

Re-Understanding the Content of Surah al-Kāfirūn: Analysis of Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Jābirī’s Chronological Qur’anic Interpretation

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Abstract. This paper discusses the attempts to re-understand the content of surah al-Kāfirūn, which is often identified as the foundation of religious tolerance through the chronological Qur’anic interpretation of M. ‘Ābid al-Jābirī through surah al-Kāfirūn. Al-Jābirī interprets it differently. He does not mention tolerance at all and instead emphasizes the social context that occurred when the surah was revealed. Using a descriptive-analytic method, this paper tries to find out how al-Jābirī interpret the surah? This study finds that al-Jābirī uses the *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl* method. In this way, it not only reads the text of the Qur’an chronologically but also considers the contents of the surah according to the social context that surrounded it. In contrast to other interpreters, al-Jābirī shows that the surah responded to the economic logic of the Quraysh leaders who offered compromises in worship for their own benefit. This surah was revealed to unequivocally reject that compromise.

Keywords: surah al-Kāfirūn, chronological interpretation, ‘Ābid al-Jābirī.

1 Introduction

Surah al-Kāfirūn is one of the popular surahs among Muslims. Apart from being often read during prayer, this surah is also often used as an argument for one of the current popular issues, namely tolerance between religious communities. In particular, the most frequently quoted verse is the sixth verse, *la-kum dīnu-kum wa-liya dīn*, which means "to you your religion and to me my religion". This verse is understood as the basis for the teaching of religious tolerance in which followers of each religion respect each other and do not disturb each other in carrying out their worship.

The understanding of the surah al-Kāfirūn, as mentioned above, at least in Indonesia, is commonplace. In fact, if we review the meaning of word by word, especially the sixth verse, we will not find a single word that means tolerance or what in Arabic is called *al-tasāmuh*. How and since when was the surah interpreted as tolerance? That is the fundamental question that might reveal the discourse on the understanding of surah al-Kāfirūn. This question could determine whether it is true that the Qur’an - through the surah - talks about tolerance or whether it is simply an imposition of meaning on the Qur’an by its readers today.

So far, several studies have shown that there is a discourse of tolerance in surah al-Kāfirūn. For example, Supardi examines the boundaries of religious tolerance with case studies of tolerance practices in Indonesia. Using linguistic analysis, he finds that religious tolerance includes two things, namely "the belief" and "the rituals". Based on surah al-Kāfirūn, according to him, there are three limits to tolerance in religion, namely: compromising religious beliefs, mixing religious ritual activities, and imposing religion on others[1].

Anam and Ghozali examine the concept of religious tolerance in Surah al-Kāfirūn from Mun'im Sirry's perspective. Sirry is of the view that tolerance is not only within social boundaries but perhaps also within religious boundaries. According to him, Muslims not only need to respect, appreciate, and acknowledge differences in beliefs with followers of other religions and live in harmony with them but also acknowledge the possibility of salvation for them on the Day of Resurrection. By using Teun van Dijk's critical discourse analysis approach, the two researchers found that Sirry's understanding of surah al-Kāfirūn was inseparable from the Western influence that surrounded him[2].

Slightly different from the two previous studies, Muttaqin and Nafiza's research examines the understanding of moderation and religious tolerance from the perspective of Habib Husein Ja'far, one of the most popular preachers in Indonesia recently. Ja'far explains his understanding of surah al-Kāfirūn on YouTube. Among the findings from this research is Ja'far's moderation attitude, which interprets the word *kāfir* not only for disbelievers but also for people who have bad behavior, such as ungrateful and liars. Regarding the last verse, Ja'far explains that *dīn* can be interpreted as a reward. This means that everyone gets a reward from what they do and not from what other people do. Therefore, there is no need to be angry with those who sin or force them to adhere to Islamic teachings[3].

There is still a lot of other literature that discusses surah al-Kāfirūn within the framework of the discourse of religious freedom and inter-religious tolerance. However, it is not necessary to mention all of them here. What is clear is that this discourse has spread and is generally known in modern times. The problem is how surah al-Kāfirūn can be seen as a basis for religious freedom and tolerance between religions.

At this point, the author sees that there is a missing process in understanding surah al-Kāfirūn in the discourse. This is corroborated by evidence that earlier commentators such as al-Ṭabarī [4], al-Qurṭubī [5], al-Rāzī [6], and Ibn Kathīr [7] do not provide any explanation that addresses the topic. In addition, several modern interpreters -such as Ibn 'Āshūr [8], al-Marāghī [9], 'Abduh [10], and al-Ṣabūnī [11]- also did not indicate to that direction (see Table 1). In general, they emphasize the confirmation of *taūhīd* in surah al-Kāfirūn. This shows that freedom and tolerance are discourses that have only emerged in recent times (modern-contemporary), and not all modern interpreters react to them. Some of the scholars that reacted to the discourses are Indonesian interpreters such as Shihab [12] and Harun [13] (see Table 2).

Table 1. Scholar's Interpretation of Surah al-Kāfirūn

Scholar's Interpretation of Surah al-Kāfirūn				
Name	Classic		Modern	
		Tolerance	Name	Tolerance
Al-Ṭabarī		x	Ibn 'Āshūr	x
Al-Qurṭubī		x	Al-Marāghī	x
Al-Rāzī		x	Al-Ṣabūnī	x
Ibn Kathīr		x	Muḥammad 'Abduh	x

Several names in Table 1 above are the main interpreters who are generally used as references in interpretation. This means that if the commentators do not touch on the topics of tolerance and religious freedom in the slightest, then it can be assumed that these topics emerged later or that these topics appeared outside the context of their lives. However, this assumption seems weak because tolerance is one of the big issues that is often discussed in the modern era. These symptoms were seen in Shihab and Harun, two commentators from Indonesia.

Table 2. Indonesian Scholar's Interpretation of Surah al-Kāfirūn

Indonesian Scholar's Interpretation of Surah al-Kāfirūn	
Name	Tolerance
M. Quraish Shihab	√
Salman Harun	√

However, there are differences between Shihab and Harun. In Shihab's interpretation, the discourse of religious tolerance is touched upon implicitly while in Harun's interpretation, this discourse is touched upon explicitly. In general, both of them touch on the issue of religious tolerance in the sense that Islam recognizes the existence of other religions. Islam teaches that Muslims should not impose their teachings on non-Muslims. Islam also has principles related to tolerance in the form of freedom for everyone to practice the religion they believe in.

Meanwhile, in one of her writings, Johanna Pink maps out several contemporary interpretation methods. One of them is *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl*, an interpretation which follows the arrangement of the Qur'an based on the chronology of its revelation. In that discussion, she makes the interpretation of Muḥammad 'Ābid al-Jābirī as a case example. The interpretation that is used as the object is surah al-Kāfirūn. According to her, al-Jābirī's interpretation is different from the interpretation of other contemporary scholars who raise the issue of religious freedom and inter-religious tolerance or at least touch on this issue[14].

Pink does not mention any of the mufassir who studied surah al-Kāfirūn within the framework of the discourse on the two issues above or who discussed them. In her final note, she only refers to Darwazah's interpretation, who is also a pioneer of chronological interpretation. Darwazah spends more than 15 pages discussing the issue[14]. Pink's presentation attracted the attention of the author to examine further al-Jābirī's interpretation. Besides it, al-Jābirī's interpretation is known as the latest which was published in the 21st century where the issues spread widely.

Based on the background above, Pink's assessment of al-Jābirī's interpretation of surah al-Kāfirūn needs to be re-examined. This needs to be done, especially because she does not refer to any other interpretation besides Darwazah, so the basis for her claim is quite weak. For this

reason, there are at least two questions to be answered in this paper. First, how does al-Jābirī understand surah al-Kāfirūn? Second, is there any novelty or difference in his interpretation?

2 Methods

In this study, the author uses qualitative research methods in the form of descriptive-analytic to explain, describe, and analyze al-Jābirī's interpretation of surah al-Kāfirūn[15]. The primary data source for this research are the text of surah al-Kāfirūn in the Qur'an and its interpretation written in the book *Fahm al-Qur'ān al-Ḥakīm: al-Taḥsīn al-Wāḍiḥ ḥasb Tartīb al-nuzūl* by al-Jābirī[16]. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from all literature related to the topic, whether in the form of interpretive works such as *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* (classical exegesis) and *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* (modern exegesis), journal articles, or other scientific works. In the data analysis process, the author sometimes uses a comparative method between interpretations.

3 Findings

Al-Qur'an is a holy book whose truth is believed by its adherents. In this case, the truth of the Qur'an is absolute while the truth of its understanding is relative. As a text that has its own context, there are times when the understanding of the Qur'an is deviated from its context. This often happens, especially when a reader of the Qur'an wants to find something new that appears in the present in the Qur'an.

Indeed, the Qur'an is a book of guidance. However, he does not explain everything, let alone the intricacies of the fast development of the era. Many new issues or discourses emerge that the Qur'an does not explicitly mention. This then encourages readers of the Qur'an to search for the values or content of the issue. Unfortunately, in that search, it is not uncommon for the meaning of the Qur'an to be forced so that it is not the Qur'an that guides the reader but is guided by the reader.

In the context of the problems above, Surah al-Kāfirūn is explicitly/textually a revelation guidance for the Prophet Muhammad SAW in responding to the offers of Quraysh leaders. From the beginning to the end, it is clear from the surah that the words (dialogue) must be conveyed by the Prophet. Judging from the text, we know from the first verse that the Prophet's interlocutor at that time was called *al-kāfirūn*. The following verses contain the statement that the Prophet did not worship what they worshiped nor did they worship what the Prophet worshiped. The next verse contains the statement that the Prophet is not a worshiper of what they worship and they are not worshipers of what the Prophet worships. The last verse contains a statement of detachment from the Prophet's attachment to those who are nicknamed *al-kāfirūn*.

The basic question we asked earlier about "does surah al-Kāfirūn talk about freedom and tolerance in religion" led us to explore interpretations in both classical and modern tafsir works. In an effort to find answers, we try to find readings that place the text according to its context. Chronological interpretation or *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl* makes this possible. The interpretation is indeed designed to find out the context of the process of the decline of the Qur'an. In addition, this interpretation also offers readings of the Qur'an through the Prophet's *sīrah*. These two approaches are sufficient to provide a basis for knowing the surah of the Qur'an according to its

context. The choice of al-Jābirī was made because apart from following the chronological method of interpretation, he himself has a contemporary way of reading that tries to read the text objectively[17]. Therefore, al-Jābirī is chosen here.

Based on the reading that has been done, at least the author finds several discoveries. *First*, al-Jābirī interprets surah al-Kāfirūn concisely in just two pages. The interpretation is divided into three parts, namely: *taqdīm*, *naṣṣ al-sūrah*, and *ta'liq*. In the *taqdīm* section, he explains the historical context when surah al-Kāfirūn came down. Quoting Ibn Ishāq in *al-Sīrah*, it is said that several Quraysh officials intercepted the Prophet SAW while he was making tawaf at the Ka'bah. They said, "O Muhammad! Come, let us worship what you worship, and you worship what we worship. So we, we and you, are allies in one matter. If what you worship is better than what we worship, we have indeed taken advantage of it. And if what we worship is better than what you worship, you have indeed taken advantage of it." [16].

According to al-Jābirī, Ibn Ishāq's history, if true, is in accordance with the context of the previous surahs, especially because it reflects the logic of the Quraysh officials who were "commercial." They were traders who practiced religion as part of their trade. What they cared about from idols were the economic benefits they got from the pilgrimage of the Arab tribes who came to Mecca and the giving of gifts to their idols. Rasulullah SAW knew this condition of the Quraysh leaders: that what they were most important about was economic benefits. They will not abandon the idols as long as there are benefits associated with them. Therefore, the Prophet made these benefits a goal in his wars when he moved to Medina [16].

There is another narration which is attributed by the commentators as *sabab al-nuzūl* surah al-Kāfirūn. The history says that the Quraysh leaders offered wealth, power, marriage, and so on to the Prophet before they offered fellowship in worship. According to al-Jābirī, this history is not balanced with the *marḥalah*/period in which this surah is located/sequenced. This is because the history states that they asked the Prophet to stop criticizing their gods. In fact, at that time, the Prophet had not yet started rejecting their gods. Just like the previous surahs, surah al-Kāfirūn is free from such objections. The new rejection occurs in the next phase [16].

In the *naṣṣ al-sūrah* section, al-Jābirī does not explain much about the lafaz. At least he gives six explanations. First, he only gives a footnote to the first verse regarding the lafaz "*kāfirūn*": Ulama distinguishes *kufr* between denying favors and denying the oneness of Allah or the apostolate of the Prophet Muhammad. According to him, the word *kāfirūn* referred to in this surah is the final meaning of *kufr*. Then, he gives an explanation respectively in the second and third verses as the context of "now/*ḥāl*!" and the fourth and fifth verses as the context of "the future/*mustaqbal*." Finally, he gave an explanation for the last verse: "There is no room for offers." [16].

As for the *ta'liq* section, al-Jābirī emphasizes that this surah does not deal with the idols of the Quraysh, either in the form of praise or criticism. What is emphasized in the surah is the Prophet's definite refusal to worship the idols that the Quraysh people worshiped, as he knew they would never worship what the Prophet worshipped. This is because the compromise offered by the Quraysh was fundamentally false. That is, only they will benefit from the compromise. If the Messenger of Allah worshiped what they worshiped, it meant he abandoned his religion, which does not recognize other gods besides Allah. If the Quraysh worshiped Allah while maintaining the worship of idols, which they considered as intermediaries to Allah, they would

not suffer the slightest loss. In fact, they continue to adhere to their religion as it is because their religion does not need Allah and instead places its allies with him[16].

When the Quraysh said to the Prophet, "So we are allies, we and you, in one matter. If what you worship is better than what we worship, we have indeed taken advantage of it. And if what we worship is better than what you worship, you have really taken advantage of it," they wanted the hidden economic logic to work by seducing the Prophet into their opportunistic position. What is important for them is what they get in the world through religion. Therefore, renunciation comes to cut it off, rejecting what the Quraysh people worshiped in the current and future[16].

According to al-Jābirī, the Prophet attempted to ingratiate himself with them through this aspect on another occasion. This happened when they tried to negotiate with his uncle, Abū Ṭālib. They increased their material persuasions, but the Prophet refused. When they tricked the Prophet by asking him to tell them what he wanted, the Prophet replied that it was a sentence shared by both Arabs and non-Arabs (shahādat). They then understood and then left in despair[16].

Second, based on the description in these three parts, al-Jābirī does not mention the issue of tolerance. He purely discusses the context of the surah when it was revealed. He discusses *sabab al-nuzūl*, which involves the Prophet's interactions with the Quraysh. He elaborates by trying to understand the background of their offer to the Prophet, which was then responded to immediately by the revelation. By looking at the profiles of the Quraysh people, he perceives that there was a trade logic there. In general, al-Jābirī focuses on emphasizing the existence of this logic in his interpretation.

Third, al-Jābirī's attention to history in understanding the Qur'an. In the *taqdīm* section, we can see how al-Jābirī, on the one hand, refers to the book *al-Sīrah* by Ibn Ishāq and, on the other hand, criticizes a history that the mufasssirs associated with *sabab al-nuzūl* surah al-Kāfirūn. For the first, al-Jābirī affirms its validity both in terms of narration and its suitability for the context of the surah. Meanwhile, he criticized the second narration for its incompatibility with the context of the historical period in which surah al-Kāfirūn was revealed. One of the indicators is to look at the relationship between the surah and the surahs before and after it.

Fourth, besides being based on context, al-Jābirī's understanding is also based on text. This can be seen in the *ta'liq* section, where we can clearly see the text-based understanding.

4 Discussions

In responding to some findings discussed above, there is one important thing that needs to be discussed, namely understanding the context of the revelation of surah al-Kāfirūn. This will show the difference in al-Jābirī's understanding of the surah compared to other interpretations.

In discussing al-Jābirī's interpretation, we cannot ignore the chronological interpretation, which forms the basis of his interpretation. What is meant by chronological interpretation here is *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl*. Al-Jābirī uses this term clearly as the title of his commentary work. Etymologically, *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl* means "interpretation based on revelation order." The term "*tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl*" is specifically used to refer to the interpretation of the Qur'an,

which in the process of interpretation follows the order of *tartīb al-nuzūl*, namely the arrangement of the Qur'an based on the chronology of its revelation. " [13].

Methodologically, at first glance, there seems to be no difference between *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl* and other interpretations. Its main characteristic is that the interpretation is carried out not based on the order of 'Uthmanī's manuscripts or what is known as *tartīb al-muṣḥaf* but rather based on *tartīb al-nuzūl*. As with the chronological study of the Qur'an, making an interpretation in this way is intended to obtain the contextual meaning of the Qur'an in accordance with the period of its decline, namely relating to the history of the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad. In this way, interpreters are expected to be able to use the contextual meaning of the Qur'an to address contemporary problems in society. This chronological reading of the Qur'an is considered important and has become a trend in the West [18].

However, there is an important issue that needs to be highlighted here. Interpretation by following the chronological order of the Qur'an, as mentioned above, makes the interpretation very dependent on *tartīb nuzūl*. In the context of *tartīb al-nuzūl*, al-Jābirī has his own stance in determining the order of the surahs. He tries to compromise between classical opinions and Western approaches. In the case of the sequence of surah al-Kāfirūn, for example, al-Jābirī is different from classical narrations. He places the surah in 15th place while generally, the surah is in 17th or 18th place. However, despite the difference in sequence numbers, in general, there is no significant difference regarding the surahs before and after al-Kāfirūn, namely al-Mā'ūn and al-Fīl. Based on this evidence, it can actually be said that al-Jābirī still followed classical opinion[19]. (See Table 3)

Table 3. The Order of Surah al-Kāfirūn by al-Jābirī and Scholars

<i>Tartīb al-Nuzūl</i> of Surah al-Kāfirūn								
No.	Al-Jābirī	1.	Ibn Durays,	Al-	1.	Ibn al-Hārith, al-Bayhaqī (2), Darwazah, Habannakah	<i>Muqaddimah</i> Kitāb <i>Al-Mabānī</i> from Abī Šāliḥ	Kitāb <i>al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh</i>
		2.	Al-Naysābūrī,					
		3.	Al-Bayhaqī (1),					
		4.	<i>Muqaddimah</i> Kitāb <i>Al-Mabānī</i> from ‘Aṭā’ And ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib					
11	Al-‘Ādiyāt	Al-Sharḥ		Al-Duḥā	Al-Sharḥ			Al-Sharḥ
12	Al-Kawthar	Al-‘Aṣr		Al-Sharḥ	Al-‘Aṣr			Al-‘Ādiyāt
13	Al-Takāthur	Al-‘Ādiyāt		Al-‘Aṣr	Al-Kawthar			Al-‘Aṣr
14	Al-Mā’ūn	Al-Kawthar		Al-‘Ādiyāt	Al-Takāthur			Al-Kawthar
15	Al-Kāfirūn	Al-Takāthur		Al-Kawthar	Al-Mā’ūn			Al-Takāthur
16	Al-Fīl	Al-Mā’ūn		Al-Takāthur	Al-Fīl			Al-Mā’ūn
17	Al-Falaq	Al-Kāfirūn		Al-Mā’ūn	Al-Kāfirūn			Al-Kāfirūn
18	Al-Nās	Al-Fīl		Al-Kāfirūn	Al-Ikhlāṣ			Al-Fīl
19	Al-Ikhlāṣ	Al-Falaq		Al-Fīl	Al-Najm			Al-Falaq
20	Al-Fātiḥah	Al-Nās		Al-Falaq	‘Abasa			Al-Nās

However, what makes al-Jābirī different from other interpreters is that he relates the understanding of the context of surah al-Kāfirūn to the previous surahs. He used this to verify the history of *sabab al-nuzūl*. *Sabab al-nuzūl* al-Kāfirūn has similarities with the context of previous surahs such as al-Takāthur and al-Mā’ūn, namely: the thoughts of the Quraysh magnates who are commercial in nature. We can see from surah al-Takāthur where they are described as people who accumulate wealth and al-Mā’ūn as people who are reluctant to set aside their wealth.

Apart from differences in the order of the suras, another aspect that also influences al-Jābirī’s interpretation is the division of phases in the revelation of the Qur’an. Classical Muslim scholars generally divide the phases of the revelation of the Qur’an into *Makkī-Madanī*. Al-Jābirī still uses this division but, at the same time, breaks it down into six phases. The division of phases is based on the development of the Prophet’s preaching. In the case of surah al-Kāfirūn, al-Jābirī includes it in the initial phase, where the *da’wah* was carried out secretly. That is the reason why, at the beginning of the discussion of the surah, al-Jābirī criticizes one of the narrations, which was considered as *sabab al-nuzūl* but, according to him, contradicted the context in which the surah was revealed.

Al-Jābirī's criticism based on the chronology of the Prophet's history above was not found in other commentators. In fact, awareness of history is needed so that readers of the Qur'an do not give arbitrary interpretations. That is, relying on history-based *sabab al-nuzūl* alone is not enough. If *sabab al-nuzūl* which mentions the Prophet's condemnation of idols is used as a basis for understanding, then it means that surah al-Kāfirūn came down during the period of open preaching. During this period there was hostility and harassment from the Quraysh authorities. Surah al-Kāfirūn does not give any indication of this animosity. Therefore, al-Jābirī emphasizes the characteristics of the Quraysh princes as traders. They only want profit and do not want to lose. Their compromise about God was not separated from him.

Al-Jābirī's interpretation also cannot be separated from his way of reading and understanding the Qur'an. Long before writing tafsir works, al-Jābirī was known for offering contemporary readings or what he called *qirā'ah mu'āṣarah*. He outlined this offer of contemporary reading in *Naḥnu wa al-Turāth* and seems to have become the basis for the foundation of his great thought in the works that followed, including those directly related to the Qur'an[20].

In *qirā'ah mu'āṣarah*, there are two stages of reading that must be applied, namely what al-Jābirī calls *al-faṣl* and *al-waṣl*. *Al-Faṣl* is a way of reading that shows the meaning of objectivity of an object of study and the subject of the reader. This way of reading *al-faṣl* aims to fulfill the target of a study object that is relevant and contextual to itself or what is referred to as *mu'āṣiran li-nafsi-hi*. Meanwhile, *al-waṣl* is a way of reading that shows the continuity of an object of study with the subject's present, connecting the past with the subject's present interests which is known as *mu'āṣiran la-nā*[21].

This contemporary reading was used by al-Jābirī in studying the Qur'an. This reading may have influenced al-Jābirī's way of understanding the Qur'an, namely making the Qur'an relevant to its time (*mu'āṣiran li-nafsi-hi*) and also relevant to the contemporary reader (*mu'āṣiran la-nā*). Finally, he formulated a reading similar to Izzat Darwazah, namely *qirā'at al-Qur'ān bi al-sīrah wa qirā'at al-sīrah bi al-Qur'ān*[16]. By reading this model, inevitably, the Qur'an is understood through the process of its decline, so this requires knowledge of the order in which the Qur'an was revealed. Therefore, al-Jābirī offers an interpretation based on *tartīb al-nuzūl* and not *tartīb al-muṣḥaf* as has been explained.

It should be noted here that based on his explanation of surah al-Kāfirūn, al-Jābirī does not appear to have actualized the contents of the surah in the contemporary context. There are two possibilities here. The first possibility is that he has not done *al-waṣl*. He just applied *al-faṣl* by focusing on studying the context of the surah when it was revealed. He tried to make surah al-Kāfirūn relevant to its own time. This contextual reading makes it easier for readers to understand the meaning of the Qur'an. In this case, al-Jābirī is not much different from classical commentators who tried to understand the Qur'an based on the context of *sabab al-nuzūl*. Therefore, it is natural that he does not touch on issues of religious freedom and tolerance.

The second possibility is that he deliberately did not do *al-waṣl*. This may have happened because al-Jābirī felt that there was nothing that needed to be actualized. We can judge from his explanation that al-Jābirī tends to interpret surah al-Kāfirūn in the frame of *tawḥīd*/the oneness of Allah. This means that the content of the surah emphasizes the oneness of Allah and not other topics. Apart from that, this assertion came as a response in the Qur'an to the opportunistic attitude of the Quraysh officials so that the Prophet would associate partners with Allah. So,

surah al-Kāfirūn has its own background, which is not necessarily the same as the background referred to in the discourse on religious freedom and inter-religious tolerance.

On the other hand, it can be said that the originality that differentiates al-Jābirī's interpretation from other *mufasssīr* is his attention to the logic of the Quraysh officials. As explained in the section on *taqdīm* and *ta'līq*, al-Jābirī considered that they were using the logic of trade. The trading logic is opportunistic with a profit and loss perspective. This logic was inherent in the Quraysh people, who were traders. Al-Jābirī's keen attention helps readers understand the mindset of those who do not want to suffer losses because of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The Prophet's teachings would have a bad impact on their trade. This understanding is not found in either classical or modern interpretations as in Tables 1 and 2 at the beginning. Most of them pay more attention to the meaning of the text between verses in the surah than to the context of the surah itself, namely the relationship between text and context. No one has attempted to understand the surah by referring to the social context behind the surah's revelation.

Finally, the interpretation of al-Jābirī above is clearly different when compared to the interpretation of Darwazah, the first person to write *tafsīr ḥasb tartīb al-nuzūl*. In *al-Tafsīr al-Ḥadīth*, Darwazah emphasized that surah al-Kāfirūn contained the principle of religious freedom (*mabda' hurriyat al-tadayyun*) from the beginning of the interpretation of the surah. This topic is the main discussion in the interpretation, so that - as Pink alluded to - it takes up many pages. Unfortunately, this long explanation does not focus on the verses of Surah al-Kāfirūn but instead discusses other verses that are considered relevant to the topic of religious freedom.

Based on the study above, we finally know that even though we both use chronological interpretation, the results of the interpretation can be different. In this case, the author agrees with Johanna Pink's assessment that considers al-Jābirī's interpretation to be different. However, what needs to be underlined is that this difference is not a matter of freedom of religion and tolerance between religions. In fact, it was Darwazah who had a different view from the previous *mufasssīr*, while al-Jābirī was relatively the same as them. However, al-Jābirī, in his own way, discovered another portrait of surah al-Kāfirūn, namely how to understand the contents of the surah based on the chronological context of its decline: how, when, where, and to whom the Qur'an was revealed.

Conclusion

It is clear here how the influence of chronological reading impacts al-Jābirī's understanding on surah al-Kāfirūn. Besides reading the surah chronologically, he focusses to investigate the history behind the surah's text to know its context. The originality of his interpretation can be seen in his sensitivity to read the economic logic of the Quraysh people, which was the background to the revelation of the surah. This kind of interpretation is not found in other interpretations. Unfortunately, he has not perfected his reading by contextualizing the contents of the surah to present. However, he has provided a new perspective in understanding surah al-Kāfirūn.

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