

The Concept of Magic in The Qur'an: An Encyclopedic Semantic Analysis

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Abstract:

This study aims to discuss the concept of magic (*sihr*) in the Qur'an using an encyclopedic semantic approach. The formal object of this research is the semantic study of the Qur'an, while the material object is the concept of magic in the Qur'an. The context of this study is encyclopedic semantics. The research method is qualitative, employing descriptive-analytical methods and is based on library research. The findings of this study indicate that the word *sihr* in the Qur'an has a basic meaning of the last part of the night, before the break of dawn, where the darkness of the night meets the light of dawn. This makes anything present during that time appear unclear and indistinct. This meaning is also found in pre-Islamic poetry texts and authoritative Arabic dictionaries. Moreover, the basic meanings found in these dictionaries include meanings reflected in the Qur'an, such as ambiguity, hiddenness, deception, and others. Additionally, the meaning of *sihr* in the Qur'an has undergone a shift toward a more specific negative connotation. This is evidenced by the frequent association of the term *sihr* with negative words or meanings in the Qur'an, although the Qur'an still retains its basic meanings from the pre-Islamic period, such as the dawn, something attractive and beautiful, as well as abundance in food and drink.

Keywords: excessive belief; meaning of expressions; Qur'anic exegesis; semantic approach; shamanistic practices.

INTRODUCTION

The history and development of magic are challenging to trace back to its initial origins due to its long journey through human civilizations. Some opinions suggest that magic was first practiced during the era of Prophet Noah (AS), as explained by Ibn Hajar (Pratama et al., 2024). However, other views argue that the Zoroastrian adherents from Persia were the first human civilization to engage with and use magic. Additionally, other ancient civilizations, such as Canaan, Egypt, Babylon, and India, are believed to have extensively incorporated magic into their lives, dating back to 5000 BCE up until the first century CE (Amal & Hajir, 2023). Evidence of the existence of magic can be seen from pre-colonial times in Indonesia. Written evidence of shamanistic practices is recorded in inscriptions from the Kerdatuan Sriwijaya, such as the Kota Kapur, Palas Pasemah, and Telaga Batu inscriptions (Sianipar, 2020). These inscriptions, dating from the 6th–7th centuries CE, contain statements indicating the prohibition of shamanistic practices by the Sriwijaya authorities, with violators subject to curses as punishment from the king.

Magic became a significant aspect during the Middle Ages In Europe, roughly between the 13th and 17th centuries CE. In places like England, magic was used to address societal needs, such as healing, romance, identifying thieves, uncovering buried treasures, and foreseeing the future. The spread of magic in the West was facilitated by Jewish communities, leading to its proliferation in Germany, France, and Italy by the early 14th century CE. This culminated in the establishment of the first Western school of magic in 1533 CE (Stanmore, 2021). Before this, ancient Greek civilization is believed to have been the first Western society to interact with magic, as evidenced by the Greek term *μάγος*, referring to a practitioner of magic (Silooy, 2023). Historical evidence supports the existence of magic and its practitioners. Moreover, the Qur'an references magic in several verses, such as Surah Al-Baqarah (2:102), Al-A'raf (7:111–112), Taha (20:61–72), and implicitly in Surahs Al-Nas and Al-Falaq. Additionally, several hadiths confirm the existence of magic, including those narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, and Abu Dawud, which mention magic among the seven major sins that lead to destruction, alongside *shirk*, unjust murder, consuming *riba*, misusing orphan wealth, fleeing the battlefield, and falsely accusing chaste women of adultery (Baharudin & Mohamad, 2024).

The existence of magic has led to two opposing societal phenomena: complete denial of magic and excessive belief in it, where any unexplained occurrence is deemed magical (Singh, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to understand the concept of magic as outlined in the Qur'an. An in-depth analysis of the term *sihr* and the related verses in the Qur'an is necessary. This study explores the concept of magic in the Qur'an using the encyclopedic semantic analysis method. Encyclopedic semantics is a method for analyzing Qur'anic verses by combining semantics and thematic exegesis. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that seeks to understand the meaning of expressions. Derived from the Greek term to signify, it signifies meaning-making (Suryaningrat, 2019). Semantics, as part of semiotics, gained prominence in the West in the early 19th century, spearheaded by Charles Morris, who included semantics within the broader framework of semiotics, connected with syntax and pragmatics (Ramadhani, 2020).

Meanwhile, Eastern scholars, such as Al-Jahiz, Al-Khattabi, Al-Baqilani, and Al-Jurjani, had earlier developed semantic approaches to study the Qur'an. They highlighted the miraculous nature of the Qur'an in its precise word placement and structure, which conveys its intended meanings. This concept is known as *Nazm Al-Qur'an* (Damanik et al., 2024). Hence, semantics is considered credible in studying the words and meanings of Qur'anic verses. Rahtikawati, cited by Siti Fahimah (2020), asserts that Qur'anic interpretation aided by semantic approaches strengthens a fundamental understanding of Qur'anic concepts beyond other interpretative methods (Fahimah, 2020).

Modern semantic studies of the Qur'an were pioneered by Toshihiko Izutsu, documented in three works: *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (1960), *God and Man in the Qur'an: Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung* (1969), and *The Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology: A Semantical Analysis of Iman and Islam* (1969) (Hooker, 2022). Izutsu proposed that semantic analysis examines key terms of a language to uncover the conceptual worldview (*weltanschauung*) of its speakers. However, Izutsu's approach, being external to Islam, focuses on global understanding rather than specific and in-depth Qur'anic concepts (Darmawan et al., 2020). To address this limitation, Darmawan proposed combining modern semantics with thematic exegesis, a classical Qur'anic interpretation method centered on specific socio-religious issues in the Qur'an (Muyasaroh, 2017). This combination aims to bridge Izutsu's global and often oversimplified approach with thematic exegesis, which sometimes lacks focus or limits discussion (Awadin & Hidayah, 2022). As described in previous studies, encyclopedic semantic analysis involves: 1) Choosing and Profiling: Selecting the topic and explaining the reasons for its selection; 2) Collecting: Compiling relevant Qur'anic verses containing the term and its derivatives; 3) Research: Gathering materials to determine the basic and relational meanings of the term (Kaltsum & Anita, 2021). This involves analyzing four primary sources: dictionaries, pre-Qur'anic poetry, Qur'anic verses, and authentic Qur'anic commentaries; 4) Identifying Basic and Relational Meanings: Establishing core meanings and contextual relationships.; 5) Constructing Semantic Fields: Comparing meanings before and after Qur'anic revelation; 6) Writing the Concept: Synthesizing unique insights and social perspectives embedded in Qur'anic terminology (Fangesty, 2024).

Several researchers have conducted previous studies related to the concept of magic in the Qur'an. Magic in the Qur'an is described as an act capable of distorting reality into ambiguity, as analyzed by Rahman (2019) through the perspective of Imam Fakhruddin Al-Razi. Rahman and Mubarak (2021) explored the concept of magic from the perspectives of Buya Hamka and Quraisy Shihab, who regarded magic as an illusion originating from Harut and Marut. Quraisy Shihab explained that magic operates through incantations aimed at causing harm to others, accompanied by the blowing of knots by women. Hamka provided a more

detailed explanation of the workings of magic, including its techniques and elements of mysticism rooted in Minangkabau culture, such as using seven needles, pieces of burial shrouds, grave soil, and tombstones as mediums (F. Rahman & Mubarak, 2021).

Magic does not originate from the teachings of Prophet Sulaiman but is instead attributed to the teachings of devils, learned by the Jews as a deviation from the Torah. Maghfiroh and Bahri (2023) emphasized that magic does not affect anyone unless permitted by Allah. Furthermore, magic has existed in human society since the time of the Prophets. Islam prohibits magic as its practices consistently lead to harm, evil, and sin (Maghfiroh & Bahri, 2023). Magic is closely linked to devils, as its practices invariably involve the participation of devils, both from the ranks of jinn and humans. This connection is analyzed thematically through verses related to devils and magic, as explained by Ismail et al. (2023) (Abdullah et al., 2023). The Qur'an also narrates stories of magic as lessons for contemporary society. According to Mujahidin (2024), practitioners of magic risk falling into disbelief because it involves elements of worshiping devils, which is a form of associating partners with Allah (Kholik et al., 2024). The revelation of Surah Al-Mu'awwidhatain serves as a shield for Muslims from all harm and evil, including magic.

The current study shares similarities with previous research in exploring the concept of magic in the Qur'an. However, it differs in its approach by examining the concept of magic in the Qur'an through the lens of encyclopedic semantics (Haj-Yahya & Haj-Yahya, 2024). The main issue in this study lies in the concept of magic in the Qur'an, analyzed using an encyclopedic semantic approach. In line with this core issue, the research question is: How is the concept of magic in the Qur'an analyzed through an encyclopedic semantic approach? This study aims to explore the concept of magic in the Qur'an using the encyclopedic semantic approach (Fancy et al., 2023). Theoretically, this research is expected to benefit readers by providing a deeper understanding of the concept of magic as explained in the Qur'an (Aboamro & Rizapoor, 2023). Practically, this study is anticipated to raise awareness among readers about the concept of magic in the Qur'an, helping them avoid misconceptions about magic and freeing them from superstitions and myths that may lead to polytheism.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach utilizing descriptive-analytical methods and is based on a literature review. It involves collecting data from sources such as books, online media articles, and other documents (Saefullah, 2024; Silverman, 2015). The type of data used in this study is qualitative, comprising primary and secondary data, including scholarly articles, books, reputable tafsir works, documents, and others. Data collection techniques are conducted through documentation (M. T. Rahman, 2025). The data analysis process includes data inventory, data classification, and data interpretation (Rofiah, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Term *Sihr* in the Qur'an

The term *sihr* (magic) is mentioned 63 times in the Qur'an (A. Rahman, 2019) with 15 derivative forms. It is found across 27 surahs in the Qur'an, including: Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 102; Surah Al-A'raf [7]: 109, 112, 113, 116, 120, and 132; Surah Al-Mu'minin [23]: 89; Surah Al-Maidah [5]: 110; Surah Al-An'am [6]: 7; Surah Yunus [10]: 2, 10, 76, 77, 79, 80, and 81; Surah Hud [11]: 7; Surah Thaha [20]: 57, 63, 66, 69, 70, 71, and 73; Surah Al-Anbiya [21]: 3; Surah Al-Syu'ara [26]: 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 46, 49, 153, and 158; Surah Al-Naml [27]: 13; Surah Al-Qashash [28]: 36 and 48; Surah Saba [34]: 43; Surah Al-Shaffat [37]: 15; Surah Al-Zukhruf [43]: 30 and 49; Surah Al-Ahqaf [46]: 7; Surah Al-Thur [52]: 15; Surah Al-Qamar [54]: 2 and 34; Surah Al-Saff [61]: 6; Surah Al-Muddathir [74]: 24; Surah Sad [38]: 4; Surah Ghafir [40]: 24; Surah Al-Dharyat [51]: 39, 51, and 52; Surah Al-Isra [17]: 47 and 101; Surah Al-Furqan [25]: 8; Surah Al-Hijr [15]: 15; and Surah Ali 'Imran [3]: 17 (Haikal et al., 1989).

The table below illustrates the distribution of verses regarding *sihr* in the Qur'an:

Table 1: *Sihr* in the Qur'an

No.	Word	Frequency	Verse
1.	سَحَرُوا	1 time	Qs. Al-A'raf [7]: 116
2.	تُسْحَرُونَ	1 time	Qs. Al-Mu'minin [23]: 89
3.	سِحْرٍ	13 times	Qs. Al-Qashash [28]: 36, Qs. Saba [34]: 43, Qs. Al-Shaffat [37]: 15, Qs. Al-Zukhruf [43]: 30, Qs. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 7, Qs. Al-

			Thur [52]: 15, Qs. Al-Qamar [54]: 2, Qs. Al-Shaff [61]: 6, Qs. Al-Mudatsir [74]: 24, Qs. Thaha [20]: 57, 63, and 66, Qs. Al-Syu'ara [26]: 35.
4.	سِحْرَان	1 time	Qs. Al-Qashash [28]: 48
5.	ساحر	12 times	Qs. Al-A'raf [7]: 109 and 112, Qs. Yunus [10]: 2 and 79, Qs. Thaha [20]: 20 (two words), Qs. Al-Syu'ara [26]: 34, Qs. Shad [38]: 4, Qs. Ghafir [40]: 24, Qs. Al-Zukhruf [43]: 49, Qs. Al-Dzariyat [51]: 39 and 52.
6.	ساحران	1 time	Qs. Thaha [20]: 63
7.	ساحرون	1 time	Qs. Yunus [10]: 77
8.	سحرة	8 Ttime	Qs. Al-A'raf [7]: 113 and 120, Qs. Yunus [10]: 80, Qs. Thaha [20]: 70, and Qs. Al-Syu'ara [26]: 38, 40, 41, and 46.
9.	سَحَار	1 time	Qs. Al-Syu'ara [26]: 37
10.	مسحورا	1 time	Qs. Al-Isra [17]: 47
11.	مسحورون	1 time	Qs. Al-Hijr [15]: 15
12.	مُسَحَّرِينَ	1 time	Qs. Al-Syu'ara [26]: 185
13.	سَحْر	1 time	Qs. Al-Qamar [54]: 34
14.	أسحار	2 times	Qs. Ali 'Imran [3]: 17 and Qs. Al-Dzariyat [51]: 18

The Basic Meaning of the Sihr

The basic meaning refers to the inherent and inseparable meaning of a word (Darmawan et al., 2020), or the literal meaning that cannot be detached from the root of a word. For instance, the word *salat* in Arabic is commonly understood as a term signifying a worship ritual that begins with *takbir* and ends with *salam*. However, in its literal sense, *salat* means prayer in Arabic. It has been adapted to a term that denotes a specific act of worship because all the movements in *salat* are filled with prayers and are inseparable from them (Zulkifli & Fitriya, 2023).

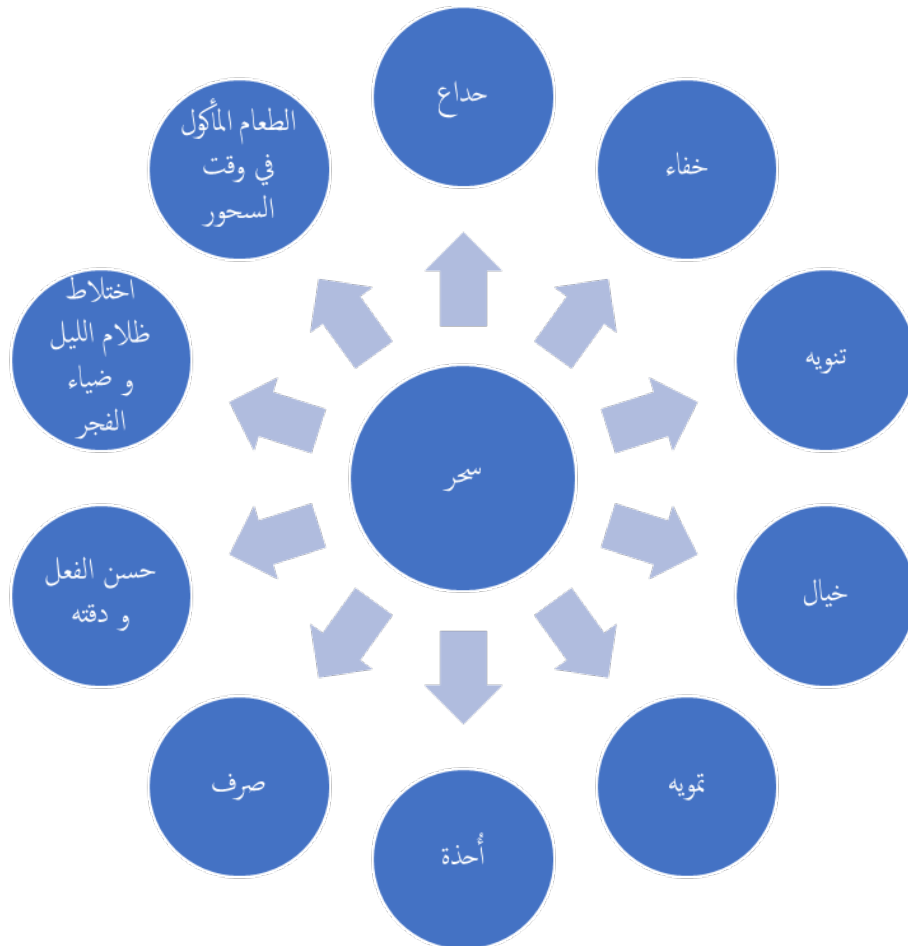
The basic meaning of a word can be examined and analyzed through authentic Arabic dictionaries as the primary reference. This study employs several classical Arabic dictionaries, such as *Al-Misbah Al-Munir*, *Lisan Al-'Arab*, and *Mufradat Al-Faz Al-Qur'an*. In addition, it uses scholarly articles as secondary sources to explore the fundamental meaning of *sihr*. *Sih* is composed of the letters *sin*, *ha*, and *ra*. According to Ibn Faris (as cited in Al-Fayyumi, 2015), *sihr* means presenting falsehood in a way that appears truthful, referred to as deception. Al-Fayyumi also cites Al-Razi's similar opinion that *sihr* in Islamic law involves concealing and disguising matters so that the cause of a thing is hidden and perceived differently from reality. Moreover, it has the characteristic of captivating individuals because of its seemingly extraordinary nature, beyond ordinary perception (Al-Fayyumi, 2015).

In *Lisan Al-'Arab*, *sihr* is described as a term indicating deception, capable of misleading someone's perception into believing what they see as reality, whereas in truth, it differs from actual reality. Thus, *sihr* involves deception or trickery; any subtle deception is referred to as *sihr* (Çaksen, 2023). Also explained in (Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahani, n.d.), *Sih* has several basic meanings, including 1) Deception and delusion that is not real, 2) Asking for protection from Satan using certain methods, so that this is considered as strength. extraordinary and beyond reason that comes from itself, 3) Good, thorough in doing something, 4) Turning away from something, 5) Mixing darkness and light at dawn (end of the night) and 6) Food eaten at the end of the night (*sahur*) (Dodi, 2024).

In line with the meaning extracted from classical sources, it is included in secondary sources in the form of an article on the harmony of the basic meaning of magic, including 1) Ibrahim Mustafa's opinion that magic is an act that can give the best and most amazing impression in terms of appearance, 2) Magic is an act that is vague and cannot be seen in its true form, through deception and distortion of reality, 3) deception and deception, so that every cause of something is hidden and is not depicted as it should be, 4) Manipulation which aims to obtain unusual knowledge or skills, and 5) Magic is imagination, something which is unclear, as is the lack of clarity between darkness and light which causes everything to not be completely visible clearly (Ismail et al., 2023). Therefore, *Sih* comes from the word *Sahar* which is the time of dawn or time of night, a time that is mixed between darkness and light so that every event becomes unclear (F. Rahman & Mubarak, 2021).

Based on the data that has been collected, it can be concluded that the basic meaning contained in sihr is every matter that is carried out in secret, carefully. But full of trickery and deceit so as to create a power that will be considered unusual, which deviates from the real shadow. The chart below explains the basic meaning of *sihr*.

Figure 1. The Basic Meaning of *Sihr*



Relational Meaning of Sihr Pre-Qur'an

Relational meaning is the meaning that appears when a word is inserted into a sentence structure with other words, and which arises due to a certain context of conversation or is influenced by certain circumstances (Darmawan et al., 2020). To find out the relational meaning before the revelation of the Qur'an, classical poetry texts from the period of ignorance were chosen as the main reference. Among the poetry of ignorance that contain the word *syair* are the following (Murtaza et al., 2016):

First Poetry

صَادَتْ فُوَادِي مِنْهُنَّ جَارِيَةً
 مَكْحُولَةٌ الْمُقْلَتَيْنِ بِالْحَوَرِ
 تُرِيكَ مِنْ تَعْرِهَا إِذَا ابْتَسَمَتْ
 كَأَسِّ مُدَامٍ قَدْ حُفَّتْ بِالذَّرَرِ
 أَعَارَتْ الظَّبْيِ سِحْرَ مُقْلَتَيْهَا
 وَبَاتَ لَيْثُ الشَّرَى عَلَى حَدَرِ
 خَوْدٌ رَدَاخٌ هَيْفَاءُ فَاتِنَةٌ

تُخَجِّلُ بِالْحُسْنِ بَهْجَةَ الْقَمَرِ

*Only one woman has captured my heart among the many,
With kohl-lined eyes full of beauty.
She reveals her gentle smile,
Like a chalice of pure wine adorned with pearls.
She is like a gazelle with piercing eyes,
Able to keep even the lions of the field alert and watchful.
A maiden of radiant beauty with an enchanting figure,
So stunning her grace leaves the moon blushing in shyness.*

Antarah describes how a woman is able to attract his feelings, making him fall in love with her. The *Sihr* in this poetry shows the meaning of *Husn wa Diqqah* as the beautiful and sharp gaze of the woman is able to make Antarah awkward like the moon that is embarrassed by the beauty of her gaze.

Second Poetry

بَرْدُ نَسِيمِ الْحِجَازِ فِي السَّحَرِ
إِذَا أَتَانِي بِرِيحِهِ الْعَطِرِ
أَلْدُّ عِنْدِي مِمَّا حَوَتْهُ يَدِي
مِنَ اللَّالِي وَالْمَالِ وَالْبَدْرِ
وَمُلْكُ كِسْرَى لَا أَشْتَهِيهِ إِذَا
مَا غَابَ وَجْهُ الْحَبِيبِ عَن نَّظْرِي

*The coolness of the gentle breeze from Hijaz at dawn
When it comes to me carrying its fragrant aroma
Is more enjoyable to me than what I have
In the form of jewels, wealth, and gold coins.
Even the Kingdom of Kisra I do not desire,
If the face of my beloved is lost from my sight.*

One of the verses in this poem further illustrates Antarah's feelings for the woman he loves, as her image lingers persistently in his mind. Antarah likens this situation to being in the early hours of dawn (sahr), accompanied by a gentle breeze.

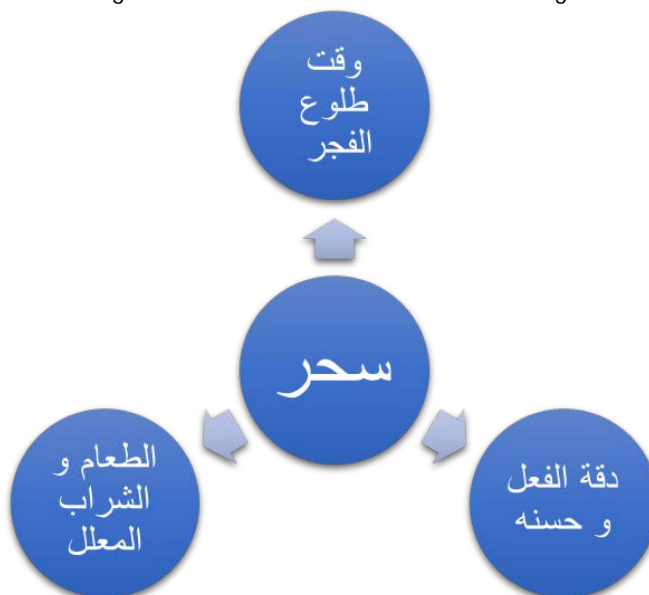
Third Poetry

فَإِن تَسْأَلِينَا فِيمَ نَحْنُ فَإِنَّا
عَصَافِيرُ مِن هَذَا الْأَنَامِ الْمُسَحَّرِ
عَبِيدٌ لِحَيِّ جَمِيرٍ إِن تَمَلَّكُوا
وَتَتَّظِلُّنَا عُمَّالُ كِسْرَى وَقَيْصَرِ

*If you ask us about our condition,
We are but weak, like a small bird among those with abundant food and drink.
We are servants to the Himyar tribe when they hold power,
Yet oppressed by the officials of Kisra and Caesar.*

This poem, recited by Walid bin Rabi'ah, portrays the state of his tribe as they contend with another tribe. He reflects on how his tribe, should they continue fighting, would have no achievements left to take pride in. In contrast, he describes the other, more dominant tribe as possessing an abundance of food and drink (musahhar), which serves as a mark of distinction and pride for a tribe or clan. Based on the text of the Jahiliyah poem above, the meaning of the word *sihr* is related to the following three meanings:

Figure 2. The meaning of the word *sihr* is related to the following three meanings



The Relational Meaning of Sihr in the Qur'an

The word *Sihr* in the Qur'an has developed its meaning, not only the time at the end of the night or something that is considered good and positive, but sometimes it indicates something bad and negative. This shows that the word *sihr* has developed even more into something that is considered to be practices that lead to Satan by asking for help from Satan to solve problems that exist in real life and this is included in the category of major sins (Al-Kabair). The following are verses that include the word *sihr*, including:

First, *Sihr* is a skill or expertise that can be learned. *Sihr* in several verses of the Qur'an is realized with the word *يعلم* – *علم* which means to teach. This relationship can be found in the following verses of the Qur'an:

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۗ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ
 وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَٰئِكِينَ بِبَابِلَ ۗ هُرُوتَ وَمُرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۗ
 فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ۚ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
 وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا
 بِهِۦٓ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ١٠٢

"And they followed [instead] what the devils had recited during the reign of Solomon. It was not Solomon who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Harut and Marut. But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say, "We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic]." And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah. And the people learn what harms them and does not benefit them. But the Children of Israel certainly knew that whoever purchased the magic would not have in the Hereafter any share. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves if they only knew"

قَالَ ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرِكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَأَقْطَعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خَلْفٍ
وَلَأَصْلَبِنَكُمُ فِي جُذُوعِ النَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ أَيُّنَا أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَأَبْقَى ٧١

[Pharaoh] said, "You believed him before I permitted you. Indeed, he is your leader who has taught you magic. So I will surely cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you on the trunks of palm trees, and you will surely know which of us is more severe in [giving] punishment and more enduring."

قَالَ ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرِكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ لَأَقْطَعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ
وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خَلْفٍ وَلَأَصْلَبِنَكُمُ أَجْمَعِينَ ٤٩

[Pharaoh] said, "You believed Moses before I permitted you. Indeed, he is your leader who has taught you magic, but you are going to know. I will surely cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will surely crucify you all."

These three quoted verses show that magic is a science that can be learned and is a skill that can be used by humans and can be passed down and taught to others, even in Qs. Al-Shu'ara [26]: 41 and Qs. Al-A'raf [7]: 113, the word *Sihir* is juxtaposed with *أجر* which means wages (Shihab, 2007). This confirms the existence of magic as something that can be learned and mastered (Al-Zamakhsyari, 1977). In line with this, magic is a matter that was revealed by Allah SWT. to Harut and Marut, who are mentioned as two angels or two pious human figures to teach magic to humans. This is used as an argument that miracles are not magic and that Prophet Solomon AS (Ibnu Katsir, 2017). did not teach magic as the claim spread among the community at that time, who saw the reason for the wealth and power of Prophet Solomon AS (A. Rahman, 2019). came from being learned. Whereas magic comes from Satan, who has blasphemed against the magic. In addition, magic is not studied and mastered but as a form of test for humans to stay away from magic because it comes from Satan, and magic cannot be mastered except with the permission of Allah SWT (Rahman & Mubarak, 2021). Meanwhile, the next two verses, according to (Shihab, 2000), relate to Pharaoh's reaction when the magicians believed in what the Prophet Moses AS had brought from the teachings of Islam. Therefore, Pharaoh was amazed and expressed his annoyance and disappointment towards the magicians who believed, were considered to have conspired with their fallen ones who had taught magic and conspired with Moses (Shihab, 2000). However, all of that was Pharaoh's rotten strategy so that he could execute them without clear charges.

Second, *sihr* is related to unusual matters (*mukhalifan li al-'adah*), so that it can influence others. This can be seen in many verses of the Qur'an when the word *sihr* is often paired with the words *آية*, *حق*, *عظيم*, *مبين*, *بينات*, *مبصرة*. The relationship between the word *sihr* and these words usually explains how miracles come, which are signs of prophecy that are sent to his people. The following are some verses that show the relationship between *sihr* and the words that have been mentioned, including: Al-Naml [27]: 13, Al-Qamar [54]: 2, and Al-Ahqaf [46]: 7

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ ءَايَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ١٣

But when there came to them Our visible signs, they said, "This is obvious magic."

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا ءَايَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ٢

And if they see a miracle, they turn away and say, "Passing magic."

وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ٧

And when Our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, those who disbelieve say of the truth when it has come to them, "This is obvious magic."

The verses above contain the situation of those of you who reject the truth of the Prophets accompanied by their miracles by equating them as if they were magic. This appears as the most reasonable reason for rejecting the truth of the miracles of the prophets. When they see extraordinary phenomena that are out of the ordinary, their alibi for not believing in miracles is to create the perception that extraordinary miracles are the same as magic which is always considered something that is out of the ordinary.

When there was strong empirical evidence of Moses' prophethood, one of which was explained in Qs. Al-Naml [37]: 13, in fact, Pharaoh and his people were convinced by the miracles of the Prophet Musa As. in the form of sticks, typhoons, locust attacks and others (Al-Razi, 1981). However, it is clear that this miracle still cannot be a guidance because of their arrogance. A similar thing happened when the Mecca polytheists asked for concrete evidence regarding the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Zamakhshari, 1977). However, when concrete evidence emerged in the form of the split moon phenomenon, they rejected this empirical evidence, considering it to be the emergence of magic that occurred continuously (Khoiri, 2024). Apart from that, in Qs. Al-Qamar explained the condition of the previous people after rejecting and lying to the truth of the Prophets sent to them (Hidayanti et al., 2023). Likewise, with what is explained in Qs. Al-Ahqaf [46]: 7, when the verses of Allah SWT come. which is in the Koran as a miracle of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. with such clear explanations in it, they denied it and made it up by framing that these verses were magic (Ibnu Katsir, 2017).

Third, magic is related to something that is useless, damaged, rejected and invalid. This is found in several verses of the Qur'an that juxtapose the word *sihr* with the words *أكرهتنا*, *حطايًا*, *لا يفلح*, *مفسد*, *غير صالح*, *لا يفلح*, *حطايًا*, *أكرهتنا*. As stated in the following verse:

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ أَتَقُولُونَ لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَكُمْ أَسِحْرٌ هَذَا وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّحْرُونَ ٧٧

Moses said, "Do you say [thus] about the truth when it has come to you? Is this magic? But magicians will not succeed."

فَلَمَّا أَلْقَوْا قَالَ مُوسَىٰ مَا جِئْتُمْ بِهِ السِّحْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَيُبْطِلُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ٨١

And when they had thrown, Moses said, "What you have brought is [only] magic. Indeed, Allah will expose its worthlessness. Indeed, Allah does not amend the work of corrupters."

إِنَّا ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَعْفَرَ لَنَا حَطِينَنَا وَمَا أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ السِّحْرِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ٧٣

Indeed, we have believed in our Lord that He may forgive us our sins and what you compelled us [to do] of magic. And Allah is better and more enduring."

Magic in these three verses; Qs. Yunus [10]: 77 and 81, and Qs. Thaha [20]: 73 explains the relationship between magic and something that is forbidden, damaged and useless. It is explained (Shihab, 2009), in Qs. Yunus [10]: 77, that magic is an act that will not produce victory (as the magicians hope); therefore, the Prophet Moses As. could not possibly do something that could be detrimental. As seen in the lives of the miserable magicians. Even if it looks comfortable, before or after his death, the magician will appear miserable and tortured. Therefore, the other two verses are an affirmation that Allah SWT will not approve of magic because it is a false matter. In addition, it appears that when the magicians realized their mistake in using magic, Allah replaced it with a better reward (Hassan & Tiwari, 2021).

Fourth, magic is related to fantasy and wishful thinking, which is actually a picture or image of something that did not happen. Among them, there is a verse that equates *sihr* with *خيال*. This verse is found in Qs. Thaha [20]: 66 and Qs. Al-Muminun [23]: 89.

قَالَ بَلْ أَلْفَوْا قَادًا جِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ يُحَيِّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ ٦٦

He said, "Rather, you throw." And suddenly their ropes and staffs seemed to him from their magic that they were moving [like snakes]

Magic is explained in this verse as having a relationship with fantasy, wishful thinking and trickery which is capable of deceiving the views of those who see it from the reality of what is actually happening (Ibnu Katsir, 2017). Therefore, the snake that is seen crawling in this verse is not actually crawling, as it is only a stick and a rope (Shihab, 2007).

Fifth, Sihr is related to the meaning of deception. This meaning is found in Qs. Al-Mu'minun [23]: 89, which explains the condition of the disbelievers who reject the truth regarding the day of the power of Allah SWT in all his glory in creating the heavens and the earth, as well as the existence of a day of vengeance, which has no protector except Allah SWT. on that day. So the form of denial is juxtaposed with the word *تسحرون*, which means to be deceived; it describes the situation of those who are still being deceived, despite the fact that there is real and very clear evidence (Hassan & Tiwari, 2021). The verse is as follows:

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلٌّ فَأَنَّى تُنْسَحَرُونَ ٨٩

They will say, "[All belongs] to Allah." Say, "Then how are you deluded?"

Sixth, sihr is related to something that covers and obstructs, this is found in Qs. Al-Zariyat [51]: 52, and Al-Hijr [15]: 15 which bases the word *الساحر* with *مجنون* with *سكرت*. The verses are as follows:

كُلُّكَ مَا آتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاجِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ٥٢

Similarly, there came not to those before them any messenger except that they said, "A magician or a madman."

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَسْحُورُونَ ١٥

They would say, "Our eyes have only been dazzled. Rather, we are a people affected by magic."

The verse above explains the form of rejection of previous people towards the Apostles by equating them with sorcerers or crazy people (Al-Zamakhsyari, 1977). This implies that the Prophets were just people whose minds were closed, like crazy people. This arose due to explanations to previous people regarding supernatural matters related to the Oneness and Majesty of Allah SWT. as One God, whose nature cannot be seen empirically as if it were wishful thinking conveyed by a madman or a magician whose mind is closed.

In line with the previous verse 15 of the letter Al-Hijr explains the strong rejection of the disbelievers against the messenger of Allah SWT, to the point that if the miracle came to them, the gates of heaven were opened for them as evidence of the greatness of Allah SWT which is clear, they would still reject it strongly by making an alibi that we are people affected by magic. It is explained in these two verses that the nature of magic is able to cover and prevent people from the reality of what is actually happening. Therefore, magic is juxtaposed with the words *majnun* and *sukran* as a description of the relationship of meaning between magic and both, namely their similarity, which is able to cover and prevent the truth (Gasimogama, 2013).

Seventh, Magic is related to the meaning of the last time of the night (dawn). There is a word in the Qur'an related to *سحر*, namely *سحر* which means the last time of the night, approaching the time of dawn; when dawn is about to rise (Al-Fayyumi, 2015), there is also an opinion that says that *sahar* is the last one-sixth of the end of the night (Al-Razi, 1981). The connection between *sahr* and *sahr* is that the time of *sahr* is when the darkness of night meets the light of dawn, thus making anything that exists at that time vague. As this situation occurs when *sahr* is used by someone, it will disguise something from its true nature (Rahman & Mubarak, 2021). The verses containing the word *sahar* are in Qs. Al-Qamar [54]: 24, Ali Imran [3]: 17 and Qs. Al-Zariyat [51]: 18. The verses are as follows:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّا آلَ لُوطٍ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ بِسَحَرٍ ٣٤

Indeed, We sent upon them a storm of stones, except the family of Lot - We saved them before dawn

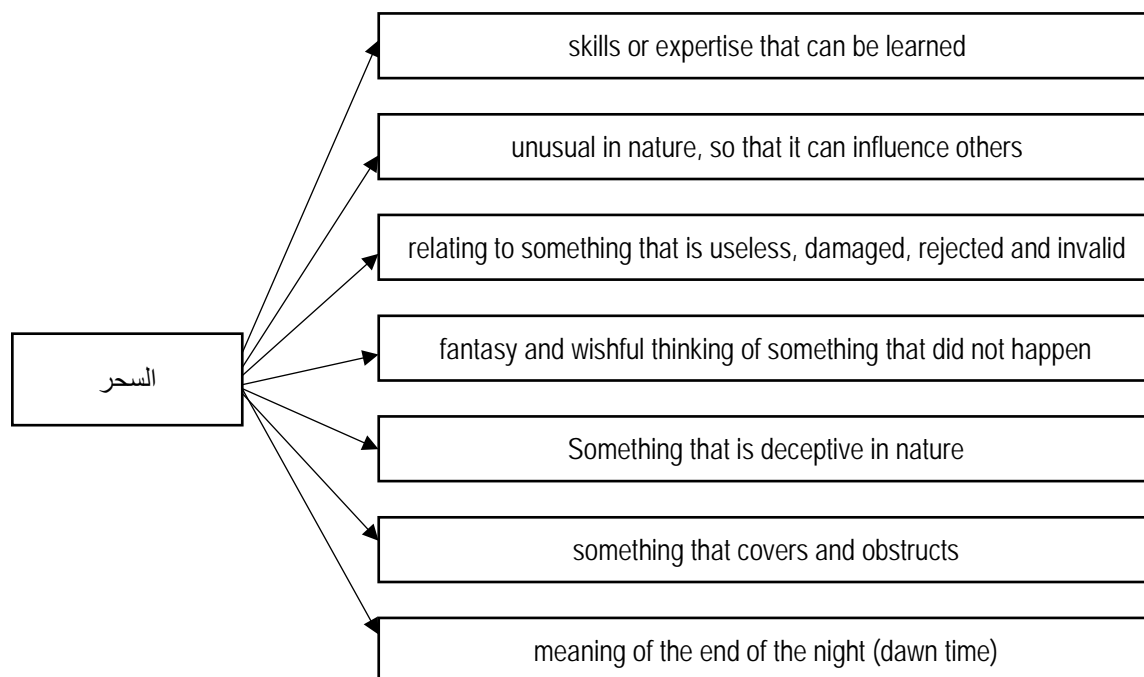
الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ ١٧

The patient, the true, the obedient, those who spend [in the way of Allah], and those who seek forgiveness before dawn.

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ١٨

And in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness.

The chart below explains the semantic field scheme of the word *sihr* in Al-Qur'an, as follows:



The Concept of the Qur'an Regarding Sihr

According to its original meaning taken from the madah sahar سَحَر which means the end of the night that meets the darkness of the night and the brightness of the dawn, which makes something at that time become smooth and vague when seen and not so visible or clear, which gives birth to other derivations including the meaning of vague, hidden, trickery, manipulative, power and so on. Likewise, the meaning of *sihr* in the Qur'an refers to something that is able to make something unclear to others. It's just that in the era before the Qur'an was revealed, the word *sihr* refers to something positive and interesting, so in the Qur'an the word *sihr* does not always indicate a positive meaning, in fact, it tends to be more based on negative meanings

The poems before Islam in the era of ignorance contain the word *sihr*, which is related to the end of the night (the time before dawn), something beautiful and interesting, and food and drink that are always served continuously and abundantly. Meanwhile, in the Qur'an, the word *sihr* is related to the time of the end of the night and unusual skills that can be learned (Zarkasyi & Ihsan, 2024). In addition, the Qur'an provides another concept of *sihr*. In addition to skills that can be learned, the position of magic in the Qur'an is a despicable, destructive and false matter and is forbidden to be learned because, in essence, magic will lead to evil, disguise all clear truths and cover them up subtly.

Therefore, the Qur'an always mentions the word magic with very despicable matters and is not appropriate to be followed, such as the hardness and closed hearts of the infidels towards the miracles of Allah SWT, thus making an alibi that it is magic. This finding is evidence that the Qur'an gives the meaning of *sihr* to something that is more focused on something that is destructive and forbidden to be learned and used in life. This is different from the period of ignorance which did not provide an affirmation of the concept of *sihr*, even though magic existed long before the period of ignorance. However, besides that, the Qur'an still maintains its basic meaning, namely the time of the end of the night or the time when dawn will appear (Sirajuddin et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The Qur'an has explained the concept of magic as something that is reprehensible, destructive and false. Therefore, the Qur'an forbids studying magic, even though magic can be mastered and learned. This is a form of test for humans against the provisions that Allah SWT has determined. The results of the discussion show that the concept of *sihr* in the Qur'an has changed, which points to a negative and more specific meaning of *sihr*, namely something that is destructive and forbidden. This is different from the meaning of *sihr* in the era of ignorance, which only refers to positive meanings, such as the time at the end of the night before dawn,

something beautiful and interesting and abundant food and drink. However, besides that, the Qur'an still maintains its basic meaning, namely the time at the end of the night before dawn, by mentioning *sihr* with a different expression phonemically.

However, it still comes from the same word, so it has a meaning relationship that is always bound by its basic meaning, namely *sahar*. But still from the same root word. Theoretically, this study is expected to be beneficial for readers to learn more about the concept of magic in more depth in accordance with the explanation of the Qur'an. In practical terms, this study is expected to be a reading that provides awareness to readers regarding the concept of magic in the Qur'an, so that they are free from deviant understandings regarding magic and free from superstition and superstition, which can lead to polytheism. In addition, this study still has limitations, such as not conducting observations or field studies by interviewing research subjects, so this can be an opportunity for further empirical research, especially those related to the study of living the Qur'an related to the concept of magic. As for recommendations, it is hoped that Islamic organizations in Indonesia, especially the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), which oversees this issue, will provide guidance to the community regarding the concept of magic in the Qur'an so that the community is able to escape from the shadow of a mistaken understanding of magic that can damage the faith in particular and in general which can damage the social order of society.

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