

FAZLUR RAHMAN'S THOUGHTS ON AHLI KITAB AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR INTERFAITH MARRIAGE IN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC LAW REFORM

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Article Progress

Received: 7 Jan 2025

Revised: 28 Feb 2025

Accepted: 13 May 2025

Abstract	<p><i>The discussion about interfaith marriages has been prolonged. The discourse of thought starts from the dynamics of thought about "Ahli Kitab" and has implications for the validity of interfaith marriages. This research describes Fazlur Rahman's thoughts about "Ahli Kitab" and their implications for the legal determination of interfaith marriages. Using a qualitative approach, this research describes Fazlur Rahman's thoughts about "Ahli Kitab" and the law of interfaith marriage in Islamic jurisprudence and Indonesian positive law. From the research results, it was found that "Ahli Kitab," according to Fazlur Rahman, is equal to Muslims. This has implications for the permissibility of interfaith marriages as per QS. Al-Maidah verse 5, and there is no reason to negate the law in this verse. In Indonesia, although UUP no. 01/1974 jo KHI prohibits interfaith marriages, interfaith marriages still occur and can be registered by Law no. 23/2006 concerning ADMINDUK.</i></p> <p>Keywords: <i>Fazlur Rahman, Ahli Kitab, Interfaith Marriage</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

The meaning of "Ahli Kitab" has experienced a significant shift from classical to contemporary Muslim thinkers (Djuned, Muslim & Mufidah, 2017). At the beginning of the development of Islam, the term "Ahli Kitab" was used to denote people who embraced Judaism and Christianity; groups outside of that were not referred to as "Ahli Kitab". Then during the tabi'in period, the term for "Ahli Kitab" developed into the people of Israel, namely the people to whom the books of the Torah and the Gospel were revealed" (Amaly & Rahmat, 2018; M. L. H. Hakim & Alif Utama, 2022). This understanding was put forward by Imam Syafi'i in the book Al-Umm, who understood "Ahli Kitab" as an ethnic community, not as a religious community brought by the Prophet Moses and the Prophet Isa (Nasrullah, 2016).

In contemporary thought, Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha in their Al Manar commentary explain that "Ahli Kitab" is not only limited to these two groups (Jews and Christians) but includes all adherents of religions whose holy books are considered to come from God, namely including Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists. and Sinto (Ridha, n.d.). Muhammed Arkoun defines "Ahli Kitab" as "Ahli Kitab" (Azhar, 2013). M. Quraish Shihab interprets "Ahli Kitab" only for all followers of the Jewish and Christian religions, anytime, anywhere, and whoever their descendants are (Hermawan, 2018).

Attitudes towards "Ahli Kitab" also experience various dynamics. Fakhru Ar-Razi in his tafsir al-Kabir declared "Ahli Kitab" to be infidels because they denied and rejected the

prophethood of Muhammad SAW and the teachings he brought (Razi, 1995). This opinion is also shared by Abi Ja'far Muhammad bin Jarir Al-Thabary in his interpretation (Thabari, 1999) and also by Yusuf al-Qardhawi (Nuari, 2020). This opinion was also followed by the Malaysian National Assembly, which stated that Christians were not the Christians referred to by "Ahli Kitab" in the QS. Al Maidah verse 5 (Arshad et al., 2022). The disbelief of "Ahli Kitab" is also due to their theological understanding being considered to deviate from the teachings of the holy books they hold, the Torah and the Gospel (Huda, 2016). This interpretation was strongly criticized by Fazlur Rahman as a figure in contemporary Islamic thought who has inclusive thinking towards the profile of "Ahli Kitab" in his book *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Masrur, 2002). According to him, it would be very naive to ignore Allah's guarantee in QS al-Baqarah verse 62 and QS. Al-Maidah verse 69 regarding the piety of "Ahli Kitab" (Rahman, 2009). Statements based on prejudices that result in collective sentiments toward other communities (Nuari, 2020). This argument is also based on QS. Ali Imran verses 110 and 199, that "Ahli Kitab" are not all disbelievers. This is in line with Tafsir Jalalain (Al-Mahalli & As-Suyuti, 2015) and Tafsir Quraish Shihab (Shihab, 2001). The implications of this thinking have an impact on the legal position of interfaith marriages.

Discussions about interfaith marriages can be grouped into three aspects: achieving the goals of marriage, children's education, and matters of inheritance. It is feared that interfaith marriages will not be able to create family happiness because of the potential for differences in the way of life of each couple, according to their religion (Mangarengi & Hanza, 2021). In the aspect of children's education, it is feared that interfaith marriages will confuse children as to which way of life their parents will live because each person will live according to their religion (Kaharuddin & Syafruddin, 2020). In the aspect of inheritance, in Islam, only those of the same religion can inherit from each other, so couples of different religions cannot receive an inheritance from partners of different religions (Istiqamah, 2017). So far, there has been no discussion of interfaith marriages that emphasizes the concept of "Ahli Kitab" and their existence today. Discussions of interfaith marriages generally start by placing all religious people outside of Islam as polytheists, and marrying them is prohibited according to the QS. Al-Baqarah 221. However, from the perspective of the potential for piety that exists among Jews and Christians, as in QS al-Baqarah verse 62 and QS. Al-Maidah verse 69 was not taken into consideration in determining this law. So this research aims to complete the discussion of the law on interfaith marriages from the perspective of Fazlur Rahman's interpretation of "Ahli Kitab".

This research examines Fazlur Rahman's discourse on the term Ahl-Kitab in the Koran and its relevance for the law on interfaith marriages in Indonesia. To reveal the problem in this research, two questions were asked: first, what is Fazlur Rahman's concept of thinking about "Ahli Kitab"? Second, is Fazlur Rahman's thinking about the permissibility of interfaith marriage appropriate to be implemented in a multicultural and multi-religious society in Indonesia, and can it be used as a form of Islamic law reform in Indonesia? It is hoped that this research will be able to present the legal aspects of Fazlur Rahman's thoughts on "Ahli Kitab" and their relationship to the law on interfaith marriages.

Fazlur Rahman's argument, which emphasizes the contextualization of universal Islamic values in the early days of Islam to be implemented in the present, means that the conception of "Ahli Kitab" influences the legal provisions currently in force. In the literature search carried out by researchers, no comprehensive discussion was found that connected the perception of the book expert Fazlur Rahman regarding the law on interfaith marriage.

Fazlur Rahman

Rahman was born on September 21, 1919, in the Hazara region, which is now called Pakistan. This region is located in the northwest of Pakistan, which in its history has given birth to some world-class thinkers, such as Shah Waliyullah, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Amir Ali, and Muhammad Iqbal (Saefuddin, 2003). As a child, Rahman was raised in a religious family based on the Hanafi school of thought, and at the age of ten, he was able to memorize the Koran by heart. From his father, Maulana Syihab ad-Din, he received a lot of education

in the fields of Tafsir, Hadith, and Fiqh. Meanwhile, while hanging out with his mother, Rahman learned valuable lessons about the values of truth, love, and loyalty (Supena, 2008).

Rahman's education started from a traditional madrasa in Deoband and a modern school in Lahore in 1933. His higher education was taken in the Eastern Department, Arabic Language Department, Punjab University, and he completed his BA degree in 1940. He also achieved a Master's Degree in the Eastern Department at the same University in 1942 (Saefuddin, 2003). The Ph.D. program was completed in 1950 at Oxford University with a dissertation on Ibn Sina, under the guidance of Prof. S. Van den Bergh and HAR. Gibbs.

Rahman's career began as a lecturer in Persian Language and Islamic Philosophy at Durham University, England, from 1950-1958. At Ayyub Khan's request, Rahman returned to Pakistan and was appointed as Director of the Center for Islamic Research Institute (1961-1968) and a member of the Islamic Ideology Advisory Council (Alyafie, 2009). After that, Rahman continued his academic career at the University of California. In 1969, he began serving as a Professor of Islamic Studies in Various Aspects at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, University of Chicago, until the end of his life on July 26, 1988. Rahman's monumental works are Avicenna's Psychology (1952), Prophecy in Islam (1958), Avicenna's de Anima (1959), Islamic Methodology in History (1965), Islam (1966), The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra (1975), Major Themes of the Qur'an (1980), Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (1984) (Saefuddin, 2003).

All of Rahman's scientific works are directed towards revealing the contents of the Koran. These works can be seen as the essence of the conclusions he made based on his in-depth and extensive knowledge of Islamic thought, in addition to his insight and experience as a person living in the world and modern times. Rahman's thoughts, which are always based on the Koran, are a critical response to the views of the orthodoxy circulating in Pakistan. One of Rahman's thoughts that caused a stir in Pakistan for a year was his opinion, which stated that the Koran as a whole is the words of Allah, and in the ordinary sense, is also entirely the words of Muhammad (Muhammad Iqbal, 2012). By implication, Rahman rejects the traditional doctrine of mechanical and external revelation. He does not agree with the view of Islamic orthodoxy, which describes the process of revelation to the Prophet through the ear as external (Setiyawan, 2022).

Apart from this phenomenal contribution of thought, Rahman sees that Muslims (especially orthodox people) have never discussed fairly the basic issues regarding the methods and methods of interpreting the Koran. There is a common error in understanding the points of integration of the Qur'an, and this error is paired with a practical stubbornness in adhering to the verses of the Qur'an in isolation. According to him, to understand the comprehensive message of the Koran, its historical context must be considered (Dewi Martina Sari, 2021; Sabriana, 2020). Rahman emphasized the importance of understanding the actual conditions of Arab society when the Koran was revealed, especially to interpret its legal statements and socio-economic conditions. The application of this historical approach makes Rahman emphasize the importance of distinguishing between the moral goals or ideals of the Koran and its specific legal provisions. The Qur'anic moral ideals aimed at in the Qur'an are more appropriate to apply than their specific legal provisions (Zaprulkhan, 2017). The success of this differentiation process, ultimately, results in the creation of an open, integrated, and universal view of the Qur'anic world.

Based on these theories, Rahman formulated an exegetical methodology (al-Qur'an) which was arranged systematically; First, finding the meaning of the Qur'anic text by using a serious and honest historical approach. Socio-historically, the Qur'an must be studied in its chronological order by examining the earliest portions of the revelation to gain a sufficiently accurate perception of the basic movement of Islam to distinguish the decrees and institutions established later. In this way, an interpreter has followed Muhammad's career and struggles. Therefore, this method not only saves us from the extravagant and artificial interpretations of modernists but also clearly shows the overall meaning of the message of the Koran. Second, distinguish between the specific legal provisions of the Koran and the moral ideals of the Koran. Rahman hopes that the laws that will be formed will serve

him, not specific laws. Rahman realizes that this is faced with subjectivity, but according to him, this can be reduced to a minimum by using the Koran itself. One thing that is too often overlooked by non-Muslims and Muslims alike is that the Qur'an usually provides reasons for its specific legal statements. Third, understand the target (purpose) or moral ideal of the Qur'an while still paying full attention to its sociological background, namely the environment in which the Qur'an was revealed (Sabriana, 2020).

Applicatively, the interpretation process offered by Rahman in the definitive formulation of his interpretation methodology is applied using two movements known as double movements. The first movement begins with interpreting specific verses in the Koran, then explores and systematizes general principles, values, and long-term goals. The second movement formulates and realizes these general views (principles) into specific views in the present (Rahman, 1984). However, even though the interpretation method offered by Rahman has a new form, all its elements are traditional. The aspect of its novelty lies in the development of its elements and the rejection of traditional religious buildings produced by historical Islam, especially after the period of the first generation of Muslims, and as a consequence, a total and complete reconstruction of Islamic traditions is urgently carried out.

“Ahli Kitab”

Literally, “Ahli Kitab” means those who have books, which is a concept that gives certain recognition to adherents of religions outside Islam who have holy books (M. L. H. Hakim & Alif Utama, 2022). This attitude is intended to provide limited recognition of each individual's right to exist with the freedom to practice their respective religions. The term “Ahli Kitab” is a term used by the Qur'an to designate two communities of followers of the divine religion before Islam, namely, Jews and Christians. The term “Ahli Kitab” naturally refers to non-Muslim groups, and is not directed at Muslims themselves, even though they also adhere to the holy book, namely the Qur'an (Nasrullah, 2016). “Ahli Kitab” are not considered Muslims, because they do not recognize, or even oppose, Muhammad's prophethood and apostolate and the teachings he conveyed. Therefore, in the Qur'anic terminology, they are called “infidels”, namely those who oppose or reject the teachings brought by the Prophet Muhammad. The scholars have agreed that Jews and Christians are “Ahli Kitab”. But they differ in opinion regarding the status of the Shabi'un, Magi, and other religions not mentioned in the Qur'an: whether they are among “Ahli Kitab” or not (Amaly & Rahmat, 2018).

According to Abdul Hamid Hakim in his book *al-Muin al-Mubin*, the “Ahli Kitab” group are people who reject the Prophet Muhammad and his teachings who are divided into three groups, (a) those who do not have the holy book at all, (b) those who have some kind of scriptures, (c) those who have clear scriptures. Those who have this clear holy book are Jews and Christians, these are those who in the Qur'an are explicitly and directly called “Ahli Kitab” (A. H. Hakim, 1959). Quraish Shihab thinks that the term “Ahli Kitab” contained in the Qur'an is only intended for people who adhere to the Jewish and Christian religions, whenever and wherever, and from the descendants of any nation. QS Al-An'am: 156. However, according to him, adherents of other religions, including non-Arab idol worshipers, even though they are not called “Ahli Kitab”, are treated like “Ahli Kitab”. This means that they pay *jizyah*, their slaughter is halal for consumption, and their women can be married (Shihab, 1996).

Rasyid Rida, who is considered more moderate, stated that: What is meant by *al-Musyrikun* in the Qur'an is only idol-worshipping Arabs. Therefore, adherents of the Magian, and Shabi'un religions, and adherents of religions not mentioned in the Qur'an, such as Brahmanism (Hinduism), Buddhism, Confucius, and Shintoism can be classified as “Ahli Kitab” because there is no one The people were not visited by an apostle of God. At first, they had the holy book and the creed of monotheism, but over time, their holy book and monotheistic beliefs were damaged. Regarding the reason they are not mentioned in the Koran, according to Rida, it is because Arabs do not know them (Rida, n.d.) Following Rasyid

Rida's opinion, it can be concluded that their slaughter is halal to eat, and their women are halal to marry (Tahqiq, 2012). Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyah Rahmatullahi strengthens the opinion that the Magi religion is not included in the group of "Ahli Kitab" (Muhdina, 2015). Non-Muslim people living in a Muslim society are treated by the Qur'an as members of society. So you won't be isolated in your social life (Said Aqil Siradz, 2008). Religious differences alone should not be an excuse for Muslims not to be kind to non-Muslims, as neighbors or as fellow members of society (Halim, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method through a literature study (Sugiyono, 2018). Researchers collect data from various sources such as books, journals, articles, and other literature to describe and understand the phenomenon of Fazlur Rahman's interpretation of the people of the Book and its relevance to the law of interfaith marriage. This interpretation is associated with the construction of law and the culture of the multicultural society in Indonesia. The primary sources of this study are the book Major Themes of the Qur'an by Fazlur Rahman, books and articles about marriage, especially interfaith marriage, and other relevant reading sources.

The data analysis technique refers to the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Miles and Huberman, 1984, 2016). Data reduction is carried out by searching for library data related to Fazlur Rahman's thoughts on the People of the Book and their relevance to the law of interfaith marriage in Indonesia. Conclusions are drawn deductively from the research findings. Testing the validity of the data using a credibility test, namely by increasing the researcher's perseverance in studying the main points of Fazlur Rahman's thoughts on the People of the Book and marriage law in Indonesia.

RESULTS

Interpretation of "Ahli Kitab" by Fazlur Rahman

In the book "Major Themes of the Qur'an", Rahman rejects an exclusive attitude toward religion (Hamim, 2022). When Jews and Christians claim that they are the only ones who receive God's guidance and will enter heaven, the Qur'an answers firmly by stating that guidance and salvation do not belong to the clans, but to God. No one group can say that they are the only ones who received God's guidance and only they have the right to enter heaven, while others will go to hell because they did not receive God's guidance (Amaly & Rahmat, 2018; Masrur, 2002).

Guidance does not belong to certain groups from certain religions, but guidance belongs to pious people, as Allah explains in the Qur'an. Al Baqarah verse 124. If the exclusive claims of Jews and Christians, as well as Abraham's request that his descendants be appointed as leaders, are rejected by the Qur'an, then Islam also has no right to claim that it is the one that gets guidance and obtains salvation (Rahman, 2009). This is also explained in QS al-Baqarah verse 62 and QS. Al-Maidah verse 69 states that Jews, Christians, and Sabians are equal to believers in getting rewards from Allah when they believe in Allah, the Day of Judgment, and do good deeds.

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴾

Meaning, "Indeed, those who believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans [before Prophet Muhammad] - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve" (Al-Quran. al-Baqarah: 62).

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴾

Meaning, "Indeed, those who have believed [in Prophet Muhammad] and those [before Him] who were Jews or Sabians or Christians - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve" (Al-Quran. Al-Maidah: 69).

Rahman's interpretation of this verse is grouped into two schools of understanding by interpreters. Firstly, what is meant by Jews, Christians, and Sabians in this verse is those who have converted to Islam. Second, the Jews, Christians, and Sabians referred to were those who were devout before the arrival of Islam (Masrur, 2002). According to Rahman, this interpretation is incorrect and wastes the meaning of QS al-Baqarah verse 62 and QS. Al-Maidah verse 69. These two verses clearly explain that believers (Islam), Jews, Christians, and Sabians will obtain salvation as long as they believe in Allah, the Day of Judgment, and do good deeds. Thus, Muslims do not have the right to claim themselves to be the best people, middle people, and special people before they can prove their goodness and specialness to other people (Rahman, 1984).

Interfaith Marriage in Islamic Fiqh and Positive Law in Indonesia

Interfaith marriage is a marriage between followers of different religions. However, they still adhere to their respective religions (Putri et al., 2023). Social interaction across heavenly and Ardhi religions has the potential for marriage between Islam and Catholicism, Islam and Hinduism, Catholicism and Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism, and so on (Bahri & Elimartati, 2022). Interfaith marriages can take the form of a Muslim man and a woman from an "Ahli Kitab" or a Muslim woman and a man from an "Ahli Kitab". Regarding the law of marriage between Muslim men and women, "Ahli Kitab", ulama in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and some Indonesian ulama follow the Syafi'iyah and Syi'i Imamiyah beliefs. Hasan Basri, former chairman of the Central MUI, said that Islam prohibits marriage between religions (Cahaya, 2019). Meanwhile, if the prospective wife is a woman from "Ahli Kitab" who belongs to the group of "Ahli Kitab" who are fighting against the Islamic government (harbiyah), then according to the Hanafi school of thought scholars it is makruh tahrim (haram) for a Muslim man to marry her because it could lead to mafsadat and give rise to slander. Meanwhile, marrying a woman from "Ahli Kitab" who is subject to Islamic law (dhimmiyah) is makruh tanzih (Al-Jaziri, 1989).

Among the Malikiyah Ulama, there are two opinions; Firstly, marriage to a kitabiyah woman for Muslim men is absolute makruh, both dzimmiyah and harbiyah. Likewise, according to Imam 'Atha', marriage is makruh. Especially with harbiyah, the level of makruh is greater; secondly, it is not makruh, because there is a verse that allows it. Because the Maliki school of thought was built based on sad al-zari'ah (closing the way of evil), then if you marry a woman from an "Ahli Kitab" who is worried about giving rise to mafsadat, it is haram to marry someone from the Bible (Al-Jaziri, 1989).

According to the Shafi'i school of thought, it is makruh to marry a woman from an "Ahli Kitab" who is a dhimmi (submissive to the rules of Islamic government). Meanwhile, for "Ahli Kitab" who are harbiyah (hostile to Islam), the level of makruh is greater. Then they also stated that the makruh law had conditions: first, not expecting women from "Ahli Kitab" to embrace Islam; secondly, there are still Muslim women who can bring goodness to him; third, if you don't marry a woman from "Ahli Kitab", there is a fear that you will commit adultery. But if a Muslim man hopes that the woman from "Ahli Kitab" will embrace Islam, there is no Muslim woman who can bring him good, and if he does not marry a woman from "Ahli Kitab", he will fall into adultery, then the law of marrying that woman is sunnah because it avoids this heinous act (Assagaf et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, the provisions for interfaith marriages refer to the provisions of Article 1 of Law No. 1/1974 concerning Marriage, which states that "marriage is valid if it is carried out according to the laws of each respective religion and belief". The interpretation of this article is that the validity of interfaith marriages is not recognized because there is a legal dualism that applies to each religion of the interfaith marriage partners (Daus & Marzuki, 2023). Furthermore, in the Compilation of Islamic Law, in article 40 (c), it is stipulated that there is a prohibition on marriage between a man who is Muslim and a woman who is not Muslim. In article 44 of the Compilation of Islamic Law, it is stated: "that a Muslim woman is prohibited from entering into marriage with a man who is not Muslim". These provisions are a comprehensive study of *naṣṣiyyah* verses discussing marriage, which were then codified as *fiqh* in statutory language and were then compiled in the form of chapters, articles, and verses so that the Compilation of Islamic Law was born. Apart from that, the Compilation of Islamic Law also covers in detail the issues of divorce, inheritance, and *waqf* (Azizy, 2002).

However, there is a legal loophole in Article 35 of Law Number 23 of 2006 concerning ADMINDUK. Under the provisions of this article, interfaith marriages can be registered based on a court decision (M.Yunus & Aini, 2020). Registration of interfaith marriages can also be carried out for interfaith married couples who hold their marriage outside the territory of Indonesia and then report their marriage no later than 1 year after they return to Indonesia, and then their marriage can be registered. The same provisions also apply to marriages of Indonesian citizens with citizens of other countries.

DISCUSSION

Implications of the Interpretation of Experts in the Book by Fazlur Rahman on the Law of Interfaith Marriage

The term "Ahli Kitab" is a study that has existed since the time of the prophethood. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the interpretation of "Ahli Kitab" has become a prolonged discussion in every era. The discussion about "Ahli Kitab" revolves around people who are "Ahli Kitab" and about marriage with "Ahli Kitab". The scholars agree that Jews and Christians are "Ahli Kitab" because they are people who have divine scriptures. However, in terms of marriage, Muslims are not permitted to marry "Ahli Kitab" according to the provisions of QS Al-Maidah verse 5 for reasons of *sadduz zari'ah* (Arifin, 2018; Assagaf et al., 2022; Bahri & Elimartati, 2022; Hedi, 2019). It is feared that interfaith marriages will hinder the achievement of the goals of marriage, cause problems with children's education, and eliminate mutual inheritance rights.

Marriage is an interpersonal bond that results in rights and obligations (Al-Hamdani, 1998). In Islam, marriage is called *mitsaqan ghalizhan* because the union is not only between two people of different genders but also with Allah SWT, as explained in QS An-Nisa verse 21 (Nur Komala, 2018). The implementation of marriage is guided by Islamic law to create a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and full of mercy (Khuluq, 2019). Thus, marriage is not just an alliance, but also means worship, because it fulfills the demands of human nature in family life, apart from preserving the survival of human children, it also guarantees social stability and a dignified existence for men and women (Santoso, 2016).

To realize this goal, in the process of determining marriage partners, it is recommended to choose those who are of the same understanding, balanced, level, and equal (Fauzi, 2019). Although this is not a necessity, it is intended to produce harmony to avoid mistakes (Chania & Mukri, 2021; Suwarjin, 2022). Often, failure in building a household is caused by striking differences, both in religion and social strata (Muslimin, 2019). These differences can become a source of dispute that causes family disharmony. Similar opinions were also expressed by psychologists who recommended that between two partners there should not be much difference, let alone conflict with each other, both in terms of understanding and social and personality levels (Susiana, 2019). In Islam, this understanding is called *kafaah*. *Kafaah* in terms of religion and social aspects (Aziz & Junaidi, 2022).

There are two different interpretations or versions regarding kufu' in terms of religion, namely, the first is that the benchmark for kufu' in religion is judged by its nasab. If a woman has a Muslim father and grandfather, she is considered less worthy than someone who has a non-Muslim father and grandfather. A person who has Muslim parents is equal to a person who has one Muslim parent. If not, his father and grandfather can sue for divorce (Ibrahimi et al., 2021; Miftahuzzaman et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the second opinion defines the size of kafa'ah in religious terms (deen or dinayah) as the level of obedience in carrying out religious commands. Even Malikiyah scholars think that this is the only thing that can be used as a criterion or benchmark for kafa'ah (Chania & Mukri, 2021). The reason put forward by the Maliki group is the word of Allah in QS al-Hujurat verse 13. This verse recognizes that the human value of everyone is the same; no one is more noble than another, except because of their piety by fulfilling their obligations to Allah and fellow humans.

Observing the opinion of Malikiyah ulama, which is based on QS Al-Hujurat verse 13, the universality of Islamic values does not mean that the dominance of truth belongs only to Muslims. According to Fazlur Rahman, the exclusivity of benefits does not only belong to a religious group and discredits the potential truth of other religious communities. The claim that interfaith marriages are not permissible without considering the observance of one's religion is an act of discrimination (Rahman, 2009). In this way, there is no obstacle to marrying an "Ahli Kitab" as long as the person concerned practices their religion obediently, as stated by Nurcholis Madjid (Karim & Mohammad, 2020). Then, regarding Surah al-Baqarah verse 221, which prohibits marrying a polytheist, according to Nurcholis, it is not correct if the category of polytheist is compared to non-Muslims. According to Nurcholis, this is not fair, because if a Muslim commits an act of shirk, it does not directly make the perpetrator a polytheist, but on the contrary, if a person is said to be a polytheist, then it is clear that he is a shirk (Karim & Mohammad, 2020).

Rahman's thoughts about piety which are also shared by Jews and Christians form a discourse on religious equality as echoed in Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that every human being has the right to marry and have a family regardless of nationality, nationality or religion as long as they like each other. The right to marry is a basic right and is entirely up to each individual's choice. This rule also states that marriage is not restricted due to differences in nationality (Siahaan, 2019). The application of provisions regarding interfaith marriages varies in countries that ratify this declaration. In Iraq's Personal Status Law of 1959, Chapter 11, Article 17, it is stated that the marriage of a Muslim man with a woman from "Ahli Kitab" is valid, but marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man is not permitted (Bahri & Elimartati, 2022).

In Indonesia, the Marriage Law (UUP) Number 1 of 1974 and Government Regulation Number 9 of 1975, as positive Indonesian laws governing marriage, do not clearly state interfaith marriages. The same thing is also not contained in Presidential Instruction Number 1 of 1991 concerning the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI). Understanding of the law on interfaith marriages is taken from Article 2 of the UUP, which states that a marriage is declared valid if it is carried out by the laws of each religion and belief. In Article 8, letter f of the Prohibited Marriage Law, it states that a marriage is prohibited if they are in a relationship that is prohibited by their religion or other applicable regulations from marrying. A similar prohibition is also contained in KHI article 40 letter c "It is prohibited to carry out a marriage between a man and a woman due to certain circumstances: ... c. a woman who is not Muslim". Article 44 "A Muslim woman is prohibited from entering into marriage with a man who is not Muslim." This article is supported by the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) dated 1 June 1980 in conjunction with Fatwa Number 4/MUNAS VII/MUI/8/2005 which states: Firstly "Marriage of a Muslim woman with a non-Muslim man is haram", secondly "A man Muslim men are prohibited from marrying non-Muslim women." Regarding marriage between Muslim men and women from Ahlu Kitab, there are differences of opinion. After considering that the mafsadah was greater than the benefit, the Indonesian Ulema Council declared that the marriage was haram."

However, in reality, in 1986, a jurisprudence decision of the Supreme Court. 1400K/Pdt/1986 submitted by Andy Vonny Gani P and Andrianus Hendrik Nelwan, who filed an appeal to the Supreme Court (Siregar, 2023). From the results of the cassation, it was decided that the Supreme Court permitted interfaith marriages because, according to the Supreme Court, the difference in the religion of the prospective husband and wife was not an absolute prohibition against marriage (Ashsubli, 2016; Wahyuni, 2018). This decision is supported by human rights contained in the 1945 Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This was then confirmed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which was ratified through Law No.12/2005, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which was ratified through Law No.11/2005. In article 16 of the UDHR, it is stated that "men and women have the same rights, namely the right to marry and form a family, without being limited by nationality, citizenship or religion" (Daus & Marzuki, 2023; Syahputra, 2024). Confirmation of these rules is contained in Article 35 of Law No. 23/2006, which talks about the Population Administration. The explanation of the article states that the purpose of marriage determined by the court, is for those who want to get married but are prevented by religious differences; their marriage can be registered (M.Yunus & Aini, 2020). The legal loopholes above have led to the proliferation of interfaith marriages in Indonesia (Bahri, 2022). In the period 2005 to 2022, there were 1,425 interfaith marriages as published by the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (Pahrevi, 2022). In general, these marriages are carried out by educated and urban communities who find it impossible not to know about the law in force in Indonesia that marriages can only be carried out by couples of the same religion (Wardana, 2020).

In general, there are two patterns of interfaith marriages carried out. First, not paying attention to National Law by making or holding a marriage abroad, which legalizes this, and continuing the marriage, which was carried out according to their respective customs. Second, not paying attention to the provisions of each religion, for example, holding a marriage more than once and changing/transferring beliefs, while it is known that while the marriage is taking place, then only return to the original belief after the marriage is completed (Islamiyati, 2017).

In the empirical aspect, Ahmad Nurcholis wrote that interfaith marriages can still achieve the goals of marriage (Nurcholis, 2004). This is also supported by the results of Nova Effenty Muhammad's research, which concluded that the ulama's concerns that interfaith couples could not become happy families did not occur. This conclusion is the antithesis, according to scholars, regarding interfaith marriages, that happiness is not related to religion (Muhammad, 2020). According to Ahmad Nurcholish, concerns about domestic conflict do not only occur in couples in interfaith marriages (Amalia, 2018a, 2018b). Overall, conflicts can be resolved through self-reflection, asking for advice from those closest to you, and presenting a mediator, through the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization (Nurlaelawati, 2016).

Fazlur Rahman's interpretation of the terminology of "Ahli Kitab" has influenced the understanding and determination of law for people who are categorized as "Ahli Kitab" today. The equality put forward by Fazlur Rahman has influenced society's attitudes and responses to the concept of interfaith marriage. This is proven by the phenomenon of interfaith marriages that continue to occur. Even though religious leaders and legal authorities in various countries do not recognize the validity of interfaith marriages, there are always efforts to find legal loopholes that allow for the legalization of these marriages. In this aspect, legal reformulation is needed so that it can provide services to a very heterogeneous and dynamic society.

CONCLUSION

Rahman's thinking on the permissibility of interfaith marriage has indirectly been implemented by some Indonesian Muslims, even though Indonesian regulations have never officially opened up the opportunity. The legal loophole that is considered to allow interfaith marriage is contained in

Law No. 23 of 2006, even though it is not specifically intended to legalize it. The contradiction between the laws that specifically regulate Muslim marriage, Law No. 1 of 1974, and the Compilation of Islamic Law in 1991 shows that there are regulations that are not synchronized in regulating the same issue.

Although Indonesian society lives in a multicultural and multireligious atmosphere, and there have been Indonesian thinkers who have developed Rahman's style of thinking, in reality, it is still difficult to make the idea of permitting interfaith marriages into a form of reform of marriage law in Indonesia. This is because interfaith marriages are not recognized as valid. After all, they do not meet the provisions of Article 2 and Article 8 of the Marriage Law. The prohibition of interfaith marriage is implicitly stated in Article 40 (c) of the KHI and MUI Fatwa Number 4 of 2005. However, there is a legal loophole in Article 35 (a) of Law Number 23 of 2006, which allows interfaith marriages to be registered at the legally authorized population administration office, which is the same as the marriage certificate issued based on Law Number 1 of 1974.

This research is limited to reading the dynamics of thought regarding the concept of equal position between "Ahli Kitab" and Islam from the perspective of social and community interactions. It is necessary to reformulate the study of this issue in the contemporary context so that religion remains present in every line of society's life. The prohibition carried out, as in Indonesia, does not prevent interfaith marriages from occurring, but opens up a mode of legal smuggling so that these marriages can be recognized by the state. Concern about the negative impacts of interfaith marriages is a condition that not only occurs in interfaith marriages but in every marriage in general. Because in today's conditions, social interaction between religious followers has become a necessity.

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