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Tensions of Adam and Iblis in the Quran: The Imagology Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the tensions between Adam and Iblis in the Quran by using imagology as the main approach. The main focus of the imagology approach reveals the interrelationship between text, intertext, and context altogether, by focusing on contextualizing them in the story. This approach does not intend to judge the truth of representations but to analyze their values important to build community *weltanschauung* (view of life) that leads them to a social change, a changing of meaning, and a new understanding. The findings demonstrate that a triangular conversation between Allah (henceforth, God), the angels and the satan on the creation of Adam showed the big scenario about Adam's image as a noble creature. Adam's noble image was because God teaches him names (*asma'* or the epistemology of science) on earth where Adam was then symbolized as God's representative on earth due to his creativity in revealing names which resembled God's manner as a creator in making innovation and change. God then governed angels and satan to kneel down before Adam as a form of honor. All did it except the Iblis who refused to obey due to his feeling of superiority over Adam. A psychological tension between Iblis's superiority which is not supported by the capacity of knowledge is defeated by Adam's inferiority which is strengthened by knowledge. The word 'kneel' was actually a theological word applied to the relation between human and God, but the word was used in this context as a symbol of appreciation for science.

Key words: Tension, Adam, Iblis, Imagology, Knowledge Capacity, Triangular Conversation

INTRODUCTION

Reading and listening to the story of Adam and Eve in the Quran may lead ones to imagine an abstract image of past history. Adam and Eve's dramatic story may develop over time due to the depiction of the story in the Quran. Adam and Eve were placed in the garden of Eden (QS, 2: 26 & 35). However, both were later expelled as the consequence of breaking God's command to not eating the prohibited fruit e.g. Khuldi.

So far, previous studies of Adam tended to consider the story as an exemplified story. Allah (God) assertively banished Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden due to their mistake in eating the fruit. Due to their mistake and guilt, Adam and Hawa (Eve) asked God for his forgiveness and subsequently God forgave them because of their wholehearted sincerity (QS, 2: 37). Since the information regarding the existence of Adam which God previously informed in the Quran varied, the angels to protest God. Their protests are related to soul that was given to Adam comes from God the Almighty (Mahmud, 2015), Adam was chosen as the *khalifa* or God's vice regent on earth (Rahmat & Fahrudin, 2016). Allah taught him names and the angels respected him (Aminudin, 2015). The text-based images of Adam in

the Qur'an which personified and illustrated the existence of Adam was still questionable since they needed to be defined and translated holistically and comprehensively in accordance with the contexts. Moreover, it created the tension between Adam and Iblis when God commanded all creatures in the sky to salute to Adam because his achievement in the form of knowledge.

This study enriches the horizon of a new thought or a variety of study to interpret and understand a story of Adam in the Quran. Three research questions were formulated as follow: a) How was Adam's and Iblis's story is viewed in the Quran?, b) What was the basis of the illustration of Adam and Iblis in the Quran?, c) How did the Adam's and Iblis's story influence Moslems' understanding and attitudes. These three questions would be main topics in the following discussions.

This study was based on the arguments that; a) Adam was represented in the Quran as the first human being created by God and Allah chose Adam as the *khalifa* on earth; Adam was tantalized by Iblis until he broke God's command and was banished from the Eden; b) The context underlying the narration of Adam and Iblis in the Quran is the triangular dialog between God, Angels and Iblis; and c) Understanding of Adam's and Iblis's image in the Quran would provide some understanding in accordance with the readers' perception.

THE TENSIONS OF ADAM AND IBLIS

Linguistically the word Adam was derived from Hebrew the earth meaning “the ground, the earth, or the russet” (Katsir, 1992 p. 112) Abrahamic religions suggested that Adam is the first human. Some sources claimed that Adam is the first man because his skin is brown, his body is made from land and his soul is from God almighty (Isfahani, 1412 p. 38). Although the name Adam is not from Arabic, Al-Waqidi (2001 p. 23) suggested that the word Adam was also derived from the term *adim al-ardh* meaning a human being created from the earth. Studies on Adam and the process of his creation has an important position in Islam since Adam is the first prophet of Islam. In the Quran, word Adam is repeatedly written 25 times, with 16 words referring to Adam himself and the rest referring to his descendants (Bani and Dzurriyah). For example, the Quran mentioned that the process of creating Isa is similar to the process of creating Adam, that both were created from the earth (QS, 3: 59).

The interpreters of the Quran classified the discussion of Adam into some topics. Some of those are Adam as the *khalifa* which means that he is the representative of God on earth (Thusi, n.d. p. 165). Some of interpreters of the Quran postulate that before Allah created Adam, He firstly conveyed His noble plan to angels, while some other interpreters of the Quran argued that Allah concealed his plan from the angels (Thabari, 1992 p. 157). Meanwhile, Thabrisi, (1983 p. 74) argued that there had been a group of satan who made chaos on earth before Adam was created, the angels tried to find out Adam’s destiny whether it is similar to Iblises’ or not, and Allah insisted to conceal the creation of Adam from the angels.

The knowledge God taught Adam led the angels prostrating to Adam stirred some debates among Muslims. Some argued that the Iblis’s refusal to prostrate to Adam presented their monotheism (Schimmel, 2000 p. v). However, the real meaning of prostrating is kissing or else so that the Iblis was reluctant to do it (al-Alusi, 1994 p. 269), and there was an argument that it is an honour Adam as a *khalifa* who had more knowledge (Hayyan, 1992 p. 188)

Satan’s rejection of God’s command (Quran, 2: 34), became a legal event that caused him to be sentenced and driven out of heaven. After casting out the devil, God set a law for Adam and Eve to remain in heaven on condition that it is forbidden to approach the Khuldi tree, a tree growing in the garden of Eden, which God commands humankind not to eat. In the biblical narrative (QS, 2: 35). As a result of Satan’s seduction, then Adam broke the law, and God sentenced him and Eve to get out of heaven (QS, 2: 36). For this oversight, Adam and Eve immediately made repentance (QS, 7: 23), based on an attitude that is full of sincerity and sincerity (QS, 2: 37). This attitude is different from Satan. When he was expelled from heaven, he told the almighty God that he would mislead Adam’s children and grandchildren (QS, 7: 16). He does not regret committed violation of the law, because of the nature of arrogance and arrogance, so the truth that is in him becomes closed. Feeling superior because he has obtained all the attributes or honors in all layers of heaven (Hafil, 2020), he refused to carry out

God’s commands, namely respecting Adam because he was equipped with a set of knowledge.

IMAGOLOGI

Imagology in general was defined as mechanisms of reality production in which the status is accent (reality conjecture) in media by using symbols and sign assemblance (Hudjolly, 2017). Etymologically, imagology was derived from Greek, *imago* (image) and *logos* (knowledge or word). Imagology was defined as a study of image. Kundera was the first novelist who introduced the term imagology (Maryam, 2018). Kundera wrote that image and reality overlap with each other. Kundera argued that public opinion polling enables imagology to live harmoniously with society (Stephens, 2011). The polling results have become the highest, most democratic reality (Hudjolly, 2017).

The term Imagology, which is derived from the word *imago* and *logos*, might be likened to imaging. It means that life is known as an image but not its reality. It is in accordance with Piliang and Goenawan Muhammad, who often compare the term imagology with imagery (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 37). Thus, the study of imagology varies greatly from theories about public image, approaches to public image, and image-making. On the one hand, image is understood as communication, especially visual communication or presentation. On the other hand, imagery is considered as a ‘mental picture’ or an idea. Grunig states that this difference as ‘artistic imagery’ and ‘psychological imagery.’ Artistic image refers to the sender of a message that displays or presents something while the mental image is addressed to the recipient of the message who interprets and understands it (Wibowo, 2012).

The term Imagology is then used widely by writers and academicians from various disciplines. For example, in the discipline of international relations or literature, imagology is defined as “the study of cross-national perceptions and images as expressed in literary discourse” (Wikipedia, 2020) Imagology is essential in these two disciplines because of the increasing attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices that lead literary activities and international relations from literary works about a country or nation (Wibowo, 2012).

Nasip (2017) argued that imagology is a concept which can create an representation/image in the society. Nasip asserted that imagology is a text manipulation strategy which uses symbols and is based on the transformation of imagination or mind which is believed as knowledge system in a society (Beller, 2007). Consequently, imagology becomes a tool to portray a phenomenon in society life which is presented in the text (Yusa, 2016). Besides, imagology is employed to convey a group’s or society’s ideology (Leerssen, 2017) and national identity in literary discourse (Chew, 2006).

Imagology can allude all sides of life. In the religious life, imagology is the field that most often displays the dialectical process of texts as a result of the localization of texts formed by each fragment of civilization which has a distinctive purpose (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 42) viewing religious texts as if they have represented the original reality of religion. From the perspective of imagology, the two things must be

separated from the text's reality about religious phenomena and the intrinsic value of religion (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 46). In the framework of imagology, the text turns out to be necessary and is considered to be sacred in its use depending on imagological needs that always adjust the context. Religious imagology is the formation, duplication, and production of religious texts by the medium (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 51). The core teachings of religion represented through symbols, narratives, and icons in the universe of imagology are no longer easily understood. Assessment is done as far as it relates to symbols, icons, text, and narratives used to represent, not to find the meaning of what is represented (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 51).

The imagological study analyses the textual, intertextual, and contextual aspects of a discourse structure (Wikipedia, 2020). Every understanding that is resulted from the text will produce a new response. It means that a text forms a new reality. Instead, the text is produced by the existence of reality, which is then constructed into a text. This construction process results in a reduction because not all reality can be represented by the text (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 41). Therefore, the existence of contextual dimensions becomes essential to be explored in order to uncover the historical and socio-historical background where the text was produced. The existence of this imagological analysis is to build a construction that leads to social change, change in meaning and interpretation of phenomena that change the community's *weltanschauung* (view of life) towards a new understanding (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 192). Adam's position in the Quran, which can be called an imaginary religiosity is not a religious phenomenon and expression, but a Prophet narrated through various forms of texts. Through imagological analysis, the story of Adam in the Quran will provide a new understanding and meaning to emulate by considering the existence of texts, intertext, and context.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study focused on Adam's story in the Quran that was how the Quran explained the position and the existence of Adam. This choice was based on the consideration that the story of Adam in the Quran was merely considered as an exemplary story despite his position as the noble creature which was above the angels. This study was a content/text analysis to elucidate the psychological tension between Adam and Iblis. The data collection technique used in this study is documentation. First, the verses portraying the tension between Adam and Iblis was positioned. Second, the verses explaining the dialog between Adam, God, Angel and Iblis about Adam was categorized. Third, several Quranic exegesis were collected to analyze and comprehend the context behind it. The used books of commentary are: *Ruh al-Ma'ni* by al-Alusi (1994), *Bahr al-Muhith* by Hayyan (1992) and *Thabari* by Imam Thabari (1992).

The data was analyzed using Hudjolly's (2011) imagology approach. The imagological study analyses the textual, intertextual, and contextual aspects of a discourse structure. Every understanding that is resulted from the text will produce a new response. It means that a text forms a

new reality. Instead, the text is produced by the existence of reality, which is then constructed into a text. This construction process results in a reduction because not all reality can be represented by the text (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 41). Therefore, the existence of contextual dimensions becomes essential to be explored in order to uncover the historical and socio-historical background where the text was produced (Wikipedia, 2020). The existence of this imagological analysis is to build a construction that leads to social change, change in meaning and interpretation of phenomena that change the community's *weltanschauung* (view of life) towards a new understanding (Hudjolly, 2011 p. 192). Adam's position in the Quran, which can be called an imaginary religiosity is not a religious phenomenon and expression, but a Prophet narrated through various forms of text. Through imagological analysis, the story of Adam in the Quran will provide a new understanding and meaning to emulate by considering the existence of texts, intertext, and context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Quran portrayed Adam as the first man and as the father of all human being (Hasnah, 2009). In the Quran, the existence of Adam can be categorized as; first, knowledge was taught to Adam and it is compulsory for him to spread it out (QS, 2: 31 & 33). Second, Adam gained honor from Angels (QS, 2: 34, QS, 7: 11, QS, 17: 61, QS, 18: 50, QS, 20: 116). Third, Adam was governed to live in the eden (QS, 2: 35, QS, 7: 19). Fourth, Adam was warned that the satan is the real enemy (QS, 20: 117 & 120). Fifth, Adam broke God's command (QS, 20: 121). Sixth, Adam forgot God's command (QS, 20: 115). Seventh, Adam repented and asked for God's mercy (QS, 2: 37). Eighth, Adam was God's chosen creature (QS, 3: 33). Meanwhile, Iblis is known as the arrogant creature (QS: 2; 34) and (QS: 7; 13) because feel superior and had gained the honor from God. Hence, his arrogance covered the truth that he had ever got.

In addition, Adam was provided with the soul (desire) to accomplish the mission of becoming the *khalifa* on earth. Sometimes, the complement of desire spreads paradox to the readers' mind (Adnan, 2014). Desire was also the cause of Adam's descendants creating anarchy in society. The narration of Adam in the Quran should be put in the right position to motivate the readers to become noble creatures. Allah informed His angels that He would create a khalifa (Adam) to make the earth prosperous. This news led the angels inquired God's plan, which was whether human beings would cause destruction and war on earth. In this context, the angels only focused on one side of Adam and disregarded another positive aspect which God prepared for Adam, which is human mind.

The angels' questions and arguments were not a sign of disapproval of God's plan, but a form of inquiry into the future probability and prejudice against Adam. The other creature, Iblis kept silent. Psychologically, this manner gave an impression that they agreed with the angels. Yet, satan assumption hides their ethnocentricity. This manner then becomes symbol of hypocrisy. Responding to the angels'

question, God answered that His plan was a historical program which was planned as a must for history and Adam as the first human being was a creature who was ready to undergo the big mandate, that was as a *khalifa* who would develop science and build values and morals which give a positive impact to the other creature. On one side, human is a multidimensional creature who had a curiosity that can make life dynamic and developed.

Thus, an image attached to Adam in the Quran would not cause a priori assumption so Adam was not only known as a creature who had negative characters. There are at least three factors to consider in comprehending the tention narration between Adam and Iblis in the Quran namely the writer's world, the text's world, and the reader's world. In addition, context also has a significant role in comprehending Adam's story because Quranic verses can only be understood perfectly by considering their context/reality. This indication was proven with the concept of *asbab al-nuzul* (revelation circumstances) and *nasikh mansukh* (the text or ruling which abrogates and one which has been abrogated) in the study of Quran. Therefore, understanding the history of text in the Quran is essential so that the meaning and moral messages, as well as benefits, in the Quran can be reflected.

In the imagological analysis, the existence of context becomes vital to know the position of a text. In this context, through imagological analysis that emphasizes inter-text or intertext analysis based on context, the actual story of Adam in the Qur'an can provide new meaning and understanding that he is noble among other God's creatures because there is a process, namely learning science in order to carry out the task of the caliph or God's representative on earth. While Satan, who is symbolized as a proud and arrogant creature who maintains his superior attitude, feels better, describing him as a creature that is resistant to change. In the Quran, word Adam is repeatedly written 25 times, 16 words is directly referred to Adam himself and the rest affirms Adam's descendants (Bani and Dzurriyah). Therefore, the repeatedly mentioned word "Adam" is important to discuss since it is a positive images of Adam, including God's chosen creature (QS, 3: 33), receiving knowledge from God and spreading it (QS, 2: 31 & 33) and Gaining Angels' respect (QS, 2: 34, QS, 7: 11, QS, 17: 61, QS, 18: 50, QS, 20: 116). Meanwhile, Iblis was created from flame (QS: 7: 12), the God's arrogant creature (QS: 2: 34), because of his arrogance, he was banished from the honorable community (QS: 38; 77), and he asked God's permission to tantalize Adam's generation (QS: 38; 82).

A triangular conversation between God, the angels, and the as to a story of Adam can be at least concluded as follows; first, Allah informed the angels that He would create a creature named Adam and appointed him as a khalifa on earth which is provided with knowledge. Second, the angels as God's obedient creatures could not mention names like Adam, who was taught by God, did (Rahmat, 2015). Third, due to the angels' limited knowledge of those names, Allah instructed the angels and the Iblis to prostrate before Adam, which the angels complied with, except the Iblis (Rahmat

& Fahrudin, 2016). Fourth, Adam and Eve were asked to settle on the eden and allowed to do everything else except approaching one (Khuldi) tree. Fifth, the Iblis seduced Adam and Eve to eat the prohibited fruit so then both were banished to earth.

Adam's oversight did not deny Adam's values and status as the noble creature, but God gave him a chance to carry out the glorious task as the leader of all creatures. God directly taught Adam names (*asma kullaha*) which were the basic of knowledge. (QS, 2: 31) These names were names used for religious and world matters (Hayyan, 1992, p. 180). Al-Suyuthi (1994, p. 100) said the meaning of *asma kullaha* is that Allah taught Adam names that are already known by all mankind.

In today's context, knowledge which God taught Adam is the basic epistemological concepts of science which serves as the driving force of the human resource development (Kurniawan, 2013). Adam's merit makes him different and superior to other creatures; it is a form of science that can be passed down from one generation to the next generation. Adam is then symbolized as the representative of God on earth. The human beings' noble position and high status on earth are the results of the humans' creativity which resemble God's manner as the creator in making innovation and improvement (Irwandar, 2003 p. 33).

Due to Adam's mastery of knowledge, Allah asserted His angels to prostrate before Adam as a form of respect. Basically, the real meaning of prostrating is kissing or else so that the Iblis was reluctant to do it (al-Alusi, 1994 p. 269). However, it is because of thier arrogance and feeling of superiority (QS, 2 :34 and QS, 7: 13). The arragonce characteristics covered them from the truth. The superiority, as they gained the honor title from all layers of sky, banished them from the honorable community. Meanwhile, Hayyan (1992 p. 188) suggested that prostrating in Adam's case was to honour Adam as a *khalifa* who had more knowledge and not to worship. This big advantage makes human beings more superior than other creatures including the angels. Thus, the word 'prostrating' which is used to describe the relation of human and God was used to portray the importance of human beings.

In the imagological analysis, the existence of context becomes vital to know the position of a text. In this context, through imagological analysis that emphasizes inter-text or intertext analysis based on context, the actual tention narration of Adam and Iblis in the Qur'an can provide new meaning and understanding that he is noble among other God's creatures because there is a process, namely learning science in order to carry out the task of the caliph or God's representative on earth. While Satan, who is symbolized as a proud and arrogant creature who maintains his superior attitude, feels better, describing him as a creature that is resistant to change. For Iblis, knowledge does not have any benefit other than seniority and that genealogy is more important in displaying one's status. Seniority and superiority feelings which are not supported with knowledge capacity is the Iblis' legacy to humans so as to not act as a khalifa or God's representative on earth.

CONCLUSION

Adam was the first creature created by God from soil, meanwhile the other creature, Iblis was created from flame. Dualism of this creation creates disharmony in performing the task as the God's creature. The angels' protest in the triangular conversation between God, the angels and the Iblis about Adam's narration as the *khali-fa* on earth, Allah provided Adam with knowledge as an advantage. Adam is then symbolized as God's representative on earth. The superior position of human beings on earth is due to humans' creativity in making innovation that resembles God's manner as a creator. God instructed the angels and Iblis to prostrate before Adam as a form of respect and positive appreciation for Adam's knowledge mastery. Only Satan rebelled because he felt superior to Adam. A psychological tension between Iblis's superiority which is not supported by the capacity of knowledge is defeated by Adam's inferiority which is strengthened by knowledge. The word 'kneel' was actually a theological word applied to the relation between human and God, but the word was used in this context as a symbol of appreciation for science.

Using imagology analysis approach, this study can explore the actual relationship between text and context. The main attention of imagology analysis here is on how one can simultaneously interpret the text, intertexts, and context existed in the communication process between God, the angels and the Satan. Thus, the context of communication in the conversation can be analyzed well. Values and moral messages can be exposed by interpreting the text which is produced by the existence of context. Hence, the Adam's narration in the Quran is not merely a story of him sent down from Eden, but this moment cannot deny his value and status as the honour creature even God gave a noble mandate as the leader of all creatures.

To sharpen the result of this study, understanding of imagology of Adam in the Quran needs to be explored from other areas of study, such as semantics, semiotics, and hermeneutics. The use of various approaches will result in the understanding of Adam's imagology in the Quran as not becoming a single truth for certain groups of people or authority. Thus, one conversation in the Quran will produce a new understanding.

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