

INTERPRETING THE QURAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON HATE SPEECH THROUGH FAZLUR RAHMAN'S DOUBLE MOVEMENT THEORY

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Abstract

This article examines how to respond and deal with hate speech through two verses of the Quran, namely al-Ḥujurāt (49:11) and al-An'ām (6:108). The widespread dissemination of hate speech across various platforms has raised concerns. This activity not only has the potential to incite discriminatory behavior and provoke violence, but the larger issue at hand is the threat of national disintegration and social disharmony. Therefore, using Fazlur Rahman's double movement method, a socio-historical contextual analysis of the period during which these verses were revealed is conducted to uncover the moral message of the Quran and contextualize it for the present day. The results of this study indicate that Surah Al-Ḥujurāt (49:11) and Surah al-An'ām (6:108) emphasize the importance of promoting politeness and respect in communication, by refraining from using derogatory titles or nicknames that may demean or offend others. It also stresses the importance of self-control to avoid engaging in spreading hate speech, both in verbal and online interactions. Additionally, responsible use of social media is highlighted, prioritizing healthy discussions and dialogues to prevent online conflicts that could disrupt societal harmony.

Keywords: *Hate Speech, Double Movement, Fazlur Rahman*

Abstrak

Artikel ini berupaya mengkaji upaya menyikapi dan menghadapi ujaran kebencian melalui dua ayat Alquran, yaitu QS. al-Ḥujurāt:11 dan QS. al-An'ām: 108. Sebab maraknya penyebaran ujaran kebencian dalam berbagai platform telah menciptakan kekhawatiran. Aktivitas ini tidak hanya berpotensi menimbulkan perilaku diskriminatif dan memicu kekerasan, masalah yang lebih besar yang dikhawatirkan adalah disintegrasi bangsa dan ketidakharmonisan sosial. Oleh karena itu melalui metode *double movement* Fazlur Rahman dilakukan analisis konteks sosio-historis pada masa turunnya ayat-ayat tersebut, untuk mengungkap pesan moral Alquran dan membawanya pada kontekstualisasi ke zaman sekarang. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dari Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:11) dan Surah al-An'ām (6:108) menegaskan pentingnya mengedepankan kesopanan dalam berkomunikasi, dengan tidak menggunakan julukan atau panggilan yang dapat merendahkan atau menyinggung orang lain. Ditekankan juga pentingnya mengendalikan diri untuk tidak terlibat dalam menyebarkan ujaran kebencian, baik dalam interaksi verbal maupun online. Selain itu penting juga untuk menggunakan media sosial secara bertanggung jawab, mengedepankan diskusi dan dialog yang sehat, untuk menghindari konflik online yang dapat merusak kerukunan masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Ujaran Kebencian, Double Movement, Fazlur Rahman*

Introduction

The advancement of information and communication technology in this era has brought significant changes and impacts. The role of media communication is increasingly crucial as it can present current events on a wide scale.¹ The ease and freedom of communication access have, however, brought various consequences. In the realm of social media, which has become an integral part of global communication, serious challenges have emerged. One common occurrence is the misapplication of freedom of speech resulting in defamation, hoaxes, and hate speech, all of which can lead to various negative outcomes.²

The rampant spread of hate speech, both in spoken and written forms, has raised concerns. This activity not only has the potential to foster discriminatory behavior and incite violence but also poses a more significant concern of national disintegration and social disharmony. The widespread distribution of hate speech, particularly in Indonesia, can also disrupt the harmony among religious communities.

¹Takdir Alisyahbana, 'Hoax dalam Perspektif Islam', *El-Ghiroh*, 17.02 (2019), p. 104 <https://doi.org/10.37092/el-ghiroh.v17i02.107>.

²Danu Aris Setiyanto, 'Hoax: Teks dan Konteks dalam Al-Quran', *Indonesian Journal of Religion and Society*, 1.1 (2019), p. 2 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.36256/ijrs.v1i1.5>.

Established harmonious relationships may be vulnerable due to the spread of statements containing hateful opinions.³

Since the 2000s, the rapid increase in the dissemination of hate speech has been observed following the introduction of various social media platforms. Hate speech often emerges because of individual or group dissatisfaction based on freedom of expression. In this context, UNESCO reports that the online phenomenon of hate speech is expanding and presenting a number of problems, becoming one of the main trends in recent years.⁴ Despite frequent efforts by the government to investigate and eradicate hate speech in Indonesia, the reality has yet to show significant changes.⁵

The phenomenon of hate speech is not a new development; it has existed long before the modern technological era. The Quran delivers examples of various forms of hate speech that occurred in the past. For instance, in the story of Prophet Musa, he was falsely accused of being a sorcerer by the leaders of Pharaoh's people (al-A'rāf/6: 107-109). Similarly, in the story of Prophet Nuh, he was labeled as a madman by his people (al-Qamar/54: 9). Additionally, almost every Messenger sent to their people was often accused of being a sorcerer or a madman (al-Dhāriyāt/51: 52-55). These examples illustrate concrete instances of hate speech directed towards the messengers of Allah, resulting in the defamation of their character.⁶

From an Islamic perspective, the act of hate speech is unequivocally condemned. Morally, religion prohibits engaging in hateful actions, whether towards fellow Muslims or non-Muslims. Hatred, similar to incitement, is a negative trait that individuals should avoid. When expressed and directed towards others, it can cause harm and injustice, potentially leading to conflicts.⁷ Islam also explicitly prohibits hate speech that violates the individual's fundamental rights, irrespective of their religion or beliefs. In the Islamic view, there is no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in this matter. The religion emphasizes the prohibition of discrimination and prioritizes principles of human rights, justice, and equality.⁸

Based on the discussion above, whether hate speech expressed orally during the time of the Prophets or in the present era where social media is a primary means of spreading hate speech, it has various negative impacts on social order. This issue has been discussed in the Quran, and the holy book has offered solutions to address it. The Quran provides guidance that includes commands for worship, performing good deeds,

³Ahmad Nurcholis, *Merajut Damai dalam Kebhinekaan* (Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo, 2017), p. 28.

⁴Mahlail Syakur, 'Ujaran Kebencian dalam Al-Qur'an', *Hermeneutik: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, 15.2 (2021), p. 336 <https://doi.org/10.21043/hermeneutik.v15i2.8483>.

⁵Mujib Ridlwan and Yayuk Siti Khotijah, 'Islam dan Hate Speech (Studi Fenomenologi atas Ujaran Kebencian di Indonesia)', *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 11.1 (2021), p. 46.

⁶Rikho Afriyandi, 'Analisis Ujaran Kebencian dalam Bermedia Sosial: Kajian atas Semangat Perdamaian dalam Al-Quran', *Journal of Islamic Civilization*, 3.1 (2021), p. 27 <https://doi.org/10.33086/jic.v3i1.1893>.

⁷M Yahya, 'Ujaran Kebencian dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Tafsir Tematik/Maudhu'i)' (PTIQ Jakarta, 2023), p. 23 <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/1250/1/2023-M.YAHYA-2020.pdf>.

⁸Yahya, p. 23.

avoiding prohibitions, and offering guidance for living socially in a culturally diverse society.⁹ Furthermore, the Quran also includes guidance on developing noble character and commendable behavior. Through these teachings, there is potential to reduce the prevalence of hate speech.¹⁰ Therefore, it is fascinating to examine how the Quran addresses hate speech and the appropriate ways for Muslims to respond to such actions, since the verses of the Quran essentially serve as guidance for believers to learn from.

This article will discuss how the Quran views and addresses hate speech in the context of the present time. It will also search for moral principles within the Quran relevant to the spread of hate speech and how these principles can serve as guidelines for Muslims in responding hate speech. This will be done by applying the double movement method of Fazlur Rahman to understand how the Quran's interpretation of hate speech applies in the context of modern society. The central focus of this article will be on al-Ḥujūrāt (49:11) and al-An'ām (6:108), aiming to provide a deeper understanding of how the Quran discusses hate speech and how Muslims should respond to it in the contemporary context.

Several articles are related to the discussion in this paper. The first article, titled “Hoaks dan Ujaran Kebencian Perspektif Al-Quran” by Muhammad Tang S from the Faculty of Islamic Studies at Kutai Kartanegara University, shows that from the Quranic perspective, Muslims are required to always speak the truth, use their conscience in facing hoaxes and hate speech, and the importance of verifying news from unknown sources. The second article, titled “Ujaran Kebencian dalam Al-Qur'an by Mahlail Syakur” from Wahid Hasyim University Semarang, reveals that there are 28 Quranic verses depicting hate speech in the form of euphemisms, 21 verses in the form of dysphemisms, 8 verses in the form of labeling, and 8 verses in the form of stereotypes. Lastly, the article titled “Problem Ujaran Kebencian (Hate Speech) di Media Sosial dalam Al-Qur'an” by Maris Safitri from Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin State Islamic University Banten, shows that slander, defamation, and provocation are three forms of hate speech frequently used in political communication. The Quran teaches to avoid such behaviors and always verify news to maintain harmony and prevent slander and conflicts within society.

After conducting a thorough literature review, there has not been a comprehensive discussion on the perspective of the Quran regarding respond towards hate speech using Fazlur Rahman's double movement method. Therefore, the discussion in this article aims to enrich the knowledge and contribute to the field of Quranic studies and exegesis.

⁹Wahyuddin and Saifulloh, ‘Ulum Al-Qur'an Sejarah dan Perkembangannya’, *Jurnal Sosial Humaniora*, 6.1 (2013), p. 20 <https://doi.org/10.12962/j24433527.v6i1.608>.

¹⁰ Samsul Bahri, Yasmin Thahira, and Danil Akbar Taqwadin, ‘Father's Role and Character Education: A Reflective Analysis of the Qur'anic Stories’, *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 24.1 (2024), 102–28 (p. 102) <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i1.13785>.

The Definition of Hate Speech

In English vocabulary, hate speech explained as defamation, libel, and slander, which if translated into Bahasa Indonesia are *fitnah* (defamation), *fitnah lisan* (slander), and *fitnah tertulis* (*libel*)¹¹ In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), *kebencian* is defined as a feeling of hate, while *ujaran* refers to spoken sentences or parts of sentences.¹² As for hate speech in Arabic, it is expressed with the term *khīṭāb al-Karāhiyah*, *qawl qabīḥ*, or *kalām qabīḥ*, contrasting with the meaning of good words (*qawl ḥasan*) or polite conversation (*kalām ṭayyib*), or beautiful expressions (*kalimah ṭayyibah*).¹³

The terminology definition of hate speech is a form of communication that expresses feelings of hatred and intolerance towards a specific social group, often related to factors such as race and sexual orientation. Another definition states that hate speech is a communicative act carried out by individuals or groups, involving provocation, incitement, or insult towards other individuals or groups based on various aspects such as race, skin color, ethnicity, gender, physical condition, citizenship, religion, and others.¹⁴ Such actions are degrading and can create conflict, fear, and are part of defamation efforts.

From the various definitions mentioned, the understanding of "hate speech" can vary significantly depending on the progression of time, contemporary perspectives, moral values, social situations, and diverse societal views. Nevertheless, hate speech is generally described as an act that damages a person's reputation, reducing the public's positive perception of them, or even hindering others from interacting or dealing with them. However, the essence of hate speech lies in its difference from ordinary speech, although it contains elements of hatred, attack, or strong emotions. The distinction lies in the intention behind the speech, deliberately intended to create a specific impact, whether directly (actual) or indirectly (limited to the intention).¹⁵

Discussion of Hate Speech in the Quran (al-Ḥujurāt/49:11 & al-An‘ām/6:108)

The Quran encourages individuals to distance themselves from hate speech and encourages patience in dealing with it without resorting to retaliatory actions. This is because responding to hate speech with hatred would result in a similar offense as the one who initiated it. The earlier prophets also never responded to hate speech or hateful behavior with similar actions; instead, they demonstrated patience as an expression of their devoutness.¹⁶

¹¹Maris Safitri, Uin Sultan, and Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, 'Problem Ujaran Kebencian (Hate Speech) di Media Sosial dalam Al-Qur'an', *Jurnal Al-Fath*, 14.2 (2020), p. 205.

¹²Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, Edisi Keempat (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), p. 168.

¹³Syakur, p. 339.

¹⁴Syakur, p. 338.

¹⁵Yahya, p. 18.

¹⁶Syakur, p. 355.

In the Quran, discussions related to hate speech are reflected in various forms, such as insults, condemnation, spreading false news, blasphemy, sowing defamation, and more. However, this article will specifically explore into hate speech in the context of insult and blasphemy, focusing on al-Hujurāt (49:11) and al-An‘ām (6:108).

QS. al-Hujurāt (49:11)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْأَسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

Translation: “O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule (another) people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule (other) women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by (offensive) nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after (one’s) faith. And whoever does not repent – then it is those who are the wrongdoers.”

This verse in Ibn Kathīr's exegesis is directed towards the believers. The main point emphasized is the importance of avoiding the behavior of disparaging fellow believers. It is deemed inappropriate to judge the hearts and actions of others, as it may lead to demeaning and insulting behavior. The rationale behind this advice is that someone who becomes the target of criticism and ridicule may possess greater virtues than those who mock them. Women, particularly those with strong convictions, are also cautioned not to criticize other women and to refrain from making negative and insulting comments about them. This caution is rooted in a lack of understanding regarding the positive potential of those who become the subject of criticism and mockery.¹⁷

In Tafsir al-Misbah, Quraish Shihab mentions that the term يسخر (ridicule) refers to mentioning someone else's weaknesses with the intention of ridiculing and demeaning them, whether through words or gestures aimed at humiliating that person.¹⁸ Allah declares that this behavior should not be done, as it is mentioned that the person being ridiculed may actually be better in the sight of Allah than the one ridiculing them.

Al-Qurṭubī's commentary mentions that the person being ridiculed may already have a strong faith and embrace Islam in their heart.¹⁹ Thus, this indicates that the standards of righteousness, which are the basis of Allah's judgment, may differ from

¹⁷Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azhim Juz 7* (Riyadh: Dar Thaiyyibah li al- Nasyr wa al- Tauzim, 1999), pp. 376–77.

¹⁸M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Jilid 13* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), p. 606.

¹⁹Imam Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsir Al-Qurṭubī Juz 17*, trans. by Ahmad Khatib (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam), p. 57.

human standards in general, as many values considered good by humans within themselves may actually be incorrect and mistaken.

QS. al-An'ām (6:108)

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ
فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Translation: “And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus, We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them about what they used to do.”

In Tafsir al-Misbah by Quraish Shihab, this verse is a call to refrain from cursing or disparaging the idols worshipped by the mushrikīn. The prohibition against demeaning "gods" or the religious beliefs of others is a demand from the Quran to foster harmonious relationships among people of different faiths. It also aims to keep the dīn sacred and protected from mockery by those who may not understand them.²⁰ Therefore this verse explicitly shows Muslims to preserve the sacredness of their religion and foster a sense of harmonious relations among people of different faiths.

Sayyid Quṭb explains that this verse not only instruct Prophet Muhammad to ignore the polytheists but also advises Muslims to do it with manners, respect, and dignity. Muslims are commanded not to insult or offend the idols of the polytheists, fearing that it might lead the polytheists to insult Allah, while they (the polytheists) are unaware of His greatness and glorious position.²¹

According to Rasyīd Riḍā, insulting others is prohibited because it often leads to a cycle of mutual insults. He relates it to a situation where someone insults another person's father, prompting a reactive insult due to the personal nature of the confrontation. Therefore, Allah forbids Muslims from insulting the idols of the polytheists, as this would provoke them to insult Allah out of aggression. Such actions, without realizing it, could make Muslims who are angered by these insults appear as if they are dishonoring Allah.²²

Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Theory

Fazlur Rahman was a prominent Pakistani-American Islamic scholar, philosopher, and reformer known for his significant contributions to modern Islamic thought.²³ Fazlur Rahman was born on September 21, 1919, in Hazara, in the

²⁰M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Jilid 4* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), p. 243.

²¹Sayyid Qutb, *Tafsir Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān Juz 4* (Beirut: Dār Al-Shurūq, 1992), p. 182.

²²Muhammad Rasyīd Riḍā, *Tafsir Al-Qur'ān Al-Hakīm Al-Syahrir Bi Tafsir Al-Manār Juz 5* (Kairo: Dar al-Manār, 1954), p. 663.

²³Junefza Bilal, 'Academic Researches on Fazlur Rahman: An Assessment', *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion*, 6.01 (2021), 47–62 (p. 47) <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v6i01.1288>.

Northwest region of Pakistan.²⁴ Fazlur Rahman was educated at the Punjab University and later at Oxford University, where he completed his PhD. Rahman was deeply engaged in reconciling traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary issues and modernity.²⁵

One of Rahman's roles in the Islamic world is that he was a pioneer of the hermeneutical approach to "read" the Quran contextually. He formulated the theory of double movement, a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning patterns.²⁶ The double movement method refers to the interpretive process that moves from the current situation back to the context in which the Quran was revealed, and then returns to the present era. According to Rahman, the importance of revisiting the time when the Quran was revealed lies in understanding it as a divine response through the memory and thoughts of Prophet Muhammad to the moral and social circumstances of the Arab society at that time.²⁷

The double movement theory involves two main stages in interpreting the verses of the Quran. The first movement involves the interpretation process of the Quran starting from the current conditions and context, then connecting it back to the time when the Quran was first revealed. The second movement is to interpret the Quran with reference to its revelation into the current context and situation.²⁸

The first movement is understanding the Quran from the present situation to the time the Quran was revealed. This movement consisted of two steps. The first step is understanding the meaning of a statement by examining historical conditions. The second step is generalizing those specific answers and stating them as statements with general moral-social goals that can be filtered from specific texts in light of the socio-historical background and ratio-logical (*'illat*) that are often stated.²⁹ This first movement aims to understand the meaning of a statement in the Quran by delving into the macro-situation of Arab society at that time, including culture, religion, and institutions.

The second movement is to interpret the Quran with reference to its revelation into the current context and situation. This method is to define the mentioned verses to obtain a moral social purpose in the form of a statement. This step should be directed towards the coherent and cohesive teachings of the Quran to produce a

²⁴Kurdi, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an & Hadis*, Cetakan 1 (Yogyakarta: elSAQ Press, 2010), p. 60.

²⁵Hanifah Muyasaroh, "Perempuan dalam Poligami dan Kewarisan (Pendekatan Metode Double Movement Fazlur Rahman)," *Jurnal Al-Munqidz: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 9, no. 2 (2021), p. 157–58, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52802/al-munqidz.v9i2.%20Mei.179>.

²⁶Septian Bimo Saputra and others, 'Memahami Kata-Kata Sumpah dalam Terjemahan Indonesia Surah As-Syams dengan Pendekatan Hermeneutika Double Movement Fazlur Rahman', *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat*, 18.1 (2022), p. 5 <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v18i1.3620>.

²⁷Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity; Transformation of Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: Chicago & London University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 5.

²⁸Rahman, *Islam and Modernity; Transformation of Intellectual Tradition*, p. 6.

²⁹Fazlur Rahman, *Islam; Past Influence and Present Challenge*, ed. by Alford Welch and Cachia Pierre (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1979), p. 7.

concrete world view.³⁰ This second movement involves interpreting the Quran from the time the verse was revealed to the present. In other words, the long-term values, or goals from the first movement must be reinforced in a socio-historical context that aligns with the present. In this stage, careful evaluation of the current situation and its components is required. The goal of this stage is to spotlight the current state and then integrating Quranic values into it.³¹

The double movement method creates a dialectical relationship between the text, author, and reader. As an author, Fazlur Rahman does not impose his own interpretations on the text but allows it to speak for itself by examining its historicity. The historicity of the text is examined not only through *asbāb al-nuzūl* (the circumstances of revelation) but also by analyzing the social setting of Arab society at that time, known as *al-qirā'ah al-ta'rikhiyyah* (historical reading). This exploration aims to uncover universal values, which Rahman terms as moral ideals, because moral standards are unchanging and universally applicable. The moral standard represents the fundamental moral purpose commanded by the Quran, while specific legal provisions are contextually applied. A moral ideal is more enduring and appropriate than specific legal requirements, making the Quran's ethical model universal, elastic, and flexible, in contrast to the more particular nature of specific legal rules.³²

According to Abd A'la, Rahman's historicism involves three interconnected stages. The first stage is comprehending the historical process through which Islam developed its form. The second stage involves analyzing this process to separate its core principles from the specific practices of Muslims shaped by their distinct circumstances. The third stage is determining the most effective way to apply these fundamental principles.³³

In applying moral ideals, as an author, Rahman also considers the reader, who comes from diverse cultural and social backgrounds. Therefore, Rahman's consideration of the reader is not limited to a local *reader* but includes an international one (world citizenship). Thus, the double movement method can be characterized as an approach that balances the three aspects of text, author, and reader, rather than prioritizing one over the others.³⁴

Analysis of Verses Regarding Hate Speech using Double Movement Theory QS. al-Hujurāt (49:11)

This section will examine the first movement, which aims to understand the meaning of a statement in the Quran. Generally, most mufassir agree that Surah al-Hujurāt belongs to the Madinan surahs because it was revealed in the 9th year of Hijrah. Al-Baghawī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Suyūṭī are among those who agree with this

³⁰Rahman, *Islam Dan Modernitas: Tentang Transformasi Intelektual*, p. 6.

³¹Rahman, p. 8.

³²Kurdi, p. 72–73.

³³Abd A'la, *Dari Neomodernisme ke Islam Liberal* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2003), p. 71.

³⁴Kurdi, p. 73–74.

view.³⁵ In verse 11, Allah explicitly forbids mocking and insulting others, as the person being insulted may be more honorable in the sight of Allah than the one mocking them. Linguistically, the use of the word *قَوْمٌ* in the verse, according to Quraish Shihab, is directed towards men, as the verse also specifically mentions the word *نِسَاءً* (women). This implies that gossiping and mocking are more prevalent among women than men.³⁶

The verse also prohibits self-deprecation (*وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ*), which essentially means "do not insult others." Quraish Shihab interprets this phrasing to suggest that one should feel the suffering and humiliation of others as if it were their own. Alternatively, this prohibition can be understood as advising against actions that invite others to insult oneself, equating to mocking oneself. Additionally, the verse forbids assigning offensive nicknames to others (*وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ*) because the term *تَنَابَرُوا* implies interchange, where the offended person is likely to retaliate with another offensive nickname, leading to mutual insults (*تَنَابَرُوا*).³⁷ This verse concludes with the statement (*يَبْسُ الْاسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ*), which means that the worst kind of labels or nicknames are those that are derogatory, as was common among the *jāhiliyyah* people in the past.³⁸

Surah al-Ḥujurāt verse 11 was revealed in the context of the prevailing phenomenon in Mecca at that time, where individuals typically had special titles or nicknames (*laqab/kunya*) used to address them. For example, Prophet Muhammad had the title *al-Amīn* because he was known as a trustworthy person. Additionally, the name Abu Bakr is a *kunya* given to Aisha, his daughter. *Abu* means a father, while *bakr* comes from the root word *bikr*, which means girl. Furthermore, Abu Bakr is also known by the title *al-Ṣiddīq*, meaning truthful or one who verifies. Based on this situation, it is possible for someone to have various names used according to the titles or appellations they possess.³⁹

As quoted by al-Suyūṭī, this verse was revealed in the context of Banī Salamah. When Prophet Muhammad arrived in Madinah, there was an incident where he called someone by a specific name. However, the *saḥāba* informed the Prophet that the person he called felt offended when addressed by the term used by the Prophet. In response to this incident, verse 11 of Surah al-Ḥujurāt was revealed as a reminder not to address someone with a condescend or inappropriate appellation.⁴⁰

During that time, there was a practice where an individual could have more than one title or appellation. In the study of Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), two terms known

³⁵Jonni Syatri, *Makkiy & Madaniy: Periodisasi Pewahyuan Al-Qur'an*, ed. by Muchlis Muhammad Hanafi (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2017), p. 503.

³⁶Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Jilid 13*, p. 251.

³⁷Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an Jilid 13*, pp. 251–52.

³⁸Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azhīm Juz 7*, p. 376.

³⁹Asep Saepul Milah Romli, 'Pesan Al-Qur'an Tentang Akhlak (Analisis Hermeneutis Double Movement Fazlur Rahman Terhadap Q.S. Al-Hujurat Ayat 11-13)', *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran dan Al-Hadis*, 5.02 (2017), p. 462 <https://doi.org/10.24235/sqp.v5i02.4350>.

⁴⁰Jalāluddīn Al-Suyūṭī, *Asbabun Nuzul: Sebab Turunnya Ayat Al-Qur'an*, trans. by Tim Abdul Hayyie (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2008), p. 529.

as *'alam laqab* and *'alam kunya* are recognized. *Laqab* refers to the appellation or title given to someone, which can contain praise or criticism. In other words, *laqab* is a nickname given to someone based on their characteristics or actions. For example, someone might be called *al-Rasyīd* for their intelligence. Meanwhile, *kunya* is a mention or title associated with someone and is usually prefixed with words like Abu, Ummu, Ibn, or Bint. For instance, if someone is the son of a father named Mas'ūd, their appellation could be "Ibn Mas'ūd."⁴¹

Analysis of the situation indicates that, even though during that time in Arab culture there was a practice of using a system of titles (*laqab and kunya*), it is better to address someone by their given name (*asmā'*). This is because not everyone is comfortable with titles or nicknames outside their actual names. Furthermore, it is crucial to remember that a name itself is a symbol of hope. Therefore, addressing someone by their actual name is essentially wishing goodness upon them, which is a morally upright action.⁴²

In this context, the “moral ideal” from the verse is to avoid using titles or nicknames that may degrade or insult someone. In other words, the terms used should reflect respect. In its context, the verse prohibits the use of titles that are hated and actions that can harm someone.

The second movement utilizes socio-historical research on the verse into more specific situations in line with the current context. This includes examining the characteristics in the present condition with the goal of forming an ideal ethical foundation. The emerging principles will be integrated by considering the current situation, ensuring that the Quran remains relevant as a contemporary moral guide.⁴³

In the current context, hate speech has become increasingly widespread not only in real life, but also on social media which can be considered a primary essential in today's era. This surge in hate speech on social media is often attributed to the tendency to follow trends or popular discussions without thoroughly filtering or cross-checking the information. These various forms of hate speech include racism, defamation, and more.⁴⁴

Hate speech, which arises from conflicts between various groups both within and between societies, can spread rapidly on social media.⁴⁵ The rise of hate speech on social media is a concerning reality, especially considering Indonesia's rich diversity of religions, races, cultures, traditions, and identities, which traditionally upholds values of friendliness and politeness. This cultural attribute is well-recognized globally as

⁴¹Romli, p. 465.

⁴²Romli, p. 465.

⁴³Romli, p. 467.

⁴⁴M. A. Ash-Shidiq and A. R. Pratama, “Ujaran Kebencian di Kalangan Pengguna Media Sosial di Indonesia: Agama dan Pandangan Politik,” *Universitas Islam Indonesia* 2, no. 1 (2021): 1, <https://journal.uui.ac.id/AUTOMATA/article/view/17286>.

⁴⁵Fabio Poletto and others, ‘Resources and Benchmark Corpora for Hate Speech Detection: A Systematic Review’, *Language Resources and Evaluation*, 55.2 (2021), 477–523 (p. 478) <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10579-020-09502-8/TABLES/13>.

intrinsic to Indonesian society. Therefore, these values should be maintained in daily behavior, reflected not only in verbal communication but also in online interactions involving words and written expressions.

Surah al-Hujurāt: 11 provides moral guidance for communication, emphasizing the importance of addressing others by their proper names without derogatory remarks, tones, or intentions. Instead, it advocates for respectful and polite interaction, which fosters good communication. The verse also derives the message that in responding to hate speech, Muslims should avoid words and actions that demean or harm individuals or groups. This involves exercising restraint to avoid participating in hate speech and responding wisely and calmly if subjected to it. In other words, self-control, ethics, and good character are essential in communication to prevent actions that could provoke or degrade others.

The importance of restraint and good character was also expressed in a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. “A *Muslim* is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe; and a *Muhājir* (emigrant) is one who refrains from what Allah has forbidden.” This highlights the significance of speaking kindly, being respectful, and avoiding hate speech, derogatory names, defamation, and similar negative actions. Such behavior aligns with societal norms and promotes harmonious interactions.

In conclusion, the principle of respecting others, as conveyed in the verse, needs to be strengthened in the current context. When dealing with various hate speeches, Muslims should adhere to the Quranic principles that emphasize the importance of avoiding words and actions that degrade or harm individuals or groups. This includes restraining from engaging in hate speech and handling it wisely, whether in daily verbal expressions or in online activities involving words and writings.

Furthermore, the principles of the Quran regarding politeness and respect need to be interpreted in the context of diversity. This means that responses to hate speech should include an understanding of the diverse identities present and efforts to promote peace and understanding among cultures. Therefore, social awareness in society is needed, including an assessment of the current situation, an understanding of tendencies in hate speech, discrimination, or social injustice. At this stage, the community needs to be provided with a true understanding of the social situation and current conditions, embracing the existing diversity, to avoid falling into a cycle of hatred among human beings.

Finally, integrating the values of the Quran into daily life is a crucial step in overcoming hate speech. This should be accomplished by implementing concrete measures such as educating the community through various platforms about the dangers of hate speech, promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogues, and participating in activities that promote peace and tolerance.

1. al-An‘ām (6:108)

Scholars agree that Surah al-An'ām is a Makkiyah surah. Among those who hold this view are al-Baiḍāwī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Alūsī.⁴⁶ The use of the word (تَسْبُوْا) derived from (سَبَّ) implies insulting something, whether true or false. In this context, it pertains to the prohibition for Muslims to insult the idols worshipped by polytheists.⁴⁷ This is because the disbelievers would retaliate by excessively insulting Allah without knowledge. The verse (فَيَسْبُوْا اللّٰهَ عَدْوًاۢ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ) suggests that avoiding harm takes precedence over potential benefits to prevent greater damage.⁴⁸ The term (عَدُوًّا) meaning "enmity" and "transgression," indicates that any form of religious insult is a transgression and invites enmity, which is clearly prohibited in Islam.⁴⁹

The first movement to understand the meaning of this verse involves analyzing the socio-historical circumstances of Meccan society at that time. This context reflects the early struggles of the Muslim community as they faced significant pressure from the mushrikīn, who held considerable power. The Meccan society predominantly adhered to polytheistic beliefs and idol worship. It is essential to note that idols in Mecca at that time played a crucial role in economic and social life. Therefore, insulting the idols was considered a serious violation of existing social norms.

In the context of the verse, there are several events believed to be the reasons for its revelation, known as "*asbāb al-nuzūl*" or the occasions of revelation, as stated by Ahmad al-Wahidi in his work "*Asbāb Nuzūl al-Qur'ān*." According to the narration of Ibn 'Abbās recorded by Al-Walibi, it is mentioned that the mushrikīn once said to Prophet Muhammad, "O Muhammad, do not insult or degrade our gods, or we will insult and degrade your gods." In response to this incident, Allah revealed the verse as a warning against insulting or demeaning the gods worshipped by the mushrikīn.⁵⁰

Al-Baghawī further explains that during that time, Prophet Muhammad was intensely spreading the teachings of Islam. When he saw the mushrikīn worshipping gods other than Allah, he spontaneously uttered words considered to be demeaning towards the idols they worshipped. However, this action quickly received a warning from Allah, who then revealed Surah al-An'ām:108 as a reminder against such actions.⁵¹

The revelation of QS. al-An'ām: 108 should also be understood within the context of the high tensions between the early Muslim community and the mushrikīn of Mecca. At that time, Prophet Muhammad and his companions faced considerable pressure and persecution in Mecca, creating a highly complex social situation. This

⁴⁶Syatri, p. 199.

⁴⁷M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, Jilid 4 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), p. 243.

⁴⁸Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azīm Juz 3* (Riyadh: Dar Thaiyyibah li al- Nasyr wa al- Tauzim, 1999), p. 315.

⁴⁹Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, p. 244.

⁵⁰Abi Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad Al-Wahidi, *Asbabun Nuzul Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- Ilmiyah, 1998), p. 224–225.

⁵¹Abi Muhammad Husain ibn Mas'ud al- Baghawī, *Tafsir Al-Baghawī Ma'alimu Al-Tanzīl* (Riyadh: Dar Thaiyyibah li al- Nasyr wa al- Tauzim, 1989), p. 176.

verse was revealed to emphasize the prohibition of insulting others' beliefs to avoid further conflict.

Thus, the moral ideal contained in QS. al-An'ām: 108 is the importance of respecting others' beliefs and maintaining tolerance in interfaith relations. The verse underscores the need to avoid insulting remarks about others' faiths to preserve peace and social harmony. This is the universal principles that must be maintained to create peace and avoid conflict.

The second movement involves applying socio-historical research on the verse to more specific contemporary situations. In today's modern world, which is becoming increasingly global and multicultural, this moral message can be applied more broadly. In Indonesia, with its diverse religious beliefs, it is crucial to avoid hate speech and maintain an attitude of mutual respect among religions and fellow citizens. This applies not only to religious, racial, and cultural contexts but also to political, economic, and various other sectors, which should be respected and not targeted by hate speech.

In the context of social media today, this moral message emphasizes the importance of education and awareness inside the society. Programs or posts encouraging responsible and ethical communication on social media are essential. As is widely known, there is an increase of hate speech and hoaxes in the realm of social media today. With concrete and targeted steps, the society is expected to remember the message about the importance of respecting others' opinions when communicating on social media. This includes avoiding comments that demean, provoke, or mock others through various available platforms. Hence, the message drawn from this verse essentially calls upon everyone to be responsible in using social media, prioritize healthy dialogue and discussion, and avoid online conflicts that can disrupt social harmony.

Finally, reflecting on the above verse, it can be concluded that the verse was revealed to advise Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim community against insulting the idols or deities of non-Muslims. In this context, it can be inferred that Islamic teachings (through the Quran) have long encouraged its followers to firmly uphold a stance of tolerance toward individuals with differing beliefs. Furthermore, upon further examination, several verses in other chapters also encourage Muslims to uphold a high level of tolerance toward differences in beliefs, cultures, and other aspects.

Conclusion

In two Quranic verses, namely Surah Al-Ḥujurāt (49:11) and Surah Al-An'ām (6:108), there is a strong moral message emphasizing the importance of respecting beliefs, maintaining tolerance, and avoiding hate speech in dealing with individuals or groups of fellow human beings. Surah Al-Ḥujurāt (49:11) emphasizes respectful communication, advising against using derogatory titles or nicknames to other people. This is crucial in today's context, where hate speech, especially on social media, is

widespread. Respect and politeness should be maintained in both verbal and online interactions.

In the context of Surah Al-An‘ām (6:108), there is a moral message that in a multicultural world, one should certainly avoid hate speech and demonstrate respect for all aspects of society, including in social media. The verse emphasizes responsible social media conduct, prioritizing healthy discussions and dialogues to prevent online conflicts that could disrupt societal harmony.

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