist for women regardless of their social strata. This shows that Hamka has indirectly given another perspective to theology that is biased against women into a more just and progressive theology, which pays more attention to the rights and fate of women, from the domestic to the public sphere.(Maulana, 2016). Although many studies have examined Hamka's thought, this research specifically focuses on the integration of faith, reason, and worship within the framework of tawhid according to Hamka, a theme that has not been thoroughly explored in previous works. By identifying this gap, the study seeks to provide a deeper analysis of Hamka's monotheistic thinking and to uncover the dimensions contained within his concept of tawhid.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applies a qualitative approach with thematic analysis, chosen because it enables a systematic exploration of recurring ideas in Hamka's thought, especially regarding tawhid, faith, reason, and worship. The primary data consist of Hamka's original works *Studi Islam, Filsafat Ketuhanan, and Dari Lembah Cita-Cita*, while the secondary data include books, documents, and scholarly writings on Hamka. Data were collected through documentation study, involving the review, classification, and extraction of relevant passages from both primary and secondary sources. The analysis was conducted using thematic coding, where concepts were identified, grouped into themes, and interpreted to reveal their interconnections within Hamka's framework of tawhid. To ensure the validity and credibility of findings, the study employed triangulation of sources by cross-referencing Hamka's works with other scholarly interpretations, which minimized bias and strengthened the reliability of conclusions regarding the integration of faith, reason, and worship in Hamka's theology.

RESEARCH RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Biography of Hamka

Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, known as Hamka, was born on February 16, 1908, in Sungai Batang, West Sumatra. He was a prominent Islamic scholar, intellectual, and writer who greatly influenced Islamic thought in Indonesia.(Hidayat, 2015, p. 51) Hamka was born during a period of social and intellectual conflict between the younger and older generations in Minangkabau.(Sirry, 2014, p. 18) His father, Shaykh Karim

Amrullah (Haji Rasul), was a pioneer of the youth movement opposing Rabithah's teachings. Growing up amid these debates, young Abdul Malik was shaped by the tensions that influenced his perspectives on social and religious issues.(Hamka, 2016, p. 3). Hamka began his education at home after his family moved from Maninjau to Padang in 1914. His first lessons were reading and understanding the Qur'an, and at the age of seven he entered the Village School under his father's guidance.(M. Y. Yusuf, 1990, p. 40) Between the ages of eight and fifteen, Hamka's education was strongly shaped by his father, Shaikh Karim Amrullah, particularly in the field of religion. Beginning with family-based learning, his father guided him to share the same outlook, while Hamka deepened his practice of worship and nurtured his intellectual growth.(Hidayat, 2015, p. 52).

Hamka continued his studies at the evening Diniyyah School in Pasar Usang, Padang Panjang, founded by Zainuddin Labai el-Yunusi in 1916. In 1918, after his circumcision in Maninjau, his father, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, returned from Java and transformed Surau Jembatan Besi into the madrasah Sumatra Thawalib. There, Hamka deepened his religious knowledge and began studying Arabic as part of a broader education.(Rouf et al., 2013, p. 5), unfortunately, Hamka grew increasingly bored with the rigid, memorization based learning system at Thawalib(Ramadan & Pujiyaturrahmi, 2024, p. 130), From then on, Hamka also witnessed his father's active role in spreading religious teachings and new ideas. Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah not only taught religion but also worked to raise social and intellectual awareness within the Minangkabau community.(Hamka, 2016, p. 3).

In 1924, precisely when he was sixteen years old, Hamka then left for the island of Java, where Yogyakarta was the city that Hamka first went to. This city is known as the center of the activities of reformist organizations in Muhammadiyah. Then there Hamka had the opportunity to come and take various courses held by Muhammadiyah and Syarikat Islam. It was also in Yogyakarta that he learned the interpretation of the Qur'an from Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, listened to HOS Cokroaminoto's lectures on Islam and socialism and studied the modern Islamic movement, as well as discussed with figures such as Haji Fakhruddin, Syamsul Rizal, and members of Jong Islameten Bond. The course held by these figures was held in Gedong Abdi Dharmo, Pakualaman, Yogyakarta, Hamka learned about the comparison between the Islamic political movement of the East Indies Islamic Company and the Muhammadiyah social movement from the existing figures.(Hamka, 2016, p. 4) . After living for some time in Yogyakarta, Hamka then headed to Pekalongan to meet a teacher who was also his brother-in-law named A.R Sutan Mansur. There he learned to explore the wisdom of life and study philosophy. at that time. Hamka specifically expressed his respect and gratitude for all the knowledge he got from A.R Sutan Mansur, for example in one of his works entitled *Philosophy of Life*.(Hamka, 2015) After that in 1927, Hamka went to the city of Makkah and stayed there for some time to study, and during his stay in Makkah

Hamka also worked in a printing factory. then after that he also went to Medan in July 1927.(Abdul et al., 2020, p. 83).

On April 5, 1929, Hamka married Siti Raham at a young age, where Hamka was 21 years old and his wife was 15 years old.(Hadler et al., 2010, p. 232) At that time, Hamka was active as an administrator of the Padang Panjang Branch of Muhammadiyah and was preparing for the 19th Muhammadiyah Congress in Minangkabau.(Hamka, 2016, p. 5) In addition to being active in the Muhammadiyah organization, Hamka also worked as a teacher in the Tebing Tinggi plantation, then continued his teaching career at several universities. Hamka was given the mandate to become the rector of the Jakarta State Islamic University and a professor at Mustopo University Jakarta. As an intellectual, Hamka was also very involved in the world of mass media, having been a journalist and editor in several well-known magazines at that time. His expertise in the scientific field led him to various awards, both national and international, such as the honorary title of *Ustadziyyah Fakhriyyah (Doctor Honoris Causa)* from Al-Azhar University in 1958. Hamka is also known as an expert figure in various scientific fields, as evidenced by the many works he produced. According to James Rush, Hamka has written up to 115 titles in various disciplines, with *Tafsir Al-Azhar* being his most famous work.(Rizky & Zakiah, 2020, p. 7)

The Concept of Tauhid According to Hamka

Hamka considers monotheism to be the most crucial aspect of a Muslim's life. According to him, the main purpose of the coming of the Prophet Muhammad as a leader is to free the human soul from the shackles of slavery, from the shackles of confined intellect, unclear thoughts, and limiting thoughts due to blind taklid, with which humans can have a direct relationship with God. All of these goals can be achieved through monotheism. For Hamka, monotheism begins with the expression "*La ilaha illal Lah*," which means "There is no God but Allah," which affirms that no creature, both large or small, is equal to the position of Allah SWT. (Hamka, 2020, p. 70). Hamka views monotheism as the core and essence of Islam, as well as the center of all worship performed. Hamka described the role of monotheism as dry soil that becomes fertile after being watered, the heart that receives monotheism will become alive and develop.(Pusat Studi Buya Hamka, 2019, pp. 426–429) In the Qur'an there is an explanation of the nature of Tawheed repeatedly through various parables, stories, and struggles of the prophets, with Prophet Adam as the first prophet until the descent of Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet. In this case, for Hamka, monotheism provides light that illuminates the hearts and minds of its followers, so that all the results obtained from nature and human efforts are always seen through the lens of monotheism. Tawhid cleanses feelings towards everything else, with the aim of purifying and glorifying Him.(Hamka, 2020, p. 72).

In this context, Hamka's emphasis on freeing humans from slavery and taklid can also be understood in relation to the social-political situation of his time. Living under

colonial domination and later in the era of nation-building, Hamka saw tauhid not only as a theological foundation but also as a spiritual ideology that resisted oppression and encouraged independence. Thus, tauhid was not a passive dogma, but an active energy that legitimized the struggle for freedom and dignity. According to Hamka, Tawheed has a depth that includes theological, psychological, and social aspects. For Hamka, if the relationship with Allah has been established directly without an intermediary, then this will also have an impact on the creation of peace of mind and will also be seen in the relationship with fellow humans, how not, aren't other humans also creatures like us, and are equally given glory by Allah. (Hamka, 1996, p. 62) Therefore, it is important to emphasize that monotheism is the core of Islamic teachings that honor Allah as the only God worthy of worship, and cannot be associated with anything. Hamka also emphasized that tauhid is not just a verbal utterance, but a confession and belief born from a clean thought process and a sincere heart. (Hamka, 2020, p. 70).

This understanding of monotheism is also the basis for building the spiritual and moral life of a Muslim, which is expected to be able to direct every individual to distance themselves from all forms of sharia. In Hamka's perspective, shirk can appear in various forms, both obvious ones such as idolatry and more subtle ones such as *riya*, which is doing deeds solely to get praise from humans. Hamka criticized each form of shirk for undermining the direct relationship between man and Allah, as well as obscuring the understanding of true monotheism. (Hamka, 2020, p. 71) Hamka, in his book *From the Valley of Ideals*, reveals that "It is very foolish for man to feel his Iemah in nature, then make an idol in his hand, and say that the idol is his God." (Hamka, 1982, p. 19).

Not only related to the worship of Allah SWT, Hamka also relates the concept of monotheism to the formation of an individual's character and mental strength. According to him, monotheism has a crucial role in shaping spiritual freedom, personal independence, and strength to face various difficulties in life. With a deep understanding of monotheism, a person will have the belief that everything that happens in this world is part of God's destiny and will, so that he will be able to face the various trials of life without being affected by temporary joys or sorrows. Tawheed teaches that Allah is the Ruler of all things, so a Muslim must completely surrender himself and depend on Him in facing life's challenges. (Hamka, 1996, p. 61) In this context, monotheism is a source of steadfastness and courage in facing life. Uniting beliefs so that they are not separated from other things, and believing that nature is only under His control is the most fundamental thing for Muslims to believe so that this view can increase their devotion to Allah SWT. (Hamka, 2017, p. 30).

Here we can compare Hamka's thoughts with other Muslim reformers. Muhammad Abduh also rejected blind taklid and emphasized rationality, but his focus was on educational and institutional reform in Egypt. (Rohman, 2016, p. 91) Hassan Hanafi, on the other hand, framed tauhid as a call for socio-political liberation and justice. (Manshur, 2021, p. 7) Hamka stands in between: like Abduh, he highlights

rational thought, and like Hanafi, he recognizes the liberating potential of tauhid, yet his unique contribution is the spiritual-psychological dimension rooted in the Indonesian struggle for dignity. In the practice of worship, monotheism teaches that all deeds of a Muslim must be directed solely to Allah, without any intermediary or purpose other than His pleasure. In this case, Hamka criticized forms of worship that involve intermediaries other than Allah, such as idolatry or asking for help from living beings or inanimate objects. Tawheed demands that every worship be carried out with sincerity and sincerity, solely for the sake of Allah, not to gain recognition or praise from humans. In this context, Hamka emphasized that the deeds done by a Muslim are motivated by pure intentions for Allah alone, and not by worldly impulses such as praise or flattery from others. (Hamka, 1996, p. 61).

The concept of monotheism in Hamka's ideas is not only understood as a concept, but is applied in various aspects of life, including in all lines of life such as the state, economy, and society. According to him, the principle of monotheism opposes acts of colonialism carried out by one nation against another nation, because monotheism teaches the rejection of chaos and injustice. (M. Yusuf, 2014, p. 11) In the book Islamic Religious Studies, Hamka argues that tawhid that is understood critically will foster a love for justice and truth. A person who has the belief of monotheism will look at nature with full attention and reflection. The sun will never chase the moon, and the night will never precede the day. All the balance and laws of nature, such as fallen heavy objects and lifted light objects, reflect the principle of justice. Therefore, everything that happens is right and just. A house built by a skilled craftsman or architect, with an attractive design, exudes order, as well as the arrangement of the yard and household. We tend to like the beautiful, because beauty lies in balance. Something that is unbalanced, cannot be said to be true, because it is fundamentally unfair. The more refined the feeling of monotheism, the greater the desire to achieve perfection. (Hamka, 1996, p. 65)

Tauhid is the Foundation of Balance of Faith, Reason and Worship According to Hamka

According to Hamka, the teachings of monotheism can be understood through three main teaching points. *First*, the teachings of monotheism instill the belief that this universe was created by the Almighty Substance, namely Allah. All events that occur in this universe are His will. *Second*, the teachings of monotheism also teach belief in the supernatural, namely the afterlife which is our goal after the life of the world. Life in this world is only temporary, and after death, every living thing will experience a second life in the hereafter. All deeds done during life in this world will be considered good and bad in the hereafter. We only live once in this world, and not alone, but with billions of people who come and go alternately from generation to generation. *Third*, because living in this world only once, the teachings of monotheism emphasize the importance of doing righteous deeds, which are deeds that are beneficial both for oneself and for society. (Hamka, 2020, p. 26).

After knowing Allah and then believing in Allah as the only God (Tauhid), then the next thing that needs to be done is to surrender to Him, according to Hamka, the form of faith is not only limited to knowing Allah and being confident but must be covered with surrender wholeheartedly. All His commandments and laws are obeyed willingly. Faith, which means belief, and Islam, which means surrender with willpower and pleasure, arise when the intellect has reached the limit of its ability to explore and understand. Therefore, the farther the intellect goes in the search, and the more tools of knowledge are used, the higher the degree of one's Faith and Islam. (Hamka, 2017, p. 10) So the sentences of faith and Islam, meaning believing and giving up, are two sentences that will not be separated forever. Not only by believing but not giving up or surrender is also not perfect if followed by trust. So these two words must go hand in hand and side by side with a Muslim.

A sign of trust in Allah, according to Hamka, of course we must also follow His commands. And we follow the commandments because we believe in Him and these two things if concluded then trust and submission, that is religion. Because according to Hamka, admitting oneself as a believer even though he does not follow orders, cannot yet be categorized as a mu'min. (Hamka, 1996, p. 360). According to Hamka, Iman or Islam that is only inherited without a deep understanding, or carried out solely because of the habit of following, cannot be considered perfect. Even if a person appears to be steadfast in practicing religious teachings, such beliefs are easily wavering because they are not rooted in deep soul awareness. An example is someone from a village, where religion is part of daily life, who then moves to the city. Over time, religion slowly detached itself as its new environment was very different from the previous one. Religions that are only practiced on the basis of taklid or participation, tend to be afraid of being tested by reason. Those who adhere to this pattern are often quick to anger and accuse others of "leaving the religion" simply because of differences of opinion that do not conform to what the teacher taught or inherited by their ancestors. (Hamka, 2017, p. 10).

Thus, Hamka emphasizes the importance of the journey of reason and heart in achieving true faith. He explained that faith is not merely an inheritance or passive acceptance of teachings, but the result of a deep personal search. Reason is used to understand and seek truth, but at some point, reason will reach its limits, especially when trying to understand the essence of the Substance that governs the universe. At this point, although reason is indeed a divine gift that prepares humans to recognize the existence of God, it must always be guided by revelation in order to truly know His essence correctly. (Rush, 2018, p. 138) At that time, man is asked to surrender sincerely, to trust fully in the Almighty, as a form of awareness of his limitations. True faith, according to Hamka, is the result of self-awareness, a process that involves the mind and heart, not just following the teachings blindly (taklid). He criticized beliefs that were based solely on tradition or heritage without any effort to understand them deeply,

because it made religion lose its meaning and become frozen. Faith, thus, is an active attitude in seeking and understanding the truth, while taklid is passive and tends to make a person stagnant in his religious understanding.(Hamka, 2017, p. 11) For Hamka, taklid is the real enemy of freedom of reason.

After faith and reason support each other, the next thing is about worship, as mentioned earlier, that we believe in Him, of course, by following all His commandments. According to Hamka, the combination of aqidah and worship is inseparable so it can be said that confessing without following orders is tantamount to ignoring the essence of the faith. Hamka criticized those who claim to be Muslims but do not perform the five-time prayer or other pillars of Islam. For him, such a person is not truly a believer and is willing to believe. Hamka emphasized that trust has grown in the heart and confesses love for Him. Then of course we will be willing to sacrifice according to what He wants.(Hamka, 1996, p. 362).

According to Khairuddin AlJunied, in explaining the importance of reason in Islam, Hamka was greatly inspired by the thoughts of his teacher, Muhammad Natsir, as well as figures such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Taymiyya. In line with their perspectives, Hamka affirmed that reason is the greatest gift of God to humanity, serving as the primary distinction between humans and other creatures. Unlike animals, which act merely on instinct, humans possess the capacity to reflect upon and comprehend their actions. Therefore, if humans neglect the use of reason, their status may fall even lower than that of animals.(Aljunied, 2019, p. 26).

Thus, it can be concluded that Hamka views Faith as a direct relationship between man and Allah which is the essence of monotheism. Faith strengthens the spirituality of humanity through worship rituals such as prayer, dhikr, prayer, etc. Strong faith is the foundation for a responsible life. Both to Allah and to man. In Hamka's perspective, reason is God's gift that is used to understand revelation and reflect on His creation. Reason helps man to know God through the signs of His greatness in the universe. However, Hamka emphasized that reason must remain guided by revelation so that it remains within the limits of sharia and does not deviate, so that reason becomes a means to strengthen faith, not even oppose it. Then Hamka also emphasized in the aspect of monotheism, when the cleaner the way we think, the more open the way to monotheism.(Hamka, 2015, p. 70) .

Hamka in his book says that:

After the young men have fully understood what life really means and where this life is going, after they have understood that the earth and the heavens and all these celestial spheres are only part of the great realm under some power, and that power is the final concern rather than the purpose of life, then they are taught the kaifiat prayer and the way that begins with takbir and ends with salam. Allahu Akbar's words alone are enough to free the soul from the influence of nature.(Hamka, 2020, p. 23)

Worship in Hamka's thought includes all forms of obedience to Allah, both rituals such as prayer, fasting, and dhikr, as well as social charities such as helping others and upholding justice. Hamka emphasized that worship must be done with a deep understanding so that it does not become an empty routine. With this balance, worship becomes a real manifestation of monotheism in daily life. Hamka sees that faith, reason, and worship complement each other and cannot be separated. Faith provides a spiritual foundation, reason provides intellectual guidance, and worship is a practical expression of both. Tawhid is the link that unites the three in harmony, allowing humans to achieve a meaningful life and in accordance with the purpose of their creation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the above research, Based on the findings, it can be concluded that in Hamka's thought, tawheed is the central foundation that integrates faith, reason, and worship. True faith must be rooted in the awareness of God's oneness, reason functions as a tool to deepen the understanding of tawheed, and worship becomes its practical manifestation in daily life. This integration demonstrates that for Hamka, tawheed is not only a theological concept, but also a comprehensive guide for personal, social, and spiritual life. Hamka's emphasis on rationality, spiritual depth, and moral responsibility highlights his contribution in addressing the challenges of modernity. By rejecting blind imitation (taqlid) and encouraging critical religious understanding, Hamka situates tawheed as a source of liberation from ignorance, injustice, and intolerance. The practical implication is that true tawheed leads Muslims to cultivate a strong faith, an intelligent and open intellect, and sincere devotion, which in turn contributes to building a harmonious and peaceful society. In this way, Hamka's thought remains highly relevant to contemporary Muslim life, particularly in strengthening religious moderation and tolerance. Future research may further explore the significance of Hamka's concept of tawheed in Islamic education, interfaith dialogue, and the broader discourse on religious moderation in Indonesia and beyond.

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