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FACING THE CHALLENGES OF ISLAMOPHOBIA: A Study on The Message of Peace in The Qur'an Through the *Ma'na cum Maghza* Approach

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Abstract
This study aims to uncover the messages of peace in the Qur'an using the *ma'na cum maghza* approach and analyze their application in addressing the challenges of islamophobia in the modern era. The research employs thematic *tafsīr* analysis using a qualitative approach, focusing on verses that convey messages of peace, such as al-Baqarah (2:256), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), and al-Anfāl (8:61). These verses are examined based on their literal meanings and universal values relevant to the contemporary context. The findings reveal that the Qur'anic messages consistently emphasize the values of tolerance, justice, and peace, which can serve as a foundation for countering negative stereotypes about Islam. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach enables a deep and practical interpretation of these verses, particularly in the fields of education, media, and global diplomacy. The study also

identifies practical strategies for Muslim communities to proactively address islamophobia, such as promoting positive narratives in the media and developing curricula based on Qur'anic values. The study concludes that the Qur'an's messages of peace are not only relevant in the context of islamophobia but also contribute to efforts to build social harmony and global peace. The novelty of this research lies in the use of the *ma'na cum maghza* approach to contextually elaborate the Qur'anic messages of peace in response to islamophobia—an area that has received limited attention in previous studies.

Keywords: Islamophobia; Peace; Qur'an; *Ma'na cum Maghza;* Tolerance

Abstrak
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pesan-pesan perdamaian dalam al-Qur'an menggunakan pendekatan *ma'na cum maghza* serta menganalisis penerapannya dalam menghadapi tantangan islamofobia di era modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis tafsir tematik dengan pendekatan kualitatif, yang difokuskan pada ayat-ayat yang memuat pesan perdamaian, seperti QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 256, QS. al-Mumtaḥanah [60]: 8, dan QS. al-Anfāl [8]: 61. Ayat-ayat tersebut dikaji berdasarkan makna literal dan nilai-nilai universal yang relevan dengan konteks kekinian. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pesan-pesan al-Qur'an secara konsisten menekankan nilai-nilai toleransi, keadilan, dan perdamaian yang dapat menjadi dasar dalam merespons stereotip negatif terhadap Islam. Pendekatan *ma'na cum maghza* memungkinkan interpretasi ayat-ayat tersebut secara mendalam dan aplikatif, khususnya dalam bidang pendidikan, media, dan diplomasi global. Studi ini juga mengidentifikasi strategi praktis bagi komunitas Muslim untuk secara proaktif menghadapi islamofobia, antara lain dengan mempromosikan narasi positif di media serta mengembangkan kurikulum berbasis nilai-nilai al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pesan-pesan perdamaian dalam al-Qur'an tidak hanya relevan dalam konteks islamofobia, tetapi juga berkontribusi pada upaya membangun harmoni sosial dan perdamaian global. Kebaruan dari penelitian ini terletak pada penggunaan pendekatan *ma'na cum maghza* untuk mengelaborasi pesan-pesan perdamaian al-Qur'an secara kontekstual dalam merespons islamofobia—suatu aspek yang masih jarang disentuh dalam kajian-kajian sebelumnya.

Kata Kunci: Islamofobia; Perdamaian; Al-Qur'an, *Ma'na cum Maghza*; Toleransi

Introduction

The phenomenon of islamophobia has emerged as a prominent global issue in the modern era. This term refers to prejudice, discrimination, or baseless fear toward Islam and

Muslims.[1] Various reports indicate that islamophobia impacts not only interfaith relations but also the social, political, and cultural stability of many countries. Incidents such as terrorist attacks and political conflicts are often used as justifications for marginalizing Muslim communities, despite the intrinsic teachings of Islam emphasizing values of peace and compassion. This situation necessitates an in-depth study to uncover the essence of peaceful values within the Qur'an to counter negative stereotypes about Islam.[2]

The phenomenon of islamophobia has been increasing globally in recent years, reflecting a serious challenge to the values of tolerance and diversity. In the United States, for example, the year 2023 recorded the highest number of anti-Muslim incidents ever, with 8,061 reports received by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), marking a 56% increase from the previous year. This surge was largely driven by the Israel-Gaza conflict that began in October 2023.[3] In the United Kingdom, the monitoring organization Tell MAMA reported 5,837 incidents of islamophobia in 2024 the highest number since its founding. This significant increase has been attributed to rising geopolitical tensions and the spread of online hate speech.[4]

[1] Muhammad Qorib and Rahmat Rifai Lubis, "The Defensive Fortress for Strengthening Religious Harmony: The Existence and Strategy of Pioneers in Religious Moderation to Educate Muslims in Sumatera Utara," *Kurdish Studies* 11, no. 3 (December 15, 2023): 162–77, https://kurdishstudies.net/menu-script/index.php/KS/article/view/1175.

[2] Hikmatul Akbar, Noorhaidi Hasan, and Dicky Sofjan, "Sacred Text Narratives and Religious Violence: The Case of Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) in Indonesia," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 19, no. 2 (December 27, 2023): 217–30, https://doi.org/10.18196/afkaruna.v19i2.16884.

[3] The Economic Times, "US Anti-Muslim Incidents Hit Record High in 2023 Due to Israel-Gaza War," The Economic Times, accessed May 17, 2025, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/us-anti-muslim-incidents-hit-record-high-in-2023-due-to-israel-gaza-war/articleshow/108961556.cms.

[4] Catarina Demony, "Israel-Gaza War Fuels Record Level of Anti-Muslim Hatred in Britain, Monitoring Group Says," Reuters, accessed May 17, 2025,

Meanwhile, in Europe, discrimination against Muslims has also shown a worrying trend. A 2022 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights found that 38% of Muslims in EU countries had experienced discrimination in the previous 12 months, and 50% over the past five years.[5] In Germany, for instance, anti-Muslim hate crimes rose by 140% since October 2023.[6] In France, the murder of Aboubakar Cissé at a mosque in April 2025 highlighted the extreme violence faced by Muslim communities. Although the attack was clearly hate-motivated, local authorities were initially reluctant to classify it as a hate crime or terrorism, drawing widespread criticism of institutional responses to islamophobia.[7]

These data illustrate that islamophobia is not merely an individual problem but has become a structural issue involving the media, public policy, and political discourse. This situation calls for a comprehensive response grounded in the values of justice and peace inherent in Islamic teachings. This study aims to explore the Qur'anic messages of peace through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach to formulate effective strategies for addressing the challenges of islamophobia in the contemporary era.

In the Qur'an, the teachings of peace hold a central position. Numerous verses emphasize the importance of tolerance, justice, and harmonious relationships among people, regardless of their

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https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/israel-gaza-war-fuels-record-level-anti-muslim-hatred-britain-monitoring-group-2025-02-19/.

[5] Statista, "Prevalence of Discrimination among Muslims in Europe 2022," Statista, accessed May 17, 2025, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1551354/share-muslims-experienced-discrimination-europe/.

[6] Yeni Şafak, "Anti-Muslim Hate Crime on Rise in Europe since October 2023: EU Islamophobia Chief | News," Text, Yeni Şafak (Yeni Şafak), accessed May 17, 2025, https://www.yenisafak.com/en/news/anti-muslim-hate-crime-on-rise-in-europe-since-october-2023-eu-islamophobia-chief-3700891.

[7] Rokhaya Diallo, "A Worshipper Is Murdered in a French Mosque. How Can This Be 'Just Another Crime'?," *The Guardian*, May 13, 2025, sec. Opinion, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/13/worshipper-murdered-french-mosque-politicians-crime-islamophobia.

differences in belief. These teachings diametrically oppose the narratives of violence often attributed to Islam by certain groups. As the primary source of law and ethics in Islam, the Qur'an serves as a crucial reference in addressing the challenges of islamophobia.[8] However, interpreting these verses requires a comprehensive approach to ensure that the messages of peace they contain can be understood universally.

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach is particularly relevant for studying Qur'anic verses in this context. This method not only explores the literal meaning (*ma'na*) of the Qur'anic text but also delves into its universal values (*maghza*) that can be applied across different times and contexts.[9] Through this approach, the messages of peace in the Qur'an can be scientifically explained and utilized in efforts to reduce islamophobia through interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

The study of islamophobia is also pertinent in the context of globalization, where intercultural interactions have become increasingly intense.[10] Misunderstandings about Islamic teachings often trigger conflicts, both on local and global scales.[11] Therefore, it is crucial to demonstrate that Islamic values can contribute to creating a more peaceful world. This motivation underpins the

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[8] Fakhri Afif, M. Rodinal Khair Khasri, and M. Ilham Ulul Azmi Khasri, "Post-Truth And Qur'an: Hacking The Truth Decay Through The Qur'anic Epistemological-Ethical Vision," *Religia* 27, no. 2 (October 30, 2024): 162–95, https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v27i2.8562.

[9] Nahrul Pintoko Aji, "Metode Penafsiran Al-Quran Kontemporer ; Pendekatan Ma'na Cum Maghza Oleh Dr. Phil. Sahiron Syamsuddin, MA," *Humantech : Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin Indonesia* 2, no. Spesial Issues 1 (January 31, 2022): 250–58, https://doi.org/10.32670/ht.v2iSpesial.

[10] Gabriele Marranci, "Multiculturalism, Islam and the Clash of Civilisations Theory: Rethinking Islamophobia," *Culture and Religion* 5, no. 1 (March 1, 2004): 105–17, https://doi.org/10.1080/0143830042000200373.

[11] Simon Ozer and Milan Obaidi, "Globalization and Radicalization: The Rise of Extreme Reactions to Intercultural Contact, Sociocultural Disruption, and Identity Threat," in *Globalized Identities: The Impact of Globalization on Self and Identity*, ed. Iva Katzarska-Miller and Stephen Reysen (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 107–30, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04644-5_5.

selection of this topic for scholarly exploration, with the hope of making a tangible contribution to strengthening global peace.

Numerous studies have been conducted on islamophobia and interfaith relations. For example, Kazeem Oluwaseun Dauda[12] identified that islamophobia in Europe and America is driven by media stereotypes portraying Islam as synonymous with violence. This research highlights the significant role of media in shaping public perceptions. Meanwhile, Erik Bleich[13] revealed that the majority of Muslims worldwide support peace and reject acts of violence. His findings underscore the importance of dialogue in countering negative narratives about Islam.

In the context of Qur'anic studies, prior research has examined verses related to tolerance and peace. For instance, Abdullah Saeed,[14] in Interpreting the Qur'an, elaborated on the importance of contextual approaches in understanding Qur'anic verses. This study provides a foundation for viewing the Qur'an's messages as universal and applicable to contemporary challenges. Additionally, works such as Rahman[15] on Qur'anic hermeneutics emphasize the need to interpret the text within its socio-historical context.

However, specific studies employing the *ma'na cum maghza* approach to reveal the messages of peace in the Qur'an remain relatively limited. Most existing research focuses on thematic studies or literal approaches to the Qur'anic text without integrating universal values relevant to the context of islamophobia. This

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[12] Kazeem Oluwaseun Dauda, "Islamophobia and Religious Intolerance: Threats to Global Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence," *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 8, no. 2 (January 1, 2021): 257–92, https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v8i2.6811.

[13] Erik Bleich, "What Is Islamophobia and How Much Is There? Theorizing and Measuring an Emerging Comparative Concept," *American Behavioral Scientist* 55, no. 12 (December 1, 2011): 1581–1600, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764211409387.

[14] Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting The Al-Qur'an Towards a Comtemporary Approach* (New York: Roudledge, 2006).

[15] Fazlur Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Karachi: Central Institute of Islamic Research, 1954).

creates a research gap that calls for more in-depth and holistic exploration. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach is chosen in this study because it not only emphasizes the literal and contextual meanings of the Qur'anic text but also bridges those meanings with universal and applicable values (*maghza*) across time and space. While other contextual approaches, such as hermeneutics or *maqāṣid*-based interpretation, often focus on legal or moral dimensions, *ma'na cum maghza* offers a dynamic framework that is particularly effective in addressing contemporary socio-religious issues like islamophobia by uncovering the lived meaning and relevance of the verses in today's pluralistic and globalized world.

While previous studies have discussed the values of tolerance and peace in the Qur'an, most have not positioned islamophobia as the central context. Furthermore, the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, which integrates literal understanding and universal values, has rarely been applied to Qur'anic verses related to peace. This highlights an important gap in the literature that requires attention.

This article offers novelty by integrating the *ma'na cum maghza* approach in examining Qur'anic verses relevant to peace, particularly in the context of islamophobia. As such, this research not only contributes to the field of Qur'anic exegesis but also proposes practical solutions for addressing negative stereotypes about Islam. This approach is also expected to enhance interfaith and intercultural dialogue as part of efforts to build global peace.

The primary issue addressed in this article is how the messages of peace in the Qur'an can be deeply understood and applied to respond to the challenges of islamophobia in the modern era. This study aims to answer fundamental questions about how Qur'anic verses containing messages of peace can be interpreted using the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, what universal values are embedded in these verses, and how these values can be applied in modern contexts to mitigate the impact of islamophobia.

This research is expected to make a significant contribution by elucidating the messages of peace in the Qur'an through the *ma'na*

cum maghza approach. With a comprehensive explanation, the universal values embedded in Qur'anic verses can be clearly identified and articulated to address the challenges of islamophobia. Furthermore, this study aims to provide practical recommendations for applying these values in various global contexts through interfaith dialogue, education, and international diplomacy toward creating a more peaceful and harmonious world.

This study employs a qualitative approach using thematic exegesis analysis, specifically through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach.[16] This approach is chosen for its ability to bridge the literal meaning of the Qur'anic text (*ma'na*) with universal values relevant to the modern context (*maghza*).[17] The primary data used in this research are Qur'anic verses that convey messages of peace, such as al-Baqarah (2:256), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), and al-Anfāl (8:61). In addition, the study references secondary data, including classical and contemporary *tafsīr*, journal articles, books, and reports related to the theme of islamophobia.

The analysis process begins with identifying Qur'anic verses containing messages of peace through literature review and library research. The identified verses are then analyzed using the *ma'na cum maghza* approach. This analysis involves exploring the literal meaning of the text, examining the historical context of the revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), and deriving the universal values embedded in the verses to be applied in modern contexts. This approach ensures that the resulting interpretation is not only aligned with Islamic teachings but also accessible and acceptable in interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

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[16] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Ma'na-Cum- Maghza Aproach to the Qur'an: Interpretation of Q. 5:51" (International Conference on Qur'an and Hadith Studies (ICQHS 2017), Atlantis Press, 2017), 131–36, https://doi.org/10.2991/icqhs-17.2018.21.

[17] Hardivizon Hardivizon and Mufutau Olusola Bello, "The Relevance of Justice Values in the Qur'an to Modern Legal Systems: The Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach," *Proceedings of International Conference on Religion, Social and Humanities* 3 (November 20, 2024): 83–96, https://proceedings.uinmybatusangkar.ac.id/index.php/icresh/article/view/7.

To support the validity of the findings, this study employs data triangulation by comparing various sources of *tafsīr* and literature. The triangulation process involves cross-checking the primary interpretation of selected Qur'anic verses with insights from classical and contemporary exegeses, scholarly articles, and sociological reports related to islamophobia. These secondary sources serve to enrich the understanding of the verses by providing contextual, historical, and discursive perspectives, which help to affirm or nuance the initial interpretations derived from the primary text. Additionally, the relevance of the interpretations is tested against modern cases of islamophobia, such as discriminatory policies targeting Muslims in certain countries, negative stereotypes in media, and peace initiatives involving Muslim communities. This methodological strategy ensures that the interpretations are not only grounded in sound theological analysis but also resonate with empirical realities, thereby producing findings that are both academically robust and practically relevant in addressing the challenges of islamophobia.

The methodology adheres to ethical research principles, including respect for the sacred text of the Qur'an and sensitivity toward religious and cultural issues. During the analysis, the research avoids interpretations that could provoke controversy or exacerbate existing stereotypes. Instead, the findings are directed toward strengthening narratives of peace and tolerance, in alignment with the values taught in the Qur'an

Result and Discussion
Interpreting Qur'anic Verses on Peace Through the *Ma'na cum Maghza* Approach

The Qur'an, as the holy scripture of Islam, contains numerous messages emphasizing the importance of peace, tolerance, and harmony among humans. Some of the verses reflecting these values include al-Baqarah (2:208; 2:256), al-Anfāl (8:61), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), al-Hujurat (49:13), al-Ma'idah (5:32), al-Nisa' (4:90), and Ali

'Imran (3:159). Each of these verses provides different perspectives and contexts for fostering relationships in multicultural and interfaith societies. However, this study focuses on three key verses: al-Baqarah (2:256), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), and al-Anfāl (8:61). These verses were chosen for their universal dimensions, which are particularly relevant in addressing islamophobia in the modern era.

Al-Baqarah (2:256) was selected for its emphasis on religious freedom as a foundation for tolerance. Al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) offers practical guidelines for peaceful relations with non-Muslims in multicultural settings, while Al-Anfāl (8:61) underscores the significance of dialogue and reconciliation in conflict resolution. Together, these verses represent various aspects of the Qur'anic teachings on peace and provide a strong basis for applying these values in contemporary contexts, such as education, media, and diplomacy. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach is employed to explore the literal meanings (*ma'na*) of these verses and their universal relevance (*maghza*), enabling practical contributions to reducing islamophobia and fostering global harmony.

Analysis of al-Baqarah (2:256)

Al-Baqarah (2:256) states:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۖ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

"There is no compulsion in religion; the right path has become distinct from the wrong. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the firmest handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

From a literal perspective (*ma'na*), this verse asserts that faith in Islam is a matter of personal choice, free from coercion. The phrase "*There is no compulsion in religion*" affirms the freedom of individuals to choose their beliefs. This is not merely a moral

injunction for Muslims but a universal principle applicable to all humanity. Islam recognizes the right of individuals to make their spiritual decisions, even if it leads them away from Islam.[18] This principle distinguishes Islam as a religion that prioritizes peace and tolerance, countering claims that associate it with coercion or intolerance.

In the context of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), this verse was revealed in relation to a companion of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), al-Hushain, who wished to compel his children to convert to Islam after they had embraced Judaism. The Prophet advised against coercion, emphasizing that faith must emerge from understanding and awareness, not pressure or violence. This incident reflects Islam's foundational stance against forced conversion, promoting instead a peaceful, respectful approach to religious diversity.[19]

The universal value (*maghza*) embedded in al-Baqarah (2:256) is the respect for freedom of belief, a fundamental human right. This freedom is vital not only for individuals but also for interfaith relations. In Islam, true faith is born from deep conviction, not compulsion.[20] This principle forms the basis for peaceful coexistence in pluralistic societies, ensuring that individuals can choose their path without fear of discrimination or violence.

Despite its universal message, al-Baqarah (2:256) is often misunderstood or selectively applied, both within and outside Muslim communities. Some argue that the verse is context-specific and not relevant beyond its historical setting.[21] However, through

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[18] Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1982), 2, 85.

[19] Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn 'Asyur, *Tafsir Al-Tahrir Wa al-Tanwir* (Tunisia: al-Dar al-Tunisiah li al-Nasyr, 1984), 5, 24.

[20] Ahmad Zainal Mustofa and Nurus Syarifah, "The Meaning of Al-Hurriyyah in QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 256 and QS. al-Kahfi [18]: 29: A Maqâṣid Approach of Ibn 'Asyur," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 29, no. 1 (June 28, 2021): 31–44, https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v29i1.10661.

[21] Hanifatul Sahro Yunitasari, "Analysis of Religious Issues and Interfaith Relations from Surah Al-Baqarah: 256, A Study of the Tafsir Al-Azhar," *Proceeding*

the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, it becomes clear that its message transcends temporal and spatial boundaries. The principle of religious freedom is universal and applicable in modern contexts, particularly in situations where such freedoms are threatened by discriminatory policies or misinformed stereotypes.

For example, in Western nations, Muslims often face stereotypes portraying Islam as intolerant or coercive. A proper understanding of this verse can help correct these narratives and foster better dialogue between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Practical examples of this value are found in interfaith initiatives in Indonesia, where religious leaders from various faiths collaborate to promote tolerance and social harmony.[22]

Globally, al-Baqarah (2:256) aligns with international charters like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),[23] which enshrines the right to freedom of religion and belief. The Qur'an, through this verse, has significantly contributed to the global understanding of religious freedom.

The teaching of religious freedom in this verse offers a framework for reducing conflict caused by differences in belief. When religious freedom is respected, the potential for faith-based conflicts diminishes. Conversely, efforts to impose beliefs or discriminate based on religion exacerbate conflict and harm social harmony[24]. Al-Baqarah (2:256) demonstrates that Islam upholds freedom as an essential component of a peaceful and just society.

ISETH (International Summit on Science, Technology, and Humanity), 2023, 2350–54, https://proceedings.ums.ac.id/iseth/article/view/5150.

[22] Tahir Abbas, "The Symbiotic Relationship between Islamophobia and Radicalisation," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 5, no. 3 (December 1, 2012): 345–58, https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2012.723448.

[23] Gudmundur Alfredsson and Asbjørn Eide, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Common Standard of Achievement* (London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2023).

[24] Sukrin Nurkamiden, Ida Hanifah, and Waliko Waliko, "Establishing Religious Freedom: An Overview of the Quran and Hadith in the Indonesian Context (Study of Tafsir Qurais Shihab Qs. Al-Baqarah Verse 256)," *Citizen: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin Indonesia* 3, no. 3 (August 31, 2023), https://doi.org/10.53866/jimi.v3i3.399.

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach further enables the application of this verse in broader contexts, such as combating religious extremism. By affirming that faith is a personal matter, Islam provides a theological basis to reject ideologies that justify coercion or violence in the name of religion. This verse is also pertinent within the Muslim community itself. In the pluralistic nature of Islamic practice, it serves as a guide for maintaining harmony among different sects and interpretations. Recognizing diversity within Islam encourages dialogue and tolerance, consistent with the Qur'anic message of peace.

Al-Baqarah (2:256) is a profound declaration of religious freedom with enduring relevance across all contexts. By employing the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, we can uncover its universal values and apply them to address modern challenges such as islamophobia and religious conflicts. This verse is not only a theological statement but also a practical guide for creating a more peaceful and harmonious world.

Analysis of al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8)

Al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) states:

لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

"Allah does not forbid you from being righteous and just towards those who have not fought you because of religion and have not expelled you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly."

Literally (*ma'na*), this verse teaches a fundamental principle in Islam: social relations with non-Muslims must be based on kindness (*birr*) and justice (*qisṭ*), provided they do not display hostility or force Muslims out of their lands. The verse emphasizes that there is no prohibition against establishing harmonious relations with non-Muslims as long as there is no threat or enmity. This principle

highlights that Islam not only regulates vertical relationships between humans and Allah but also horizontal relationships among people, regardless of religious differences.[25]

From the context of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), this verse was revealed when Muslims in Mecca faced significant pressure from the Quraysh. Some Muslims who migrated to Medina struggled to determine their stance toward non-Muslims who were not openly hostile, such as relatives or neighbors. Al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) clarifies that Muslims are permitted and even encouraged to treat non-Muslims well and justly as long as there is no hostility. This serves as an essential guideline for fostering peaceful relations within a pluralistic society.[26]

The universal value (*maghza*) of this verse lies in the importance of kindness and justice in human relationships, regardless of religious differences. The term birr, used in this verse, shares its root with *birr al-wālidayn* (kindness to parents), signifying the high degree of benevolence expected in interactions with others.[27] This reinforces that kindness and justice are fundamental values that should underpin social interactions with both Muslims and non-Muslims.

It is important to note that this verse is not limited to individual contexts but is also relevant on a broader scale, such as intercommunity and even international relations. In the global context, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) provides a theological foundation for Muslims to promote interfaith cooperation and dialogue. As the world grapples with challenges such as religious conflicts,

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[25] M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2000), 14, 168.

[26] Wahbah ibn Muṣṭafā al-Zuḥaylī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr Fī al-'Aqīdah Wa al-Syari'ah* (Damaskus: Dar Al-Fikr, 1418), 24, 511.

[27] Eva Ardinal et al., "Religious Moderation Curriculum Reception Based On Qur'ani Principles," *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, February 9, 2023, 19–34, https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v5i2.152.

discrimination, and negative stereotypes, this verse offers clear guidance on how Muslims should conduct themselves[28].

Unfortunately, this verse is often overlooked in narratives portraying Islam as an exclusive or intolerant religion. In many cases, islamophobia thrives due to a lack of understanding of principles like those taught in al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8). Conversely, extremism within the Muslim community sometimes fails to uphold these values, instead fostering narratives of hostility toward non-Muslims.[29] By employing the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, it's can be explored the relevance of this verse in addressing these dual challenges: correcting external misperceptions and rectifying internal misunderstandings.

In modern contexts, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) can be applied to build more harmonious societies amidst diversity. For example, in interfaith relations, this verse provides a foundation for creating inclusive dialogue. The kindness (*birr*) encouraged in this verse extends beyond mere politeness; it involves actively striving to understand, support, and collaborate with non-Muslims across various social dimensions.

The verse also emphasizes the importance of justice (*qisṭ*), a core value in Islam. Justice not only involves granting others their rights but also avoiding any form of discrimination or injustice, including in interreligious relationships. In the context of islamophobia, this verse offers a strong argument against

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[28] Abdul Khaliq, Sobihatun Nur Abdul Salam, and Muhammad Sai, "Pemahaman QS. al-Mumtaḥanah Ayat 8-9 dan Relevansinya dengan Hubungan antar Umat Beragama di Indonesia," *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (August 28, 2024): 577–88, https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v4i2.23289.

[29] Fatemeh Layeghi, Abbas Hemami, and Mohammad Reza Aram, "Guardianship Prevention Strategies of the Believers from the Infidels Based on the Structural Interpretation of Surah Al-Mumtaḥanah," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 8, no. 8 (August 18, 2021): 378–89, https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i8.2914.

discriminatory actions toward non-Muslims who are not hostile.[30] Instead, Muslims are expected to serve as role models in championing justice, not only for their own communities but also for others.

Furthermore, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) is relevant in the context of international conflicts and peacebuilding. The verse provides guidance on how majority-Muslim nations can engage with other countries that do not oppose Islam. The principles of kindness and justice taught in this verse can serve as a foundation for peaceful and respectful diplomatic relations.[31] Examples of such cooperation include economic, educational, or cultural partnerships between Muslim and non-Muslim nations.

Practically, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) is also pertinent to the daily lives of Muslims living in predominantly non-Muslim countries. This verse assures that being Muslim does not require severing ties with non-Muslims. Instead, Muslims are encouraged to be active, constructive members of their communities and to contribute positively to their surroundings, irrespective of religious differences.

Within the *ma'na cum maghza* framework, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) can be interpreted as an invitation to build sustainable peace. This verse not only underscores the importance of tolerance but also calls on Muslims to actively contribute to creating harmony in diverse societies. By embracing these values, Muslims can become agents of change in combating stereotypes and promoting more inclusive and peaceful relationships.

Al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) provides theological and practical guidance that is highly relevant for addressing islamophobia and fostering harmonious relationships in pluralistic contexts. By

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[30] Eko Zulfikar, Almunadi Almunadi, and Apriyanti Apriyanti, "Pengakuan Islam Terhadap Eksistensi Agama Lain: Studi Relevansi Penafsiran Hamka Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Perspektif* 16, no. 1 (July 17, 2023): 36–46, https://doi.org/10.53746/perspektif.v16i1.92.

[31] Layeghi, Hemami, and Aram, "Guardianship Prevention Strategies of the Believers from the Infidels Based on the Structural Interpretation of Surah Al-Mumtaḥanah."

employing the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, we can extract the universal values embedded in this verse and apply them to create a world that is more peaceful and just.

Analysis of al-Anfāl (8:61)

Al-Anfāl (8:61) states:

وَإِن جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلَمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

"And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allah. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Knowing."

This verse serves as one of the key principles in Islam regarding peace. Literally (*ma'na*), al-Anfāl (8:61) teaches Muslims to respond to peace initiatives with a similar attitude, demonstrating a willingness to halt conflict and seek peaceful resolutions.[32] While the verse appears in the context of warfare, particularly strategies for dealing with enemies, it underscores that the ultimate goal of warfare in Islam is not the destruction of enemies but the attainment of peace and justice.

From the perspective of *asbāb al-nuzūl* (context of revelation), al-Anfāl (8:61) was revealed during a time when Muslims were engaged in battles against the polytheists of Mecca. This verse provided guidance to the Prophet Muhammad that if the opposing side displayed a desire for peace, Muslims should respond with goodwill. This context highlights that Islam does not support prolonged conflicts and prioritizes peaceful solutions as long as they align with principles of justice and truth.[33]

Through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, al-Anfāl (8:61) conveys universal values (*maghza*) that are applicable in various modern contexts. The verse emphasizes that peace is a noble goal to be pursued by all, including Muslims. On a global scale, it

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[32] Abu al-Fida` Ismail bin Umar Ibnu Kathir, *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* (Riyadh: Dar al-Thayyibah li an-Nasyr wa at-tauzi', 1923).

[33] M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996).

provides theological grounds for Muslims to support international peace efforts through diplomacy, mediation, and interfaith and intercultural collaboration. A key principle derived from this verse is the importance of openness to dialogue and negotiation, even with former adversaries. This reflects Islam's flexibility in responding to changing circumstances while remaining committed to humanitarian values.[34] Consequently, al-Anfāl (8:61) is highly relevant in building a narrative of Islam as a religion that promotes peace and rejects unnecessary violence.

The verse also teaches the concept of *tawakkul* (reliance on Allah), urging Muslims to trust in Allah after making every effort to achieve peace. In the process of seeking peace, uncertainties or risks such as potential betrayal by the opposing side may arise. However, Islam encourages reliance on Allah and perseverance in striving for harmony, rather than allowing such risks to deter efforts toward peace. In the context of islamophobia, al-Anfāl (8:61) serves as an inspiration to address conflicts often rooted in misunderstandings or negative stereotypes about Islam. By emphasizing the principles of peace, Muslims can counter islamophobia through dialogue rather than confrontation. This verse also provides a basis for fostering better relations with non-Muslim communities that exhibit goodwill.[35] Through peaceful approaches, Muslims can dismantle the negative prejudices that often fuel islamophobia.

The relevance of al-Anfāl (8:61) extends beyond the context of warfare to encompass various forms of social and political conflict. In modern society, conflicts frequently arise from ideological, religious, or cultural differences. This verse offers guidance that the best solution for such conflicts is through peace

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[34] Nasywa Hilmi, "Exploring the Concept of Peace in Islamic Teachings: A Comprehensive Analysis of Surah Al-Anfāl Ayat 61," *HEUTAGOGIA: Journal of Islamic Education* 3, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 249–58, https://doi.org/10.14421/hjie.2023.32-09.

[35] Mohammad Soltanieh, Mohammadreza Ghaeminik, and Mohammad Rafigh, "Analysis of Human Relations in Surah Al-Anfāl Based on the Theory of Istikhlaf," *Applied Research in the Field of Quran and Hadith* 2, no. 3 (November 22, 2022): 56–78, https://arq.quran.ac.ir/article_173850_en.html.

and dialogue.[36] This principle aligns with universal values recognized in international law and human rights declarations, which prioritize peaceful conflict resolution.

The practical application of this verse in daily life is also significant. Muslims are taught to actively pursue peace, whether within their families, communities, or on a global scale. For example, in intergroup relations, Muslims can take the initiative to promote interfaith dialogue as a means of fostering mutual understanding. This aligns with the spirit of al-Anfāl (8:61), which encourages proactive efforts to create harmony.

It is important to note, however, that al-Anfāl (8:61) does not advocate for unconditional peace. The peace promoted in Islam must be founded on justice and truth. If the peace offered by the opposing side is intended to deceive or perpetuate injustice, Muslims are not obligated to accept it.[37] This principle reflects the balance in Islamic teachings commitment to peace paired with vigilance against potential injustice.

Using the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, al-Anfāl (8:61) can serve as a foundation for developing practical strategies to build sustainable peace. Values such as openness, dialogue, trust, and reliance on Allah are essential elements for fostering an environment that supports harmony. Furthermore, this verse inspires inclusive peace efforts that involve both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Al-Anfāl (8:61) is a key verse in the Qur'an that affirms Islam's commitment to peace. By employing the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, we can uncover the universal values embedded in this verse and apply them to address modern challenges, including islamophobia. This verse is not only relevant in the context of warfare but also

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[36] Muhammad Shohib, "Menelusuri Etika Bermasyarakat: Analisis Perspektif Wahbah Al-Zuhaili Dalam Kitab Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-Aqidah, Al-Shari'ah, Dan Al-Manhaj," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 18, no. 4 (June 27, 2024): 2859–80, https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v18i4.3612.

[37] Hilmi, "Exploring the Concept of Peace in Islamic Teachings."

provides practical guidance for fostering harmony in various aspects of life.

To further strengthen the analytical depth of this study, it is important to compare the *ma'na cum maghza* approach with other interpretive methods, particularly classical *tafsīr* and modern contextual approaches such as hermeneutics. Classical commentators like al-Ṭabarī[38] and Ibn Kathīr,[39] for instance, provided valuable explanations of the selected verses primarily based on linguistic, narrational (*riwāyah*), and jurisprudential traditions. Their interpretations emphasized the legal and theological aspects of peace but often remained within the framework of *asbāb al-nuzūl* (circumstances of revelation) and did not always address broader socio-political implications in modern settings.

In contrast, contemporary scholars such as Abdullah Saeed,[40] through his hermeneutical approach, advocates for a reading of the Qur'an that takes into account ethical objectives, changing contexts, and human experience. Saeed's work in Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach emphasizes the dynamic meaning of Qur'anic verses when placed within evolving social contexts. For instance, his interpretation of al-Baqarah (2:256) highlights the principle of religious freedom as a universal value, which aligns with global human rights discourse. However, while hermeneutics like Saeed's are strong in addressing the evolving needs of modern society, they often prioritize sociological over theological anchoring.

Here, the *ma'na cum maghza* approach offers a balanced framework by maintaining fidelity to the literal (*ma'na*) reading of the text while also extracting its universal value (*maghza*) through contextual and ethical reflections. Unlike some modern

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[38] Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān Fī Ta'Wīl al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1992).

[39] Ibnu Kathir, *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*.

[40] Saeed, *Interpreting The Al-Qur'an Towards a Comtemporary Approach*.

hermeneutical models that may risk over-contextualization, *ma'na cum maghza* grounds its analysis within the structure of Qur'anic coherence (*munāsabah*), classical *tafsīr*, and contemporary realities making it particularly effective in addressing issues like islamophobia. By focusing not only on what the verse meant in its original context but also on how its meaning resonates today, this approach bridges historical theology with practical engagement.

For example, when responding to islamophobic narratives that depict Islam as inherently coercive or violent, the *ma'na cum maghza* reading of al-Anfāl (8:61) affirms the Qur'anic commitment to peace, yet simultaneously engages with current global discourses on diplomacy and conflict resolution. This dual engagement textual and contextual is where the strength of *ma'na cum maghza* lies, offering not just interpretation, but actionable insight grounded in both faith and reason.

The Relationship Between Messages of Peace and the Challenge of Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be understood solely through religious or theological lenses. It is shaped by political agendas, media narratives, legal structures, psychological dynamics, and historical conflicts. Erik Bleich defines islamophobia as "*indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims*" and emphasizes that its manifestations vary across cultural and political contexts.[41] This broad conceptualization captures both overt acts of discrimination and more subtle forms of institutional exclusion.

Tahir Abbas[42] further highlights the symbiotic relationship between islamophobia and radicalisation, noting that marginalization and hostility toward Muslim communities can create the very conditions that fuel extremism. In this sense, islamophobia

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[41] Bleich, "What Is Islamophobia and How Much Is There?"
[42] Abbas, "The Symbiotic Relationship between Islamophobia and Radicalisation."

is not only a symptom of societal fear or misunderstanding, but also a driver of social fragmentation and insecurity. Abbas urges for a nuanced analysis that addresses not just individual bias but systemic injustice perpetuated through policy, surveillance, and security frameworks.

Gabriele Marranci[43] introduces another important perspective by linking islamophobia to identity conflicts within multicultural societies. He argues that islamophobia often emerges as a reaction to perceived threats to national identity, particularly in Western contexts. Through the lens of anthropology and psychology, Marranci shows how Muslims are often "othered" as incompatible with modernity or liberal values, reinforcing cultural boundaries and undermining social cohesion.

In light of these perspectives, it becomes clear that responses to islamophobia must go beyond apologetics or theological defenses. Rather, they require a strategic engagement with the various structural dimensions that sustain anti-Muslim sentiment. This is where the Qur'anic message of peace when interpreted contextually through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach can offer both moral grounding and practical guidance. By linking divine ethics with lived realities, Qur'anic values such as tolerance, justice, and freedom of belief can serve as counter-narratives to Islamophobic discourse in media, policy, and public opinion.

Islamophobia, or the fear and prejudice against Islam and Muslims, has become a significant global challenge, especially in Western countries. Stereotypes portraying Islam as a religion of violence, intolerance, and radicalism continue to spread through mass media, political rhetoric, and discriminatory policies. In addressing this challenge, the messages of peace found in the Qur'an serve as a vital foundation for countering such negative perceptions. Verses emphasizing tolerance, justice, and harmonious relationships can be referenced to reveal the true essence of Islam a religion that

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[43] Marranci, "Multiculturalism, Islam and the Clash of Civilisations Theory."

upholds universal values and peace.[44] Through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, these messages can be contextualized and applied to modern realities, making them an effective tool in combating islamophobia.

One relevant verse is al-Baqarah (2:256), which states, "*There is no compulsion in religion*". This verse is a strong testament to Islam's respect for individual freedom of belief, a principle highly relevant in the modern context that values human rights. In the context of islamophobia, this verse can be used to refute accusations that Islam forces its beliefs on others. Through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, this message of tolerance can be elaborated more broadly, emphasizing that Islam promotes harmonious interfaith relations without coercion or violence[45]. This value is particularly crucial in addressing islamophobia, which often stems from fears of Islamic dominance in multicultural societies.

Additionally, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) provides guidance on how Muslims should treat non-Muslims who do not show hostility towards them. This verse underscores the importance of acting justly and kindly toward everyone, regardless of religious differences[46]. In facing islamophobia, this verse provides a basis for building better relationships with non-Muslim communities. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach allows this verse to be translated into practical actions, such as engaging in interfaith dialogue, social cooperation, and efforts to create inclusive environments. When Muslims demonstrate these values through actions, negative perceptions of Islam can gradually change.

Al-Anfāl (8:61) adds another dimension to Islam's message of peace, urging Muslims to reciprocate peace initiatives from adversaries with similar goodwill. In the context of islamophobia,

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[44] Abbas, "The Symbiotic Relationship between Islamophobia and Radicalisation."

[45] Mustofa and Syarifah, "The Meaning of Al-Hurriyyah in QS. al-Baqarah [2]."

[46] Khaliq, Salam, and Sai, "Pemahaman QS. al-Mumtaḥanah Ayat 8-9 dan Relevansinya dengan Hubungan antar Umat Beragama di Indonesia."

this verse imparts an essential lesson about the importance of opening dialogue, even with those who have previously been antagonistic toward Islam.[47] Through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, this value can be applied to various modern situations, such as conflict mediation, awareness campaigns, or participation in forums addressing religious and social issues. This strategy has been adopted by many Muslim communities in Western countries to counter discrimination and foster better relationships with local societies.

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach plays a crucial role in bridging the Qur'anic messages of peace with the realities of islamophobia. This approach focuses not only on the literal meaning of Qur'anic verses (*ma'na*) but also explores the relevance of their universal values (*maghza*) in contemporary contexts. For example, the value of tolerance expressed in al-Baqarah (2:256) is not only applicable to interfaith relations but also to creating more inclusive and harmonious societies amid diversity. Similarly, the values of justice and kindness in al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) can be applied to strengthen social solidarity and respond to discrimination constructively.

This approach also enables Muslims to adapt the Qur'anic messages of peace to the needs of modern society. For instance, many Muslim communities in Western countries face challenges of discrimination in workplaces, schools, or social settings. Using Qur'anic values, they can respond positively to these situations by organizing interfaith dialogues, educational campaigns about Islam, or collaborating with humanitarian organizations. These steps not only help reduce prejudice against Islam but also demonstrate that Muslims are integral members of the societies they live in.[48]

A modern example of applying Islamic values to combat islamophobia is the success of some Muslim communities in Western countries in promoting tolerance and justice. In the United States, organizations like the Council on American-Islamic

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[47] Hilmi, "Exploring the Concept of Peace in Islamic Teachings."
[48] Afif, Khasri, and Khasri, "Post-Truth And Qur'an."

Relations (CAIR) actively defend Muslim rights through legal and advocacy efforts.[49] They draw on Islamic values of justice and equality to challenge discriminatory policies and negative stereotypes. In the United Kingdom,[50] Muslim communities have participated in various social projects aimed at enhancing understanding of Islam, such as open dialogues with non-Muslim communities and media campaigns highlighting Muslim contributions to society.

Another example is how Muslims in France[51] have responded to policies often seen as discriminatory, such as bans on wearing the hijab in schools and workplaces. Instead of reacting with anger or violence, many Muslim communities emphasize Islamic values of freedom and individual dignity. They engage in dialogue with the government, collaborate with human rights organizations, and educate the public about the hijab as a part of Muslim identity. This approach reflects the relevance of al-Baqarah (2:256) in supporting religious freedom amid modern challenges.

On a broader scale, the Qur'anic messages of peace can also support global efforts to promote tolerance and counter islamophobia. For example, programs like the United Nations-supported World Interfaith Harmony Week offer opportunities for Muslim communities to showcase the peace values taught by Islam. Through active participation in such events, Muslims can strengthen the positive narrative about Islam and build alliances with other religious communities to combat discrimination.

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[49] Urwatil Wusko, "Peranan Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) Dalam Membangun Citra Islam Di Amerika," *Universitas Indonesia Library* (Program Pascasarjana Universitas Indonesia, 2008), https://lib.ui.ac.id.

[50] Basia Spalek and Robert Lambert, "Muslim Communities, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation: A Critically Reflective Approach to Engagement," *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, Muslim Communities post 9/11 - citizenship, security and social justice, 36, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 257–70, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlcj.2008.08.004.

[51] Ellen Wiles, "Headscarves, Human Rights, and Harmonious Multicultural Society: Implications of the French Ban for Interpretations of Equality," *Law & Society Review* 41, no. 3 (September 2007): 699–736, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5893.2007.00318.x.

However, the challenges are not easy. In many cases, islamophobia is fueled by ignorance or misunderstandings about Islam, exacerbated by biased media coverage or discriminatory political statements. Therefore, efforts to combat islamophobia must include comprehensive strategies, including education, advocacy, and interfaith cooperation. In this regard, the Qur'anic values analyzed through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach provide a strong foundation for designing such strategies.

The messages of peace in the Qur'an are closely related to the challenge of islamophobia. Verses such as al-Baqarah (2:256), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), and al-Anfāl (8:61) demonstrate that Islam upholds peace, tolerance, and justice. Through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, these values can be contextualized and applied to modern situations to counter negative stereotypes about Islam. Modern examples from Muslim communities in Western countries illustrate that these values can serve as effective tools for creating dialogue, reducing discrimination, and fostering harmonious relationships with broader societies.

The Application of Peace Values in a Global Context

The peace values embedded in the Qur'an hold immense relevance in fostering harmony on a global scale. As a holy book that emphasizes tolerance, justice, and compassion, the Qur'an provides universal guidance applicable across various aspects of life. In a global context, these values offer potential solutions to major challenges facing humanity, such as interfaith conflicts, discrimination, and social polarization. Three key sectors education, media, and diplomacy serve as strategic platforms for implementing these peace values and driving meaningful change in global society.[52]

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[52] Ozer and Obaidi, "Globalization and Radicalization."

Education: A Foundation for Peace

Education is a pivotal sector for cultivating peace values. The Qur'an highlights the significance of knowledge and learning as tools for understanding truth and fostering peace. For example, al-Mujādilah (58:11) underscores that Allah elevates the status of those who possess knowledge. Globally, this principle can be operationalized by integrating values such as tolerance, justice, and cooperation into educational curricula. Some countries have embraced this approach by incorporating universal character education into their school systems. For instance, Finland's curriculum prioritizes empathy, openness, and dialogue to bridge cultural and religious differences.

In Indonesia, Islamic Religious Education curricula could be expanded to include modules on interfaith tolerance, inspired by al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), which promotes harmonious relationships with those who harbor no hostility toward Islam.[53] Such measures would not only nurture inclusive future generations but also reduce the likelihood of conflicts. Furthermore, education grounded in peace values can serve as a countermeasure against radicalization. Research indicates that one of the main drivers of extremism is a shallow understanding of religious teachings. By emphasizing peaceful Qur'anic messages, such as al-Baqarah (2:256), which upholds freedom of religion, educational institutions can help prevent the misuse of religion to justify violence. Initiatives like Pakistan's Peace Education and Development Foundation have successfully integrated peace-focused modules into *madrasah* curricula, offering students a broader perspective on Islam.

Media: Shaping Public Narratives

Media plays a crucial role in spreading peace values. In today's digital age, social and mainstream media significantly shape public opinion. Unfortunately, media often perpetuates negative

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[53] Ardinal et al., "Religious Moderation Curriculum Reception Based On Qur'ani Principles."

stereotypes about Islam, particularly in Western countries. To counter this, Muslims must actively leverage media platforms to convey positive narratives about Islam. One approach involves creating content that highlights Muslim contributions to peace and justice in global society. Campaigns like #MyMuslimFriend,[54] which gained traction on social media, have effectively dismantled negative stereotypes by sharing inspiring stories of harmonious relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims.

This strategy aligns with al-Naḥl (16:125), which encourages Muslims to invite others to Islam with wisdom and good advice. In the media context, this can translate into producing inclusive, educational, and persuasive narratives. For instance, films and documentaries showcasing Islamic values of peace, justice, and solidarity have successfully altered perceptions about Islam. Films like The Sultan and the Saint, which recounts the peaceful encounter between Sultan Al-Kamil and St. Francis of Assisi in the 13th century, exemplify how media can promote cross-cultural and interfaith harmony.

Muslim communities worldwide also utilize social media to combat islamophobia and promote peace values. Influential Muslim content creators often share inspiring messages about Islam's teachings, presenting the religion as one of compassion and tolerance. In the United States, organizations like the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) use digital platforms to educate the public about Islam and challenge discriminatory narratives.[55]

Diplomacy: Promoting Global Peace

Diplomacy provides significant opportunities to implement peace values globally. Muslim-majority nations have a responsibility to take active roles in global peace initiatives, in alignment with

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[54] Jesada Buaban, "Islamophobia as Represented by Thai Buddhist Organizations," *Journal of Social Sciences* 50, no. 2 (January 1, 2020): 125–47, https://digital.car.chula.ac.th/cujss/vol50/iss2/7.

[55] Wusko, "Peranan Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) Dalam Membangun Citra Islam Di Amerika."

Islamic teachings on justice and cooperation. al-Mā'idah (5:2) emphasizes the importance of collaborating in righteousness and piety. In diplomatic terms, this principle can manifest as active participation in international organizations like the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The OIC, representing over 50 Muslim-majority countries, has spearheaded peace-building initiatives worldwide.[56] For example, its mediation efforts in conflicts involving Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Central Africa have reduced tensions and fostered dialogue. Similarly, the commitment of Muslim nations to a just resolution in Palestine reflects the application of Islamic principles of peace and justice.

Cultural diplomacy also offers a powerful means to promote Islamic peace values. Many Muslim nations have showcased their art, music, and traditions to portray Islam as a peaceful and inclusive religion. Events like the Islamic Cultural Festival, held in various European countries, have successfully engaged diverse audiences and introduced Islamic values to a broader public. This approach resonates with al-Ḥujurāt (49:13), which highlights the importance of mutual understanding among different peoples and nations.

However, implementing peace values through global diplomacy is not without challenges. Many contemporary conflicts involve Muslim-majority countries or communities, perpetuating stereotypes of Islam as a violent religion. Consequently, diplomatic efforts must be accompanied by education and media campaigns to reshape these perceptions. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach can assist by contextualizing Qur'anic values in modern settings, demonstrating their applicability to peace and justice initiatives.

The application of Qur'anic peace values holds tremendous potential for fostering positive change on a global scale. Through

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[56] Yüksek Lisans Tezi, "Role of International Organizations in Regional Cooperation: Case Study of Azerbaijan in the System of Organization of Islamic Cooperation" (Thesis, Turkey, Marmara Universitesi), accessed January 6, 2025, https://www.proquest.com/openview/ca6dd25c1108063ff1a36e57dca8fea6/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2026366&diss=y.

education that fosters tolerance, media that promote positive narratives, and diplomacy that champions international cooperation, Muslims can demonstrate that Islam is a religion of peace and harmony. The *ma'na cum maghza* approach enables these values to be explained and applied in modern contexts, offering Islam as a solution to complex global challenges.

The Role of Quranic Values in Challenging Islamophobia: Insights from *Ma'na Cum Maghza*

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach to understanding the Qur'an's message of peace significantly contributes to the study of islamophobia, offering a more comprehensive and solution-oriented perspective. Islamophobia, characterized by prejudice and discrimination against Islam and Muslims, often stems from misunderstandings or a lack of deep knowledge about Islamic teachings. In this context, findings about the Qur'an's message of peace, analyzed through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach, highlight that Islam as a religion of mercy for all humankind (al-Anbiyāʾ (21:107)) upholds principles of harmony, tolerance, and justice. These insights pave the way for reconstructing public discourse about Islam, challenging the negative stereotypes that frequently fuel islamophobia.

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach, which integrates textual and contextual dimensions in interpreting the Qur'an, provides a relevant method for addressing complex issues like islamophobia. In islamophobia studies, this approach broadens understanding by demonstrating how Qur'anic verses are not only relevant to historical contexts but also dynamically applicable in contemporary settings. For instance, al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8) emphasizes fostering harmonious relations with those who do not oppose Islam, serving as a foundation for interfaith dialogue in pluralistic societies. Through the *ma'na cum maghza* lens, this verse offers not just a call to kindness but a practical strategy for achieving peace in diverse environments.

The implications of these findings on islamophobia studies are both academic and practical. Academically, the *ma'na cum maghza* approach introduces a new paradigm for understanding Islam as a proactive force for peace, rather than merely reacting defensively to stereotypes. This challenges traditional approaches in islamophobia studies, which often focus on the impact of discrimination on Muslim communities without exploring Islam's values as potential solutions. The *ma'na cum maghza* framework positions Islam not only as a victim but also as an active agent capable of contributing positively to global society. This perspective enriches academic discourse on the relationship between religion and peace, particularly within the contexts of multiculturalism and globalization.

In the development of Islamic discourse, these findings have wide-ranging implications. One of the primary challenges in addressing islamophobia is the lack of robust narratives about Islam as a religion of peace. Many Muslim communities focus on defensive measures, aiming to counter accusations rather than building proactive narratives that highlight Islam's universal values. By emphasizing the Qur'anic messages of peace, these findings provide a foundation for strengthening an inclusive and transformative Islamic discourse. For example, a deep understanding of al-Baqarah (2:256), which rejects compulsion in religion, underscores Islam's respect for religious freedom as a fundamental human right. These values can bridge gaps between Muslims and other communities, fostering constructive, respect-based dialogue.

In addition to enhancing Islamic discourse, the findings offer strategic recommendations for Muslim communities and related institutions to proactively address islamophobia. One key recommendation is the importance of education rooted in Qur'anic values. Education can be a powerful tool to combat islamophobia by educating society about the true teachings of Islam. School curricula, for example, could include modules on tolerance, justice,

and interfaith cooperation derived from the Qur'an.[57] This applies not only to schools in Muslim-majority countries but also in Western nations, where negative stereotypes about Islam often persist. Muslim educational institutions should also take the lead in organizing interfaith dialogue programs that emphasize the peaceful values of Islam.

Another crucial strategy involves leveraging media to reshape the narrative about Islam. Social media and mainstream media are powerful platforms for spreading positive messages about Islam. Muslim communities should actively produce educational and inspirational content, such as stories illustrating how Islamic values are applied in daily life to create peace. Digital campaigns, such as #PeaceInIslam, can showcase Muslim contributions to building harmonious and inclusive societies. Collaborations with non-Muslim media outlets are also essential to ensure that these messages reach a broader audience.

In the realm of diplomacy, the findings underscore the need for a more holistic and inclusive approach by Muslim nations in addressing global issues related to islamophobia. International organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) can play a vital role in promoting Islamic values of peace on global platforms. For instance, the OIC could initiate education programs and interfaith dialogue in member and non-member countries to enhance understanding of Islam as a religion supporting peace and harmony.[58] Furthermore, Muslim nations should actively promote Islamic art and culture that reflects peaceful messages as part of cultural diplomacy.

Moreover, local Muslim communities must be empowered to serve as agents of change within their societies. Through training and empowerment programs, these communities can be equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively promote Islamic values. For example, civil society organizations could host workshops on

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[57] Afif, Khasri, and Khasri, "Post-Truth And Qur'an."
[58] Tezi, "Role of International Organizations in Regional Cooperation."

responding constructively to islamophobia, using Qur'anic values as a foundation. This approach helps build confident Muslim communities while strengthening relationships with others.

The *ma'na cum maghza* approach to understanding the Qur'an's message of peace has far-reaching implications for islamophobia studies and the development of Islamic discourse. These findings demonstrate that Islam holds immense potential as a solution to global challenges such as discrimination, conflict, and social polarization. By integrating Qur'anic values into education, media, and diplomacy, Muslims can confront islamophobia in a more proactive and transformative way. This approach not only enriches academic discourse but also offers practical guidance for creating a more peaceful and harmonious world.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the Qur'anic message of peace when examined through the *ma'na cum maghza* approach offers a robust and contextually grounded framework for addressing the multifaceted phenomenon of islamophobia. By analyzing al-Baqarah (2:256), al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), and al-Anfāl (8:61), this research reveals that the Qur'an consistently promotes values of tolerance, justice, and peaceful coexistence, which directly counter the ideological foundations of Islamophobic narratives.

The strength of the *ma'na cum maghza* approach lies in its ability to bridge the textual and contextual dimensions of interpretation. Unlike traditional or purely thematic *tafsīr*, this approach not only preserves the theological depth of the verses but also extracts their universal relevance for contemporary issues. Through this method, Qur'anic values can be articulated in a way that resonates with global discourses on human rights, religious freedom, and intercultural harmony.

Moreover, by engaging with interdisciplinary perspectives particularly from the fields of sociology, politics, and media studies this study positions islamophobia as a structural issue that requires

strategic and systemic responses. The Qur'an's message of peace is not merely a spiritual ideal but a practical guide for social transformation, especially when applied in education, public discourse, and diplomatic efforts.

In conclusion, this study argues that combating islamophobia effectively demands more than defensive rhetoric; it requires a proactive, values-based approach rooted in the Qur'anic vision of peace. The *ma'na cum maghza* framework provides a valuable interpretive tool for Muslim communities, scholars, and institutions to reclaim the narrative and contribute meaningfully to global efforts for justice, tolerance, and lasting peace.

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