



**DAKWAH, WEALTH AND DESIRE OF SEXUALITY IN ISLAM:
THE CONCEPT OF LOVE
IN HABIBURRAHMAN EL-SHIRAZY'S AYAT-AYAT CINTA 2**

Koh Young Hun and Ummi Hani Abu Hassan

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul
ykoh21@empas.com and ummihani.abuhassan@yahoo.com.my

Abstrak

Dalam rangka melanjutkan misi dakwah, Habiburrahman El-Shirazy yang dikenal sebagai penulis fenomenal novel populer Islam di Indonesia menulis novel terbaru, berjudul *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2* (2015). Novel ini mempertahankan tema cinta seperti dalam novel sebelumnya, *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2014). Isu yang dikemukakan tentang cinta seorang gadis dan kepahlawanan seorang pemuda yang dikaitkan dengan tema dakwah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami penggabungan tema Islam dengan hasrat cinta kasih dalam *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2*. Penelitian ini mengamati kecenderungan cinta sebagai konsep yang digunakan oleh novelis-novelis Indonesia untuk mengacu pada fase perkembangan dalam kesusastraan Indonesia. Selanjutnya, penelitian ini juga menggunakan sosiologi kesusastraan untuk menghubungkan pokok bahasan cinta dengan latar belakang penulis, misi penerbit, dan realitas kemasyarakatan.

Kata Kunci: *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2*, Islam, novel, sastra, sosiologi

Abstract

To continue the mission of Islamic dakwah, Habiburrahman el Shirazy known as a phenomenal author of Islamic popular novel in Indonesia presents his latest novel, Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2 (2015). More significantly, this novel maintains a theme of love in his previous novels including Ayat-Ayat Cinta (2014). The ugly heroin, the lascivious hero and a sexual interest have been connected with the theme of dakwah. To fathom how the theme of Islam can be combined with the sexual desire, this study explores the concept of love in Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2. The study observes the inclination of love as a concept used by the Indonesian preacher-novelist in reference to the developmental phase in the Indonesian literature. Furthermore, this study also uses the sociology of literature to link the subject of love with the author's background, the publisher's mission, and the reality of community.

Keywords: *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2*, Islamic, literature, novel, sociology

A. Introduction

The subject of love in novels has undergone a lot of transformation, especially when novels begin to permeate into the eastern world. The novels that first appeared in the European world flourished in Muslim majority countries including Indonesia.



However, local novelists bring forward the subject of love influenced by the Islamic belief, the ethnicity, and the local surrounding.

Although *Azab dan Sengsara* (1922) and *Siti Nurbaya* (1922) were debated as the first Indonesian (Malay) love novels, only a few disclosures of Islamic messages were stated in those novels. In fact, according to H.M.J Maier, these novels contain values that contradict Islam (Maier, 1993). The subject of love is highlighted in the first meeting, family conflicts, tears, frustrations and marriage. The subject of love in earlier Indonesian novels was closely related to the reality of the Minangkabau Malay community for the purpose of marketing (Mujianto & Fuady, 2014). Serious novels highlighting Islamic themes and love for the opposite gender began with the novels written by Hamka. From 1936 to 1939, Hamka had written three novels that focused on love and Islam. A. Teeuw stated that in comparison with other novel authors who originated from Sumatra during that time, Hamka was not influenced by the English or the Dutch language in writing his novels, but by modern Arabic literature (Teuw, 1967).

The beginning years of Hamka's novels are the years of difficulty for the Indonesian communities including those in Padang Panjang, a little town in west Sumatra. The colonialism of Indonesia by the Dutch has not changed the economy of the indigenous community (Salim, 2010). In fact, the economic classes of the community in Pasir Panjang are bound to the *pepatih* custom based on tribes rampantly. These incidentally affected individuals were in love but came from different economic classes. Hamka, like other Minang novel writers, described that the orientation of a customary practice based on the economic class was inhuman. In comparison to the fight against the colonialists in real life (Moussay, 1986) through novels, Hamka put more emphasis more on love stories between the poor young men and the women from honourable tribal groups. Since the introduction of love novels in Sumatra, they became popular reading materials and fancied by many. The publishers in Indonesia at that time encouraged the writing of love stories and community crisis (Yudiyanto, 2007).

Although Islamic themed publications grew in the 1970s and 1980s due to a change in the economic policy that attracted foreign investors, the Muslim publishers who emerged during that time tended to publish magazines, newspapers and books on Islamic knowledge (Watson, 2005; Musa, 2012). On the other hand, at the end of the 1990s, the Islamic love novels became a phenomenon after the downfall of President



Suharto had boosted names such as Ayu Utami, Djenar Maesa Ayu, and Dewi Sartika as liberal erotic authors in Indonesia and the *sastra wangi* authors' group had successfully gathered a large number of readers based on the high record of sales (Rani, 2012). Islamic literature needs to convey that love is built on faith and morality (Arnez, 2009). This principle became the guiding policy of the authors under FLP, including the author of the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (here after will be written as AAC), Habiburrahman El-Shirazy. Monika Arnez (2009) and Mohd Zariat (2012) agreed that AAC was the trigger to the new era Islamic love novel phenomenon in Indonesia.

Subsequent studies from 2001 to 2016 found that novels with Islam and love as themes also expanded through a different path from the AAC phenomena. The authors used universal titles and they did not accentuate popular elements and profits. The strength of the message of love is portrayed until it becomes nearer to high literature with a natural and implicit Islamic nature. The authors in this group have their own unique image and use true stories in the society as stakes, as presented in novels *Hafalan Shalat Delisa* (2007) and *Daun Yang Jatuh Tidak Pernah Membenci Angin* (2010) by Tere Liye, *Negeri 5 Menara* (2009), *Ranah 3 Warna* (2011) and *Rantau 1 Muara* (2013) by A Fuadi, *Perempuan Berkalung Sorban* (2009) and *Mahabbah Rindu* (2007) by Abidah El-Khalieqy.

A feeling that describes love is complex, universal and immense in nature. Love has various phases and characteristics, develops openly or secretly and has a variety of terminologies. In developing the Islamic love terminology, this study will combine the terminologies of the West by Kern (1994) and Baruch (1991) and with Malay terminologies by Muhammad Haji Salleh (2011) that are then correlated with the concept of the relationship between God and human according to Islam. The reference for the Islamic concept of love is derived from the Quran, the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the opinions of the Muslim scholars.

The study takes into consideration the opinion on the Western love because the love theme in European novels later spread into the Islamic countries including Indonesia. This may explain whether an influence of the Western love exists in the Indonesian Islamic novels. Baruch outlines 30 terms that can be considered as love, most of the terms involve the inner feelings and psychology, such as narcissism, illusion, idealisation, identification, crystallisation of souls, combination of souls,



inspiration, passion, spiritual, lust, craze, sanity, wisdom, stupidity, generosity, selfishness, dependence, self-discovery, losing oneself, source of freedom, source of oppression, seclusion, interest in something and against something (Baruch, 1992). On the contrary, Kern outlines 18 phases of love, the majority of it are physical acts, namely waiting, meeting, encounter, embodiment, desire, language, disclosure, kissing, gender, power, others (the third party), jealousy, selfhood, proposal, wedding, sex, sexual relations, marriage dan ending (Kern, 1994).

In adapting the situation to the Malays and the Nusantara, Muhammad Haji Salleh adds terms that convey the meaning of love to the existing collection of the Malay traditional literature, namely dream, premonition, first peek, verbal love-making, longing, confirmation of emotions, expressing one's emotions, language as an instrument of love, fate, black magic, suffering, and separation or divorce (Salleh, 2011). Novels as a reflection of the real society cannot avoid from describing thoughts, feelings, reactions and the image of each character. In a relationship between humans, love has many forms, such as love of parents to children, love to teachers, love to neighbours and friends. However, a more specific definition of love is often considered the love between the different genders that gives rise to the feeling of closeness and passion.

Islamic love novels also offer the love of God as the basis of love among human beings, as in the word of God in the al-Quran, *Surah An-Nisa* verse 36: "Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful". This verse explains the priority of human beings to worship and follow the rules defined by God. Only after that, human beings are prompted to practise good deeds among them, including the prohibition of being arrogant.

Other than the universal feeling of love towards God and human beings, the concept of love between man and woman receives attention in Islam as well. As love is always referred to feelings of affection, longing and situation that are directed towards marriage and sexual matters, it is important to link the concept of sexuality according to the Islamic perspective. Mohd Zariat Abdul Rani stated that men made promises to

control their lust, their desire and their honour, fitting with their position as God's best creature. This is mentioned in the Quran, in *Surah al-Mukminun* verse 1-11 (Rani, 2004). Men should direct their sexual instincts through the channel of marriage and restrain themselves from approaching and be trapped in adultery or fornication. Human sexual tendencies must be differentiated from the sexual tendencies of animals, as stated by Samar Fatima "...the relation between the two sexes is not just for fun and pleasure or carnal lust of men, but women as the source of comfort and peace of mind for their male partner" (Rani, 2004). In line with such notion, this study linked the concept of Western, Malay and Islamic love to be used as the analytical frame for the *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2* novel by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy.

B. Methode

This research design uses qualitative research design. The method used is descriptive analysis method of analysis. In this study, the source of data of research are good words in the form of direct exposure from the author, dialogue between characters and monologues performed by the characters identified in *ACC 2*. Techniques of data collection used in this research is a technique literature.

C. Results and Discussion

Love for God

14 years after *AAC* (2003) first appeared, it spread to many countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore, discussed by different parties as Indonesia's phenomenal novel, and adapted into a film in 2008, the author, Habiburrahman El-Shirazy returned with its sequel which is entitled *Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2* (*AAC 2*). The writing process which spanned over a decade imparted a reform in attitude and a more mature thinking to Fahri, the main character of *AAC* and *AAC 2*. This time around, Habiburrahman El-Shirazy took his characters far away from a Muslim-majority country, to Edinburgh, Scotland and London, England.

Fahri appeared in *AAC* (2003) as a youth from Indonesia who studied in Al-Azhar University, Cairo; he was poor, hardworking, pursued his study while doing a part-time job, modest, and homesick. Unlike the previous character, this time, Fahri was the new



improved character after marrying the heiress to a Turkish-German millionaire, Aisha. He had completed his master's degree in *Quranic Tafseer* from Al-Azhar University, Cairo and obtained a doctorate degree from Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, Germany in the field of philology. Dr. Fahri was a visiting professor at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland while holding a permanent position at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. At the same time, he owned two apartments, a bungalow, four supermarkets and a halal restaurant, as well as eight clothing boutiques in Europe's main cities. Fahri had a chauffeur and a personal assistant, Hulusi, who hailed from Turkey, and he rode a BMW SUV and a Rolls Royce Wraith. Although his social status had changed, he became a religious man.

This is expressed in Fahri's everyday life, be it through his spoken words, his actions and his thoughts. In fact, he never let his time pass without remembering Allah Swt with *dhikr*, one of them is '*La haula wa la quwwata illa billah*' that means, 'There is neither might nor power except with Allah.' He also made *dua* (prayer) to Allah Swt in ensuring that his mind always remembers Him with the supplication '*Allahumma a'inna 'ala dzikrika wa syukrika wa husni ibadatik,*' that means 'O Allah! Assist me in remembering You, in thanking You, and in worshipping You in the best of manners.' Fahri's actions are also connected with his confidence, obtained from the Islamic traditional scholar through reading and one of the books that he read is on *taSawuff Sirrul Asrar*, a work by Syaikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani which states, 'If we do not know Allah, then how would we be able to worship Him, praise Him, and ask for His help?'. The realisation that arose from this verse caused Fahri to give precedence to Allah's rights through inclusive interactions with the non-Muslims. The examples can be viewed in these two situations below.

Firstly, Fahri is not reluctant to apologise in order to perform his prayers while delivering lectures in the university, for example, he said,

"Please accept my apology, but the time has arrived for me to perform my prayer. Would all of you mind if I perform my prayer here? If you do, then I shall perform my prayer in the office, and return afterwards. Or if all of you feel that today's lecture is sufficient, then I would end my class now" (AAC2, 6).

Secondly, Fahri doesn't want to delay his prayer even during interaction with his colleagues.



“I shall study diligently, Prof. Sorry, I have to finish some task, then, prepare myself prior to going to the mosque. Today, Friday is the day of my worship” (AAC2, 42).

Furthermore, the expression of relationship with God was addressed by the author and it was refined and had an implicit meaning. The author wanted to state that the goal of a Muslim was to worship Allah Swt whole heartedly. However, the process had gone through different paths especially after the era of Prophet Muhamad Saw, as well as the era of the caliph Abu Bakar as-Siddiq (632-634 A.D) and Umar al-Khattab (634-644 A.D). Differences in opinions started to take place in justifying the contents of the Quran and the Hadith during the era of the caliph Uthman Affan (644- 656 A.D). However, these differences have been tackled brilliantly by Muslims during those times. For example, in a matter concerning *qasr* prayer in Mina, there were different opinions during the times of Prophet Muhammad Saw, Abu Bakar and Umar al- Khattab, compared to the time of Uthman Affan.

Ibnu Mas’ud could definitely argue with Uthman by presenting his opinion. There was a huge possibility that he could win by means of presenting his proofs. But the leader during that time is Uthman bin Affan (RA), one of the *Khulafaurrasyidin* that should be respected, whose purity of his soul in the crusade for Islam is beyond any doubt. Had Ibnu Mas’ud put forward his ego to win an argument, it meant to go against the leader. And that would have provoked others to go against the leader. The *ummah* would have been split into two factions. And this automatically leads to disunity. And Abdullah bin Mas’ud did not want this to happen. He chose more often not to use very strong proofs in his conviction, for the sake of the *ummah*’s unity (AAC2, 145).

The author intends to invite the Islamic community to give precedence to their faith towards Allah Swt without dispute and disunity. This is depicted in Islamic references stated in AAC 2, representing traditional, modern, and *salafi* school of Islamic thoughts, all of which are based on the Quran and the Hadith such as *Majmu’ Washaya* by Habib Hasan bin Shaleh al-Bahr (traditional), *Fathul Bari* by Ibnu Hajar (salafi), *Tafsir Al-Manar* by Rasyid Ridha (modern), *Sirrul Asrar* by Syaikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani (traditional), and the journal *Al Urwah Al Wuthqa* by Syaikh Muhammad Abduh (modern). In addition, during the discussion of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*Usul al-Fiqh*) between Fahri and Misbah (AAC2, 166-169) they quoted the originating source from the different



schools of *Fiqh* such as those from Imam as-Syafie, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Muhammad bin Hasan and Imam Ahmad Ibnu Hanbal. The differences in opinions towards attaining the love for Allah Swt need to be handled tactfully.

The unity of the ummah is a huge *maslahah* (benefit) that should be taken care of by all individuals. This is the understanding of the best generation of this ummah. They have inscribed exemplary ways by imparting this with written words on how to address differences that could cause this unity to crumble. They were well versed in *fiqhul maqashid* and did not stop learning even though they knew how to differentiate which argument is stronger than the rest (AAC2, 145).

Besides Fahri, the character of Sabina is elevated as the one who has reached the highest level of love for Allah Swt, which is *A'rifbillah*. Sabina, an unfortunate woman who was injured by the Israeli Zionist army had left her face and body badly scarred and she was offered a plastic surgery to be performed on her by Hulya. However, Sabina rejected the offer with the following words:

“Don’t. just leave it be, I am content enough to be able to worship in peace and live with a good and God-fearing family such as all of you. Should you approve, please send the money meant for the plastic surgery towards providing medical aid for the children and women of Palestine. They need it more than me” (AAC2, 614).

To Sabina, beauty and perfection are translated as faith and devotion. The facial deformity that she endures is part of creation from Allah Swt. Therefore, although it is seen as ugly in eyes of human beings, it remains beautiful because it is a part of Allah SWT’s creation. This is in accordance with His words, “(He) who perfected everything which He created and began the creation of man from clay” (Al-Quran: As-Sajadah verse 7). Consequently, love towards Allah SWT has influenced two forms of love between fellow men.

Universal Love for Human Beings

AAC 2 presents two examples of universal love between human beings, namely love between fellow Muslims and love towards non-Muslims. Using Scotland and London as the backdrop scenery, Habiburrahman El-Shirazy connected Fahri with people from different races and nationalities with the aim of eliminating Islamophobia.

The rise of Islamophobia in the west occurred after the September 11, 2001 terrorists' attacks, followed by numerous series of other attacks. Taras presented eight characteristics that lead to Islamophobia, namely, monolithic and static, separated and do not mix with the other values and cultures, irrational and seen as inferior to the west, aggressive dan harm civilization, use ideology for political and military advantage, intolerant of criticism from the West, hostility towards Islam is used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from the general society, and view anti-Muslim hostility as normal and natural.

The form of love between fellow Muslims is shown in two different situations. One situation which is positive, as outlined by Baruch is that love is a combination of soul, inspiration, spiritual, wisdom, sanity, generosity, curiosity and self-discovery. Due to all these qualities, Fahri has saved many of his unfortunate Muslim friends; three of them are Hulusi, Sabina and Misbah. Even though they were not his own flesh and blood, Fahri was willing to risk his life to save Hulusi who was beaten up due to theft. Furthermore, Fahri financed Hulusi's medical costs in Munich, Germany. Fahri didn't ask for his help to be reciprocated, instead, he instructed Hulusi to live as a good Muslim. Fahri's magnanimity started from his conviction that Islam is a religion of love and not violence.

In the annals of history, the people embraced to Islam because its courtesy far outweighs the conflicts. Makkah was opened and its inhabitants embraced Islam in throngs because of the fine manners exhibited by the Prophet Saw. No swords were crossed in the historical conquest of the city of Makkah. It was conquered through the magnanimity and the good character of the Prophet SAW (AAC2, 133).

Fahri also did not hesitate to assist Sabina, a beggar who had no citizenship from any country. Besides money, Fahri assisted Sabina to obtain a citizenship status in Scotland; he provided a work and house to Sabina, as well as saving the life of the poor woman. Fahri wanted to make other people happy because it is part of obligations in Islam.

If the Prophet SAW explains that bringing happiness into someone's heart is through charity, then he hopes that by bringing happiness into every human being is also considered as charity. Isn't even a simple act of bringing

happiness into a dog's heart, one could attain forgiveness from Allah? (AAC2,251).

The same kindness was extended to Misbah, Fahri's housemate while he was studying at Al-Azhar University, Egypt. Fahri wanted to finance Misbah's study that had been postponed due to a shortage of money.

"I will bear your cost. I will bear the administrative fee and your living cost until you complete your Ph.D" (AAC2, 76).

Secondly, the form of the love relationship between Muslims is shown by Fahri in a stern manner, for the purpose of admonishment. This attitude can be categorised as love by Baruch who opposes matters that contradict with the existing principle. The author presented the attitude of Muslims that could contribute to Islamophobia, such as thinking that one self is more religious than others, assessing others based on his race and using one's knowledge of religion to put the blame on other Muslims, without any effort to help. Habiburrahman El-Shirazy presented solutions to restore the image of the Islamic society nowadays with the following words:

"It is not enough for us to just forbid our brothers and sisters from begging. We are all Muslims, responsible for their fates. We should introspect, is our zakat sufficient? Is there anything within our assets that belongs to them? Have we, the ones blessed with better fate, initiated commerce-related programs to improve their living? Where do we place the Prophet's pbuh hadith, *man la yahtam bi amril Muslimin fa laisa minhum*. Those who does not care about the affairs of other Muslims, are not part of them?" (AAC2, 44).

However, with the non-Muslim society, the author has chosen a soft, sane and tactful approach. The question of terrorism, committed by Muslim extremists becomes the central issue in AAC 2. The following are some of the negative reactions hurled by the non-Muslim characters:

"If the Quran teaches such good deeds, why are there still Muslims committing suicide bombing?" Questioned Juu Suh (AAC2, 9)

Jason's face conveyed his disapproval, his lips are uttering words to Fahri without making a single sound: Fuck you! (AAC2, 33).

“We consider you (all Muslims) to be the enemy of humanity...” said Grandmother Catarina (AAC2,283).

“Yes. I’m unable to forget it. The feelings of hurt and hate will not go away. They, the Muslim extremist, brutally snatched my father away. Why do I feel as though I’m not able to forgive them?” said Keira (AAC2,309).

The author brought up the reality of Islamophobia among the European non-Muslim societies together with the positive attitude to face it. For example, for all the situations mentioned above, Fahri replied with kindness. He forgave Jason who stole from his shop sponsored and purchased a violin for Keira and treated Grandmother Catarina like a member of the family, including sending her to the synagogue, or a place of worship for Jews, to worship and purchase a house for her. Fahri’s actions began with the conviction that only love could dim the fire of Islamophobia dan restore the image of Islam as the religion of love, and not the religion of hate.

He does not expect anything in return from what he gives. He does not expect praise. He does not expect that Keira and her family would sympathise with him afterwards and like him. This kind of trivials matters are not what he hopes for. He only hopes that Allah will smile at him one day (AAC2, 247).

Romantic Love

The third form of love specifically concerns the feelings of a man towards a woman that could arouse the feelings of desire and affection. As a normal man, Fahri could not stop himself from getting conflicted in this form of love. Three women who have awakened his manly instincts are Aisha, Maria and Hulya, all of whom are his wives. Evidently, the author wanted to make it clear that forms of passionate love could only happen with a marital bond.

A true love between two individuals of different genders is a love that is formed after solemnisation. That is our love towards our legitimate life partner. Love before marriage is pseudo-love that doesn’t need to be considered sacred or glorified (AAC2, 526).

Kern ascribed waiting as the first characteristic of love towards the opposite gender. Even though this characteristic is usually attributed to women, but men also wait for their love (Kern, 1994). This happened to Fahri who lost two of his earlier wives, namely Maria who passed away and Aisha, who went missing in an Israeli

prison. Fahri believed that Aisha is still alive, even though there is no news of her, which caused his heart to reject love from other women. Fahri's wait has caused a deep yearning and later, the yearning is left to Allah Swt.

The slim beautiful face of Maria, with her eyes closed and tears running down her cheeks, while reading is pictured within his eyelids (AAC2, 12).

Fahri then made a prayer for Maria. Afterwards, he sobbed, while thinking of Aisha. Will Aisha follow Maria's fate? He didn't know what he should pray for when it comes to Aisha. He kept on praying to God, that God would never stop loving his wife and would keep on blanketing her with layers of compassion and guidance, regardless of whether she is still alive or dead (AAC2, 17).

Other than yearning, waiting also brings up feelings of affection when encountering certain events that evoke memories of the loved person. This happened to Fahri when he heard the sound of his neighbour's violin being played, which caused his heart to imagine the beauty of his wife, Aisha.

Fahri can just hear the tone of the violin being played faintly. With the passing of time, it became clearer. It became nearer. As he was looking through the entrance of his study, there stood Aisha, donned in an elegant evening gown (AAC2, 9).

The author slowly revealed Fahri's manly desires that prompted him towards sexual acts. There are two forms of depiction of the physical relationships between Fahri and his wives. First, the bodily relationship happened between Fahri and Hulya after they became husband and wife. However, sexual advances only happened after Hulya tried to arouse Fahri's sexual urges that involved among others, the selection of location and the setting of mood (for sexual intercourse), seduction by whispering and poetry reading:

As night arrived, Hulya and Fahri lit a bonfire. During dawn, they performed their prayer on the ground blanketed with grass. Hulya then prepared hot tea. After the morning *dhikr*, Hulya played her violin. Fahri became more aroused.

Fahri was so tender within the tent. He was all fired up with love and passion. Prayer was read. And Hulya finally got what she desired for so long (sex). Since then, Hulya felt complete as a woman (AAC2, 608).



Hulya also aroused Fahri's lust by stating her desire without her husband having to initiate it first:

...in a whim, Hulya whispered to Fahri while they were sitting in the living room. "We have twenty minutes. The scent of spring flowers makes me feel to worship (sexual intercourse) akin to the way of the residents of the heaven. Hurry, my love!" (AAC2, 616)

The author states that passionate love is not only started by men but can also be initiated by women. As a matter of fact, women can play the role of firing up the passion of their husband with acts that can arouse their husband's carnal desires. As an example, Hulya whispered a poem entitled *The Lover* by Paul Eluard to Fahri. This resulted in Fahri prolonging his sexual intercourse with Hulya.

Second, flashbacks of Aisha caused Fahri to reminisce their intimate relationship when they were husband and wife. This relationship, however, was only pictured within Fahri's mind:

Fahri closed his book of *tafseer*. He got up and moved towards Aisha. Aisha retreated. Fahri drew nearer towards Aisha and Aisha walked slowly while playing her violin. Aisha headed towards the bedroom and sat at the edge of the bed, still playing her violin. All of a sudden, the music changed into a romantic tune. Fahri sat beside her. Aisha whose perfume smelt so delightful made Fahri feel intoxicated. While Aisha continued finishing her song, Fahri embraced his wife passionately. Aisha ended her tune, while Fahri reached the peak of his intoxication (AAC2, 19).

The author did not continue this bodily relationship between Fahri and Aisha; he instead brought back Fahri's yearning and love to Allah SWT:

"O Allah, how will I able to ever forget her. Forgive your servant if my love for her overshadows my love for, You O Allah," muttered Fahri softly as he awakened from a piece of intimate memory of him with Aisha (AAC2, 20).

D. Conclusion

AAC2 which runs at 690 pages revealed three layers of the concept of love based on love towards Allah SWT. The author continued the tradition of the Indonesian Islamic love novel which is favoured by the publishers and the society due to culture in



the post-Islamisation period. Furthermore, the choice of Europe as a setting and the issue of Islamophobia are among the efforts by the author to fix the image of Islam. This is also influenced by the background of the author and the education that he received at secondary school and at the university level. The study has found that the author has presented a form of love that is unique through Fahri; that love towards Allah SWT will strengthen if the character experiences trials and tribulations in life. The death of Maria and the loss of Aisha had deepened Fahri's love towards Allah Swt. However, just like his previous work, *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2004), the author has chosen the easier path of concluding the story with a 'happy ending' when Fahri is reunited with his first love, Aisha and ended the character of Hulya, his second wife, without elaborating in detail on the issue of polygamy. Therefore, the study found that the value of love in this novel still shadows the market trend in Indonesia while having serious Islamic image and content.

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