

**BEYOND THE LYRICS: THE REPRESENTATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES FROM
"DOWNFALL - THE BATTLE OF UHUD"**

Moh. Arif Mahbub¹

E-mail address: rif_elbarz@rocketmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at revealing what the Islamic values that can be portrayed in lyrics "Downfall - The Battle of Uhud" are. This study is qualitative research. In this study, the writer employs textual information found in lyrics "Downfall: The Battle of Uhud" as the source of data to be analyzed. Collecting, coding the Islamic values brought out by the words or phrases, and reviewing them are the next procedures to present the findings of this study. In analyzing the data, the writer uses content analysis because the data to be analyzed are in the form of documents. This method is used to reveal or capture the Islamic values from that lyric. The result shows that there several Islamic values portrayed in this lyric. They are disobedience will lead to the calamity, arrogance can lead people to be disbelievers, strong Iman will break the barriers, and, lastly, greed should be avoided. On the basis of the research findings, it can be concluded that this lyric represent many Islamic values that promotes people to do the righteous deeds.

Keywords : Islamic values, Lyrics.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menguak nilai-nilai islami apa sajakah yang ada dalam lirik "Downfall: The Battle of Uhud". Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif. Peneliti menggunakan informasi tekstual yang ada lirik lagu "Downfall: The Battle of Uhud" sebagai sumber data yang akan di analisa. Koleksi data, pemberian kode pada nilai-nilai islami yang diambil dari kata atau frase yang ada pada lirik tersebut serta meninjau ulang data tersebut merupakan prosedur lanjutan sebagai dasar dari temuan dalam penelitian ini. Peneliti menggunakan content analysis untuk menganalisa data karena data yang dianalisa dalam bentuk dokumen. Hasilnya, ada beberapa nilai Islami yang bisa di gambarkan sebagai berikut: ketidakpatuhan akan membawa kesengsaraan, arogansi akan menjerumuskan manusia menjadi kufur, Iman yang teguh akan menghancurkan segala rintangan, dan menghindari sifat serakah. Berdasarkan temuan diatas, bisa disimpulkan bahwa lirik dalam lagu ini menggambarkan banyak nilai Islami yang bisa dijadikan acuan untuk melakukan kebajikan.

Kata kunci: Nilai-nilai islami, Lirik Lagu.

¹ Dosen Program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP-UIJ

INTRODUCTION

What makes human distinct from other creatures is that human has the real god's gift namely mind. It makes human possible to think, learn, feel emotion, express or share their feelings, and have a very vivid imagination. In terms of expressing feelings, one probably expresses verbally and others in the written forms. There have been so many instances of communicating or expressing one's thoughts or feelings in the form of written language. Through the medium of literature perfectly exemplifies one of the ways to communicate or express them in the form of written language.

Literary works have been commonly classified into four broad categories; fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction. Each category has its own forms and characteristics. Further, they have sub-classifications as well. As to the classification of fiction, it commonly classified into myth, short story, novella, novel, and romance. Meanwhile, ballads, epics, odes, and lyrics belong to the sub-classification of poetry. The sub-classification of drama is tragedies, comedies, and theatre of absurd. The last classification of literature, non-fiction, is commonly classified into biography, autobiography, personal essays, proceeding journals, article, textbooks, letters, etc.

Needless to say, the artworks are not value-free. An author of novel as one of literary works, for instance, always instills values in his/her novel so that the readers can learn something positive from it. Accordingly, the poetical works are unquestionably written in a high value as well.

Song is not a mere noise that is simply intended to give pleasure to the listeners. It consists not just of the lyrics and the tune, but also of all the contexts, in which a song is created, experienced, produced, and consumed (<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/songs/whatis.html>). From the previous quotation, we can conclude that song is not simply a combination of well-formed lyrics and a pattern of sounds produced by musical instruments. Rather, it is about an outlet to reflect the songwriter's strong feelings or emotions, ideas, and, even, religious beliefs. In other words, it is through song the listeners are essentially able to learn the actual messages conveyed by the songwriter.

Lyrics, the words of a song, are an essential component in song consisting of verses and choruses (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/lyrics>). This opinion was supported by Meyer, Newmayer, and Rauber (2008, p.337) stating that song lyrics exhibit a certain structure, as they are organized in blocks of choruses and verses.

As to the discussion of Islamic values, the writer wants to make these things clear described in the following discussion. The word value is always referring to a set of social life standards which people, as member of social group, can use it as guidance or reference for them to behave. This idea was supported by Halstead that defines values in connection with the moral principles that can be used as reference in decision-making, saying:

“Values is used to refer to principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behavior or as points of reference in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action and which are closely connected to personal integrity and personal identity.” (2005:4)

Islam has two basic sources namely the noble Qur'an & the *Sunnah* (the Prophet traditions). In relation to the discussion of moral values in Islam, Thomas (1997:195-197) states that the other positive values of Qur'an, in addition to five pillars of Islam, are righteousness (2:177), various virtues (70:20), memorizing the Qur'an (73:20), orphans, fair business dealings, justice (6:152), alms, forgiveness, repentance (3:134), humility, generosity (22:35), Marriage (5:4), defending the faith (4:95), and debtors (2:276). As to moral values in *Sunnah* are general virtues, nine obligations (reverence Him, speak the truth in prosperity and adversity, be moderate in affluence and poverty, benefit my relations and kindred who do not benefit me, give alms to him who abuseth me, forgive him who injureth me, silently attain a knowledge of God, mention Him when I speak, be a proper example to others), patience and forgiveness, priorities in charitable acts, treatment of animals, just responses, courage, gentleness, and repentance. In brief in conclusion, those all Islamic values are going to be used as the basis to analyze Islamic values within the song lyrics.

Nowadays, there are so many good songs with beautiful lyrics. In relation to this study analyzing about Islamic values portrayed from song lyrics, the writer decided to choose Purgatory. They are an Indonesian religious metal band formed in around 1991 ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purgatory_\(band\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purgatory_(band))). To take this matter further, this band released its first release, *Abyss call*, in 1995. Purgatory contributed their song entitled "Sokratul Maut" in a compilation album under the label Rotocorp records, namely "Metalik Klinik 1". Only then, they released their first album, *ambang kepunahan*, in 1999. The second album called "7:172" released in 2003 under the label of Sony Music Indonesia. In 2006, they released the last album called "Beauty Lies Beneath" under the label of Dragdown Records.

Most importantly, purgatory always tries to instill Islamic values in their songs. Almost all their songs were inspired or quoted from so many Qur'anic verses. For instance, the song entitled "Angerball" from the last album "Beauty Lies Beneath" was inspired from Qur'an Surah ali-Imran (3) verses 133-134. The song entitled "Lords of War (Ahli Naar)" was also inspired from Surah al-Baqarah 11-12, Surah al-Hijr 39, and Surah ash-Shura 42. "Jonah" was inspired from Surah al-Anbiya 87. Still taken from Purgatory's last album, the song entitled "Downfall: The Battle of Uhud" was also inspired from Surah ali-Imron 140. As previously illustrated, the writer has a strong desire to dig out or uncover the Islamic values hidden in its song lyrics. In short, it is therefore that this band is quite representative to be chosen as subject for analysis. In relation to this study, the writer has intentionally decided to choose

the lyrics entitled “Downfall – the Battle of Uhud”. Based on the writer’s opinion, this song is very interesting to be explored in more details.

METHOD

Design

It is needless to say that every research approaches have different goals. In other words, distinct goals, not surprisingly, require distinct designs. This study is aimed at revealing what the Islamic values that can be portrayed from “*Downfall-The Battle of Uhud*” are. In accordance with the objective of this study, the writer employs descriptive qualitative as research design. The analysis in this study is thus interpretive rather than statistical. The process of this study involves emerging questions to be resolved, collecting or gathering the data, analyzing the data inductively (proceeding from the data to theory or interpretation), and the writer then formulating the interpretations of the data that involves drawing conclusion in narrative form to provide answers to research problems.

Sources of the Data

The qualitative inquirer deals with data that are in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers and statistics (Ary, et.al., 2010:424). In this study, the writer employs textual information found in lyrics “Downfall: The Battle of Uhud” as the source of data to be analyzed. The data are descriptive data taken from those lyrics. Collecting, coding the Islamic values brought out by the words or phrase on verses, and reviewing them are the next procedures to present the findings of this study.

Sampling

Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012:91) point out that a sample in a research study can be taken to refer to the group on which information is obtained. Based on the previous definition, sampling is thus referred to as the way the data for the study are selected. “Qualitative researchers are likely to select a purposive sample.” They (2012:436) continue. In this instance, qualitative researchers use their experience and knowledge to select a sample that can provide the relevant information about what they are studying.

In this study, the writer uses purposive sampling because, according to his personal judgment, the lyrics of “*Downfall-The Battle of Uhud*” are suited to the intent of this study. It means that they possess the necessary data to be obtained. In other words, the samples selected are deemed representative to present in-depth data the writer seeks to study. Hence, in this way, the writer does not want to select this sampling technique to accurately represent a population. Rather, the goal is to achieve in-depth understanding of the samples selected to help him to answer research questions.

Data Collection Method

The most common data collection methods used in qualitative research are observation, interviewing, and document or artifact analysis (Ary, et.al, 2010:431). In collecting the data, the writer as the key instrument uses document or artifact analysis because this study analyzes written materials. In so doing, the writer observes the data by reading intensively every single part of the lyrics to achieve the deep understanding on the Islamic values within them.

Data Analysis

As to the data analysis, the writer uses document analysis because the data to be analyzed are in the form of documents. This method is used to reveal or capture the Islamic values from the lyrics of "Downfall-The Battle of Uhud". The first step of data analysis is the writer initially reads and rereads the lyrics in order to be familiar with them. The next step is coding the data. It is a procedure for organizing the text of the transcripts, and discovering patterns within that organizational structure (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p.31). In doing so, the writer sorts them by looking for words or phrases that represent Islamic values. The writer then displays the Islamic values portrayed in the lyrics as findings. The last step is drawing conclusion related to the objective of this study.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

There are several Islamic values that can be portrayed from the lyrics "Downfall-The Battle of Uhud". The following lines will describe the data that contain Islamic values followed by an analysis for each value. First, *disobedience will lead to the calamity*. The disobedience to the command of Allah, the Almighty, basically appears in the following verse:

"...and betray what we fight for".

Prior to the discussion of the representation of disobedience portrayed from the lyrics "Downfall-The Battle of Uhud", it is worth mentioning here to discuss several Qur'anic verses and hadith related to the command of Allah to obey Him and His apostle, Muhammad. First, as stated in Qur'an Surah Ali-Imran (32), Allah, the almighty, has strongly commanded all Muslims to obey Him and His Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him). Another ayah has stated "so fear Allah, and obey Me"; Qur'an Surah ash-Shuara (108).

Obedience to the commands of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is an obligatory duty for all Muslims. It is essentially materialized by following the orders of Allah and avoiding what He has forbidden. On the other hand, disobedience to Allah means disobeying Allah's commandments or

discontinuing in worshipping Him. One who disobeys the commands of Allah will lead him to the negative consequences. First, one who always continues to commit sins, Allah will give him a humiliating punishment. This is what Allah, the almighty, has stated in Qur'an Surah An-Nisa' (14). In addition, if one always goes against the command of Allah, he will not receive a mercy from Allah. It is what Allah, the almighty, has stated in Qur'an Surah An-Noor (56).

As to the representation of this value, those verse above implicitly portrays the disobedience of Muslims who disobey the command of the last apostle, Muhammad (peace be upon him), only because of the spoils of war. In other words, those who disobey the command of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) betrayed the sole purpose of jihad.

More importantly, Allah, the almighty, basically wanted to test or distinguish the sincere believers from hypocrites who did not show the sense of responsibility and serious commitment. The negative consequence was the downfall in the battle of Uhud. In short, this perfectly proves that the disobedience to Him will lead them to the misery.

The second value that can be portrayed from this song lyric is arrogance can lead people to be disbelievers. This value can be represented from this following verse:

"You feel that you have become the master of your own fate,"

Allah, the almighty, has commanded all Muslims to not to be an arrogant people. It is what is stated in Qur'an surah al-Isra' 17. Arrogant people will claim that he is the only one who is responsible for his success. He will act as a superhuman and claim that he is better than the other people. He always thinks that he is always right. However, he forgets that all his power is simply the gift from Allah, the almighty. He even thinks that he is an immortal being. Moreover, in social life, he will show antipathetic attitudes towards people. As previously illustrated, he implicitly denies the role of God. Denying the role of God is unquestionably considered as kufr, disbeliever.

To take this matter further, there have been several instances about arrogance that is able to cause the destruction of faith. First, Shaitan was cursed because of arrogance. Second, Qabil, the son of Adam, is an arrogant person. He does not want to follow his father's order because he feel that he is much better that his brother, Habil. His arrogance made him the envy of his brother and guided him to kill his brother.

The third value is able to be portrayed from this verse *“Can't you stay to realize, for the pain of faith that our fear defies”*. This verse implicitly states that those who have a strong faith to Allah, the almighty, will never feel despondent or broken-hearted. Those who have complete faith in Allah will rely on Allah's help and be in high spirits. So, they will never have neither fear nor despair. In short, the fear of death in the battle of Uhud will never make them retreat or, even, surrender because they have unshakable belief. As previously illustrated, the third value that can be portrayed from these lyrics is the strong Iman will break the barriers.

The forth value is greed should be avoided. From the lyrics *“Greed, your spoils of war, your failure”*, we can clearly notice that the greedy Muslims on the battle of Uhud shows uncontrolled desire for the spoils of war and made them behave unethically that lead to put the Muslims in the problematic situation lead them to their lost in a battle. Another point of importance is greed is the one of bad behavior that can lead to the various evils and, or, committing sins. In the context of the battle of Uhud, it was a key trouble that carried all Muslims to hardships. Allah, the almighty, intends to show all Muslims that the failure in the battle of Uhud is simply a lesson for all of us that enjoying continuous wealth will make our souls weak. Furthermore, it is like a disease that is able to destroy people, families, and, in fact, Islamic brotherhood as well. In short, it is important to note that Adam, abul basyar, was expelled from paradise because of it. It should be a warning for all Muslims that it can enslave us. Thus, as previously illustrated, we should avoid this bad manner and view it as the enemy of our souls.

To sum up, arrogance and greed are unquestionably the diseases of heart. As Muslims, we have to fight against them. Seeking for Allah's protection is one of the ways to drive them out from our hearts. It is what Allah, the almighty, has commanded us stated in Qur'an Surah al-Mu'meenoon (60). The second way is trying to strengthen the quality of patience. There are numerous verses in Qur'an that has commanded all Muslims to be patient; Surah an-Nahl 127, Surah al-Anfal 46, and surah at-Tur 48. Another point of importance is that man in patience will have a tender heart. He will have an incredible self-control to manage his negative desires. Conversely, impatience will guide or lead to negative manners. A person who does not have a high quality of patience, for instance, tends to react with anger that can lead to verbal abuse or, even, physically assault another. Finally, putting our trust in Allah, the almighty, is the last solution. It essentially means that we have to put in efforts as best we can and the outcomes will then be in the hands of Allah, the almighty. When we face a difficult or problematic situation, Allah, the exalted, has

commanded us to have an excellence trust in Him; as stated in Qur'an surah at-Tawbah ayah 51. Further, we have to put our trust in Allah, the almighty, when we are in fear (Qur'an surah Ali-Imran: 173).

CONCLUSION

In this lyric, there are several Islamic values that can guide to build good moral characters. Firstly, the Islamic values that can be revealed from these lyrics are disobedience will lead to the calamity. Arrogance can lead people to be disbelievers has become the second value that is able to be portrayed in these lyrics. Third, the people who have strong faith will always be able to break the barriers. Lastly, greed should be avoided is the fourth value in these lyrics. Arrogance and greed are the diseases of hearts. The solutions are seeking for Allah's protection, trying to strengthen ourselves to have a high quality of patience, and tawakkal. In brief in conclusion, the songwriter essentially tried to communicate with the audiences that a song can be used as a medium for da'wah (invitation). Most importantly, the Islamic values analysed in this study are the small parts of the values that can be learnt from this lyric. Therefore, it is expected for further studies to dig deeper into the Islamic values from this lyric.

REFERENCES

- Ary, et.al. 2010. *An Introduction to Research in Education. Eighth edition*. Belmonth: Wadsworth.
- Auerbach, Carl, & Silverstein, Louis, B. (2003). *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis*. NY: New York University Press.
- Fraenkel, Jack R., Wallen, Norman, E., and Hyun, Helen H. 2012. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education. Eighth Edition*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Halstead, J. Mark and Taylor, Monica J. (Eds). 2005. *Values in Education and Education in Value*. Bristol: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Meyer, Newmayer, and Rauber. 2008. Rhyme and Style Features for Musical Genre Classification by Song Lyrics. *Journal of ISMIR*, 3a, 337-342.
- Thomas, R. Murray. 1997. *Moral Development Theories - Secular and Religious: A Comparative Study*. London: Greenwood Press.

INTERNET SOURCES:

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/lyrics>, accessed on 10th November 2015.
- <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/songs/whatis.html>, accessed on 10th November 2015.