

AIN 'EVIL EYE' IN VARIOUS CULTURES AND THE DISTORTION OF FAITH AGAINST IT

Mada Tri Majaya*

International Open University Indonesia

*e-mail: madatrimajaya@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The importance of understanding the concept of 'Ain or "Evil Eye" in different cultures is not only from a cultural perspective, but also from a religious perspective. This research aims to understand more about the disease 'Ain or "Evil Eye" in different cultures and its impact on religious beliefs. The article describes how the "Evil Eye" is understood in different cultures and societies, including its history. The research also explores how this belief can influence religious beliefs and practices in a broader context. In addition, the research also discusses how these beliefs can lead to extremism or beliefs that are contrary to religious teachings, and ways to maintain balance with true religious beliefs. The results of this research provide an understanding of how culture and religion influence views on 'Ain, as well as finding solutions to problems that can disrupt social harmony and religious beliefs.

Keywords: evil eye, 'ain, 'ain illness, hasad, aqidah, deviation of aqidah

1. Introduction

'Ain comes from the Arabic 'ana-ya'inu, which means when someone sees with his eyes. The word 'ain (العين) linguistically means the eye through which one sees (Zakaria, 1994). In Islam, the word 'ain (العين) refers to something greater (Hassan, 2019). In this case, the word 'Ain in Indonesia is often paired with the word illness. Illness means discomfort in the body or part of the body due to suffering from something or a disease of the body or mind, while illness according to the The Great Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) is something that causes disturbances in living things, health problems caused by bacteria, viruses, or system abnormalities, and bad habits or something that brings badness. So, in terms of Ain illness, it is a condition that is not like physical or spiritual illnesses commonly known by the community, but directly gives changes to a person's physique without the person affected by the disease realizing it (Farida, 2021). Ibn Manẓūr explains al-'ain is a condition in which someone gets a disaster through someone's eyes. The perpetrator of 'ain is called 'ā'in and the victim of the perpetrator of 'ain is called ma'in or ma'yūn (Manzūr, 1996). The ain illness is also called by another name the Evil Eye. The 'Evil Eye' is also known as 'Ayn-al-hasad' in Arabic, or 'Chashm-e-budd' in Urdu, 'Buri nazar' in Hindi, 'Nazar' in Turkish, "Cheshme Nazar" in Persian and also in English 'Evil Eye' (Rassool, 2019).

The definition of evil varies across cultures and religions, but the most common understanding of the concept of evil is that it is something that causes harm. Health and prosperity are two aspects that are precious to humans who seek peace, so any harm or damage to these two aspects can bring disaster and despair. Religious beliefs have a special place in societies where belief in healing is popular. Belief in the power of evil to work and affect the objects it afflicts is universal and has its roots in prehistoric times (Elworthy, 2004). The religions that influence the majority of the world's population define evil and demonic practices in terms of human-God, human-demon, and God-demon

relationships. Almost all religions have a consensus on the forces of evil that possess humans to influence the rest of creation. The 'evil eye' is one of the different forms of evil associated with the belief that the sight of an eye can have the power to cause injury, harm and even death to whoever it is directed at (Qamar, 2013).

The evil eye is a widespread phenomenon in cultures around the world. Although often considered an irrational or supernatural belief, the evil eye still has a significant impact on many societies. In Islam, ain illness or the evil eye is recognized, but it should not be believed to be the sole cause of illness. 'Ain is just one of the many factors that can cause illness. Regardless of widespread belief, the concept of the evil eye has been subjected to various interpretations and misunderstandings, leading to deviations in religious beliefs and practices. In this article, this concept of the evil eye is explored in various cultures and also discusses the deviation of aqeedah towards it.

The belief in ain has existed since ancient times. It is found in various cultures around the world, including Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Indian cultures and other parts of the world. Research conducted by Elliott (2016) in his work entitled "Beware the Evil Eye: The Evil Eye in the Bible and the Ancient World" states that the belief and practice of the Evil Eye has been rooted for thousands of years, especially in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. Ancient societies revered the eye in many forms, including eye symbols, eye statues, and myths about the eye of heaven and the lost and found eye. They also had strong beliefs about the evil eye and performed various practices to avoid it. The ancients considered the evil eye to be a dangerous natural phenomenon. The evil eye was usually associated with strangers in their own group, even more so with foreigners and exotics from other lands, blind people, one-eyed creatures, and those with unusual eye features (such as squinted eyes or united eyebrows).

The evil eye is also associated with people who are suspected of being envious and may cast envious glances such as envious people against their fortunate peers, widows or widowers abandoned by married people, elder against the younger and prettier, the sick against the healthy, ordinary people against those who are different and superior, etc. Evil eye beliefs reflect perceptions of and concern for injustice in everyday life, with differences between the haves and the have-nots, between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The accepted understanding is that the good enjoyed by a person or group of people is seen as a loss to another person or group where your gain is my loss in this life. Obviously this causes sadness and a feeling of dislike towards the good fortune of others with the hope that it will be destroyed. Envy is in accordance with human nature and is a process that needs to be guarded against and avoided as much as possible. But why the eye and not other organs? This can be traced to a complex concept, discovered by Elliott (2016) that accompanies and underlies ancient evil eye beliefs and practices, including:

- 1) The eye is regarded as one of the most important organs of the body.
- 2) The eye is regarded as an organ that emits energy, such as a lighted lamp, a shining sun, or a shot arrow. Whether it is the eyes of humans, gods, or other beings, the eyes can release energy or light. When used for evil purposes, such as the evil eye, it can hurt or damage whatever it targets. This was a widely believed theory in ancient times.
- 3) The eyes are thought to be related to the disposition in one's heart. The eyes are considered a window that can reflect what is in one's mind and soul.
- 4) The evil eye is used to convey hostile feelings and show the evil disposition that exists in one's heart. Its energy is directed at the object or person that is the target of the hatred. The evil eye is a dangerous and aggressive tool.

According to Elliott (2016), belief in the evil eye is important in several ways:

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- 1) Explaining unexpected events: the concept of the evil eye is used to explain why sudden and incomprehensible accidents, losses, or even deaths occur.
- 2) Identifying crimes: the evil eye concept helps to identify and explain evil acts committed by individuals or in society.
- 3) Promoting positive values: this belief is also used to promote values such as generosity, the spirit of liberty, and sharing possessions, as well as to discourage traits such as jealousy, greed, and excessive ambition that can disrupt harmony within the group.
- 4) Reinforcing positive behavior: the evil eye is used to sanction behaviors that support collective well-being and in-group harmony.
- 5) God's will: belief in the evil eye encourages patterns of behavior and social interaction that are consistent with God's will.
- 6) Conflict resolution: evil eye interactions and accusations play a role in conflict resolution in groups and villages where central authority is absent or ineffective. It helps define, mark, and enforce social identity and group boundaries. Accusations of the evil eye provide social control in situations that lack formal law enforcement.

Rassool (2019) in his research "Evil Eye, Jinn Possession, and Mental Health Issues" which discusses the link between 'ain, jinn possession, and mental health issues where Rassool examines these concepts from the perspective of clinical psychology and anthropology, focusing on cases where belief in 'ain or the evil influence of jinn can affect a person's mental health.

According to Islamic tradition, the evil eye is a reality and comes from two sources: the evil eye of man and the evil eye of the jinn. Primarily envy and jealousy drive the evil eye to cause harm. The Qur'an illustrates envy and jealousy as evils that originate from humans and Satan. Satan, in Arabic shaython means "astray" or sometimes "devil" who misleads people from the path of Allah and brings evil and temptation. There are several types of evil eye (al-'ayn) according to the scholars;

- 1) Al-'Ayn is defined as the envious eye of a person without malicious intent.
- 2) Al-Hasad (envy) is defined as the eye of someone who hates someone or dislikes someone and wants something removed from someone.
- 3) An-Nafs (ego) is referred to as the envious or admiring eye that one can place on oneself.
- 4) An-Nathara is the envious/evil eye that comes from the jinn.

For devout Muslims, acceptance or rejection of something is based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Evidence of various types of evil eye can be found in these two sources (Rassool, 2019).

Machovec (1976) in his research on hypnosis titled "The Evil Eye: Superstition or Hypnotic Phenomenon?" argues that the evil eye is more associated with hypnosis than with any other field of research or specialization. Nowhere else, in science, such as psychiatry or psychology, specifically talks about eye-to-eye contact and its effect on behavior, or its use as part of treatment methods or behavioral phenomena. The use of eyes to communicate can be helpful in focusing attention, reducing distractions, and creating a more stable environment. The use of eyes also provides predictable and controllable signals. In addition, the eyes can also send messages to others, depending on the situation and how the message is received by the individual. So, proper use of the eyes at the right time, with the right person, and appropriate visual messages can utilize hypnosis theory in a mechanical and phenomenological context rather than the evil eye phenomenon.

Research conducted by Qamar (2013) said that in Islamic philosophy, evil is ascribed to Satan who swears to spread evil. Humans have innate knowledge of good and evil, and have the freedom to choose. Human nature is inclined towards evil, and when influenced by Satan, they can become evil. The evil eye is a negative energy that arises from one's feelings of envy and can be harmful to others. This belief exists in various cultures and religions, making it difficult to dismiss as mere superstition. In Islam, humans are considered weak beings, but are also blessed with knowledge and

wisdom. Islam encourages humility and goodwill to maintain peace in society. Protection and healing from the evil eye reflect the basic tenets of Islam, namely Tawhid (belief in Allah as the One True God) and Tawakkal (belief that Allah is all-sufficient and His power is unrivaled).

In addition to the above studies, there have also been many studies that discuss evil eye from a cultural and historical perspective. However, there are still very few that discuss it from an Islamic perspective that is associated with a cultural context, especially specifically in Southeast Asia where the archipelago includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam which is one of the regions with the largest Muslim population. It is also rare to find research that goes deeper into the deviation of faith or belief caused by the misunderstanding of the evil eye or 'Ain illness.

2. Methods

The research in this article is a qualitative research using the literature study method to explore the belief in 'ain in various cultures and the deviation of aqidah from it. Inductive and descriptive analysis is also used where specific data on 'ain from the Qur'ān, hadith, books, academic articles, and online sources are discussed in breadth and depth.

3. Results and Discussion

'Ain Illness or Evil Eye in Islam

Belief is a state of mind that embodies trust and confidence in something (Wykowski & Douglas, 2011). Humans achieve this state of mind from their belief systems. Belief systems guide them to understand abstract and mysterious concepts that pertain to their lives in all aspects. Islam, as a belief system, describes the vulnerability of humans in their mortal environment, the power that evil (Satan) has to bring harm, and the ways to seek divine protection (Qamar, 2013). Ain or the evil eye and envy are tremendous forces that the majority of people do not believe in, even though its power can even make a person fall off a mountain. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

"The evil eye is real and can bring down a person from a high mountain." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi` no.4146)

The 'ain illness is true and also really dangerous, as the Prophet said:

“The influence of an evil eye is a fact; if anything would precede the destiny it would be the influence of an evil eye “ (Sahih Muslim no. 2188).

From Jabir bin Abdillah, the Prophet said:

“The majority of my ummah dies of (evil) eye after the qada and qadar of Allah Almighty.” (Narrated by Al Bazzar in Kasyful Astar, authenticated by al-Albani in Saheeh al-Jami' no.1206.).

From this prophetic message, Muslims believed that 'ain really existed and had happened, and that it was very easy for Allah to make a disease like 'ain exist. In addition, it is proven that this disease is also witnessed by many people, namely when it is found that someone suddenly falls ill for no apparent reason.

The 'ain illness itself has several definitions and explanations. Shaykh Abdurrahman bin Hasan defines:

"One who looks, causes annoyance to the one he looks at" (Fathul Majid Syarah Kitab Tauhid, 69).

Al Lajnah Ad Daimah said that:

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“Ain is derived from the word 'aana - ya'iiinu, which means: to be exposed to something through the eyes. It originates from the admiration of a person who sees something, followed by a negative mental response, then the soul uses the medium of the eyes to channel its poison to the seen.”
(Fatwa Al Lajnah Ad Daimah, 1/271).

Ibnu Hajar said:

" The evil eye is a look of admiration (for something) that is also mixed with envy. It comes out of an evil nature and causes harm to the one it looks at." (Fathul-Baari, 10/247)

Ibnul Qayyim in "Zad Ma'ad" says that the disease of ain is like an arrow that shoots from the heart of the envious person to the envied one. Sometimes it hits its target and sometimes it misses. If he finds that the envied person has no shield and protection, then he will attack him, but if he finds that the envied person has a shield and protection that has no loopholes, then he will not attack him. This is similar to the actual arrows, as one comes from the soul and heart, while the other comes from the body and limbs.

Evidence proving the reality of the evil eye is also found in the Qur'an. Allah says in the story of Ya'qub:

وَقَالَ يَبْنَئِي لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنِّي بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَادْخُلُوا مِنِّي أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ وَمَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

“He then instructed ‘them’, “O my sons! Do not enter ‘the city’ all through one gate, but through separate gates. I cannot help you against ‘what is destined by’ Allah in the least. It is only Allah Who decides. In Him I put my trust. And in Him let the faithful put their trust.” (Q.S. Yusuf verse 67)

Regarding the verse, Ibn Abbas, Muhammad ibn Ka'b, Mujahid, Dahhak, Qatadah and al- Suddi all said: "He fears for them the evil eye, for they are all handsome and have beauty. The evil eye is real, it causes the rider to fall off his horse." (ad-Dimasyqi, 1999)

Then, Allah SWT said:

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَرِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ
وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ

“The disbelievers would almost cut you down with their eyes when they hear ‘you recite’ the Reminder,¹ and say, “He is certainly a madman.” But it is simply a reminder to the whole world.”
(Q.S. Al-Qalam verses 51 - 52)

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Ibn Kathir said in his commentary: "Ibn 'Abbas said: That is, they would have given you an evil eye, i.e., envied you because of their hatred for you, had it not been for Allah who has protected and preserved you. This verse indicates that the evil eye and its effects are real, if Allah wills it."

In addition, Allah SWT also said:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak. From the evil of that which He created. And from the evil of darkness when it settles. And from the evil of the blowers in knots. And from the evil of an envier when he envies. (Q.S. Al-Falah)

So everyone who causes 'ain is a hasad person, but not everyone who causes 'ain is a hasad person." (Fatwa Lajnah Ad Daimah, 1/271).

'Ain can occur when there is hasad (envy or jealousy) towards someone's good fortune or favors. A person who feels hasad towards other individuals and looks at them with envy can result in 'ain. However, excessive feelings of admiration can also be a cause of 'ain.

In the hadith from Abu Umamah bin Sahl, he said:

"Yahya related to me from Malik that Muhammad ibn Abi Umama ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf heard his father say, "My father, Sahl ibn Hunayf did a ghusl at al-Kharrar. He removed the jubbah he had on while Amir ibn Rabia was watching, and Sahl was a man with beautiful white skin.

Amir said to him, 'I have never seen anything like what I have seen today, not even the skin of a virgin.' Sahl fell ill on the spot, and his condition grew worse. Somebody went to the Messenger of Allah salAllahu alahi wa salaam and told him that Sahl was ill, and could not go with him. The Messenger of Allah came to him, and Sahl told him what had happened with Amir. The Messenger of Allah said, 'Why does one of you kill his brother? Why did you not say, "May Allah bless you?" (ta baraka-llah) The evil eye is true. Do wudu from it.' Amir did wudu from it and Sahl went with the Messenger of Allah sal Allahu alahi wa salaam and there was nothing wrong with him.." (Malik in Al-Muwatha' [2/938], authenticated by al-Albani in Silsilah Ash-Sahihah [6/149]).

Ain illness can affect intelligence, sustenance, beauty, religion, character, marriage and family life, life in general, physical health, living creatures and plants, work, and knowledge, as well as other areas (al-Hibshi, 2018). This is also found in a narration:

"Narrated to me 'Uqbah ibn Mukram al-'Ammi: Abu 'Ashim has narrated to us from Juraij who said: And has narrated to me Abu az-Zubayr that he heard Jubayr ibn 'Abdullah say, "The Messenger of Allah (SAW) allowed Hazm's family to perform ruqyah for snake bites." and the Prophet said to 'Asma bint 'Umais: "Why do I see the bodies of my relative children emaciated? Are they in hunger? Asma replied, "No, but they are sent al-'Ain." He said, "Then recite ar-ruqyah for them!" (HR. Muslim).

The scholars say that inanimate objects can also be affected by 'ain where inanimate objects affected by 'ain can be damaged or destroyed suddenly. In a narration, the Prophet Muhammad prayed:

“O Allah, I seek Your forgiveness and Your protection in my religion, in my worldly affairs, in my family and in my wealth” (Abu Daud no.5074, authenticated by Al Albani in Sahih Abu Daud).

Allah SWT also said:

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ تَرْنِ أَنَا أَقَلَّ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا

“If only you had said, upon entering your property, ‘Maasya Allah, laa quwwata illaa billah.’ (QS. Al Kahfi: 39).

The scholars used this verse as an argument that a person's wealth can be affected by 'ain and in such cases, it is permissible to perform ruqyah to overcome the effects of 'ain. Ibn Kathir explains:

“Some of the salaf said: If a person is amazed at his wealth or his son, he should say Maasya Allaah, laa quwwata illaa billaah. This is taken from this noble verse”

Scholars differ on the relationship between the evil eye and envy. Some are of the opinion that the evil eye is limited to envy, but not everyone who envies has an evil eye. Others are of the opinion that everyone from whom the evil eye emanates is envious, but not everyone who is envious causes the evil eye. Some scholars are of the opinion that not everyone who casts a bad eye on others is envious, and not everyone who is envious casts an evil eye (Rassool, 2019).

Some Beliefs and Deviations of Aqeedah towards Ain's Illness

Beliefs and deviations of the aqeedah toward the 'ain illness may vary across cultures and societies. However, there are many similarities between these beliefs and deviations. In addressing the phenomenon of 'ain diseases some people have an exaggerated view of them. 'ain disease is real and potentially dangerous. However, one should not attribute every bad thing to 'ain. Hence, one should not be quick to assume that all bad things that happen are caused by 'ain. For example, when someone sneezes, one should not immediately assume that it is caused by 'ain. The same applies when his car breaks down, his business profits decline, or similar situations. A believer must find a balance between not being excessive (ifraath) in attributing everything to 'ain and not underestimating (tafrith) the potential of 'ain (Purnama, Some Facts About 'Ain Disease, 2021).

It is not appropriate for a person to go to extremes in hiding quality goods for fear of being affected by 'ain, such as a person who avoids wearing good clothes for fear of being affected by 'ain. This kind of attitude is not correct (Purnama, Some Facts About 'Ain, 2021). In addition, there is the practice of giving children bad names because it is believed that it will protect them from 'ain. In some cultures, parents may try to make their children look unattractive or make their faces scowl in order to avoid 'ain. Such practices clearly violate the Islamic aqeedah. In fact, often the actions taken to prevent 'ain can lead to other sins. For example, dressing a child in clothes of the opposite sex to prevent 'ain.

Sometimes, there is misinformation among the general public, such as the statement that "Acne falls under the category of 'ain disease because we don't say Masya Allah when we see beauty on our or other people's faces, to avoid 'ain." It is true that we should say Masyaallah when we see beauty, whether on ourselves or on others, to protect against 'ain. It is true that one should say Masya Allah when seeing beauty, whether in oneself or in others, to protect against 'ain. However, there are people

who misinterpret this by assuming that acne is Allah's way of protecting a person from someone's bad looks ('ain), in the sense that people with acne on their faces are considered ugly and unattractive so as not to arouse the admiration and envy of those who see their faces. In fact, acne can appear for various reasons, such as the influence of hormones, unhealthy lifestyles, the habit of eating fatty foods, and lack of facial care. Imagine if most people considered acne as a gift instead of looking for ways to treat it; instead of thinking about how to cure acne, they just let it be with the excuse that acne is God's way of protecting them from bad looks.

In order to avoid being the cause of the evil eye in others, someone can offer a blessing prayer when seeing something admirable in them. For example, by saying "Baarakallahu fiik" (may Allah bless you), or "Masya Allah tabaarakallah" (everything is by the will of Allah, may Allah bless you), or "Masya Allah laa haula wa laa quwwata illabillah tabaarakallah" (everything is by the will of Allah, there is no power and effort except with the permission of Allah, may Allah bless you). However, it is important to remember that it is not advisable to prevent the evil eye by putting a holy verse in the house or writing "Masya Allah tabarakallah". It is even worse if the writing has no dhikrullah element at all, such as pasting symbols with Arabic letters, which is also not recommended (Purnama, Some Facts About 'Ain Disease, 2021).

However, it should be emphasized that regarding the use of amulets derived from the Qur'an and dhikr that have been ma'tsur, the scholars have diverse views. Some scholars allow it, while others forbid it. There are views that allow it from some of the salaf and the majority of fuqaha from various madhhabs, such as Hanafiyyah, Malikiyyah, Shafi'iyah, and Hanabilah. The argument they use is the words of Allah SWT:

وَنَزَّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

“And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.” (QS. Al-Israa' verse 82)

In addition, there are also the words of the Companion 'A'ishah:

“It is not an amulet that is forbidden to hang up before the calamity. What is included in amulets is only that which is hung up after the calamity/disaster to ward off fate.” (Narrated by al-Baihaqi 9/350 (9/589) no. 19606)

Companion 'Abdullah bin 'Amru also wrote and hung prayer charms on his children who had not yet reached puberty:

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ غَضَبِهِ وَعِقَابِهِ وَشَرِّ عِبَادِهِ وَمِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَنْ يَخْضَرُونَ

“I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allah from His wrath, the evil of His servants, and from the whispers of the satan and his coming” (Narrated by Abu Daawud no. 3893, At-Tirmidhi no. 3528, and others)

Added to this are the atsar of some of the salaf, one of which is where Sa'id ibn Al-Musayyib ordered to hang up the Qur'an, and he said: 'There is nothing wrong with it'.

However, this permissible opinion is rejected by arguing that if the use of amulets was permitted, the Prophet would have given an explanation of when and how it could be done. This would be the case if the amulet is derived from verses of the Qur'an, supplications, or dhikr that are permitted in

Islamic law as is the permission to use ruqyah in certain situations, where the ruqyah does not contain elements of shirk and does not contradict the texts that prohibit it in general.

In some Muslim countries there is a belief in placing Quranic verses made of gold, silver or similar materials on a baby's chest. This is an insult to the Book of Allah due to the baby's lack of ability to understand the meaning and importance of these verses (al- Hibshi, 2018).

A number of amulets have been created in various cultures to fight curses from the evil eye. This type of amulet is known as an "apotropaic amulet" (from the Greek, "apotropaic" means "preventive" or "protective"), which serves to avert or repel harm. For example, there are disks or spheres composed of concentric blue and white circles. These apotropaic amulets are common in Western Asia and the Balkans, often attached to ship masts and elsewhere. In some folklore, the eyes on the amulet are believed to have the ability to divert evil eyes back to the witch or curse-striker.

Unfortunately, these amulets are still used in Islamic countries and maintained as a tradition. For example the amulets known as nazar (Turkish: nazar boncuğu or nazarlık), these amulets are most commonly seen in Turkey, found in or on houses and vehicles or worn as beads. Another of the most famous amulets, known as Hamsa or Khamsah. The word 'khamsah' is basically an Arabic word signifying "five" or also "five fingers of the hand". In Jewish and Islamic traditions, the number five is very important. Five (hamesh in Hebrew) symbolizes the five books of the Torah for Jews. It also represents the fifth letter in the Hebrew alphabet, "Heh", which denotes one of God's holy names. It is considered a constant reminder to use their five senses while praising God. The five symbol is also considered to stand for the Five Pillars of Islam for Sunnis and the Five Hijabed Ones (Ahlul Bayt for Shias). Despite the fact that the hamsa symbol is associated with Islamic culture, Qur'anic law prohibits the wearing of amulets (Sayed, 2016).

Early uses of the hamsa can be traced to ancient Mesopotamian artifacts in amulets of the goddesses Inanna or Ishtar. Images of an open right hand are also seen in Carthage (modern Tunisia) and ancient North Africa as well as in Phoenician colonies in the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal). An 8th century BC Jewish tomb containing a hamsa-like hand inscription was found at Khirbet el-Qom (Sonbol, 2005). Other symbols of divine protection based around the hand include the Hand of Venus or Aphrodite, as well as the Hand of Mary used to protect women from the evil eye, increase fertility and lactation, promote healthy pregnancies, and strengthen the weak (Sonbol, 2005). At that time, women were under enormous pressure and expectations to become mothers. Conditions at that time demanded that women be fertile and produce as many offspring as possible so that humans in a group could continue to live.

Therefore, it signifies femininity and embodies extraordinary characteristics. This symbolism has been used for over 1,000 years to protect against evil and create peace. Even today, the amulet is used in several countries in the Middle East. The representation of femininity is believed to symbolize the ultimate feminine figure as the Virgin Mary for Christianity and Fatimah for Islam (Gauding, 2019). In short, this sign has been interpreted in different cultures and religions differently according to their doctrines and philosophies. When Islam entered areas where these amulets were already familiar, they continued to be used, except that the name of the amulet, which was previously the name of an ancient goddess or the Virgin Mary, was changed to the name of the Prophet Muhammad's daughter, Fatimah Azzahra, which symbolizes femininity and motherhood in Islam.

Theme: Ain 'Evil Eye' in Various Cultures and the Distortion
of Faith Against It

All of these are false beliefs and things that lead to polytheism, whereas a Muslim should only seek refuge in Allah. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

“Whoever wears an amulet has committed shirk” (Narrated by Ahmad 4/156, Al-Haakim 4/219, Ibn Hibbaan 13/450 no. 6086, Al-Haakim 4/216, Al-Baihaqi 9/350).

It is not permissible to burn herbs as incense in the belief that they can cure the Evil Eye or as exorcists/witches. However, there is nothing wrong with using herbs as functional supplements that have been proven to have benefits, but must be without believing in them (al-Hibshi, 2018).

In the Malay community, 'ain illness is often referred to as "*keteguran*", "*kena mata*", or "*kena 'ain*". Anisah Barakbah (2007) explains that in the belief of the Malay community, *keteguran* comes from the tongue or can also be from supernatural beings, and this can have a bad impact on the baby, such as causing *sawan* or prolonged hot fever.

After bathing the baby and wrapping it up, in Malay culture, the baby's eyes would be treated with kohl as part of a ceremony to protect the baby from being knocked out, 'ain, or hit in the eye. In Indian culture, it is also known to use kohl for a similar purpose. In both Malay and Indian traditions, there is also an alternative treatment for *keteguran* or catching an eye that involves ingredients such as a male coconut shell with one eye hole, seven dried chili stalks, salt, and a single onion with its skin. All these ingredients are put into the coconut shell, then the shell is rotated around the baby's head seven times. After that, the shell is placed over hot coals. If the shell emits a strong odor and causes coughing, this indicates that the illness experienced by the baby is not due to *keteguran* or 'ain. However, if the dried chili pepper bursts and emits smoke without a strong odor, it indicates that the baby's illness is due to *keteguran* or 'ain. This process is repeated for seven consecutive days (Khadzali & Ahmad, 2020). It is undeniable that this practice is very much different from what was taught by the Prophet Muhammad.

Javanese people are familiar with the belief of Pemali. According to KBBI (The Great Indonesian Dictionary), the term "pemali" refers to abstinence or prohibition based on customs and habits. Pemali is often referred to as "taboo". Farberow explains that in the concept of the word "taboo" there is a meaning that includes elements of what is allowed and prohibited, what should be done and what should not be done. Most taboos are simply exaggerated myths. Even so, many people still believe and follow it because it is part of the culture and discipline that emerges as a result of habit (Aryzona, Arifin, & Rija, 2021).

The prohibition for girls to sit by the door is a common rule in many ethnicities and regions. Among the Javanese, this prohibition is particularly emphasized. This tradition is believed to date back to the royal era. At that time, Javanese society saw women or girls as a symbol of family honor. In the past, education for girls was not only limited due to the perceived lack of rights and duties of women, but also as a way to protect girls from the "evil eye".

During this time, most of the Javanese ethnic community embraced Hinduism. In Hinduism, the "evil eye" is considered to be the manifestation of negativity and the intent to harm others. Therefore, at that time, the protection of girls was highly prioritized. The door is considered the boundary between one room and another, and this can be interpreted as a barrier against things that are confidential. This is why every house has a door, as it serves as a means for individuals and others to maintain their privacy and security.

In the past, girls were often placed in the kitchen and more hidden rooms of the house, rather than in the front of the house or more visible rooms. The purpose of this was so that the girl would not

attract the attention of too many people, especially men, and thus avoid the "evil eye." On the other hand, it is not uncommon for families to deliberately hide the whereabouts of their girls. All this was done to prevent their daughters from being taken by rulers or colonizers to become comfort women or mistresses of officials at that time. Thus, it appears that the impact of this action does not always match the reality of what actually happened (Aryzona, Arifin, & Rija, 2021).

4. Conclusion

The 'ain or evil eye has its roots in the religions, cultures and belief systems of people in different parts of the world. These theories have been instrumental in understanding and explaining the concept of 'Ain in Islam. As discussed, 'ain is potentially dangerous and can affect various aspects of a person's life, including health, luck, beauty, marriage and more. In Islam, the belief in 'ain comes from the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad and is also reinforced by Qur'anic references. 'Ain is considered a tangible force that can have a negative impact on the individuals to whom it is directed. In an effort to protect themselves from 'ain, Muslims are encouraged to adhere to the Shariah, recite prayers, and undergo religious practices that can reinforce divine protection.

Although 'ain is a recognized phenomenon in Islam, it is important to maintain a balance in everyday understanding and actions. One should not go overboard in attributing all bad events to 'ain, nor should one use beliefs about 'ain as a justification for un-Islamic actions. A strong Aqeedah and adherence to Islamic principles are paramount. In addition, traditional practices involving amulets, acts that exploit 'ain beliefs, or the use of apotropaic amulets that are against Islamic law should be avoided. Islam encourages the use of prayers, dhikr, and legitimate religious practices as a way to protect oneself from the dangers of 'ain.

The people of the Indonesian archipelago also have beliefs around 'ain illness, which are linked to their traditions and culture. However, there are some similarities between the beliefs and practices that prevail in the Indonesian archipelago and those in India. These beliefs are heavily influenced by Hindu beliefs because prior to the introduction of Islam to the archipelago, the majority of the religion of the population in the archipelago was Hindu-Buddhist originating from India. To avoid deviating from the aqeedah due to misunderstandings about ain's illness, it is important to understand the correct Islamic teachings about this illness. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- 1) Ain illness is a disease caused by a spiteful or envious eye.
- 2) The disease of ain is only one of the many factors that can cause illness.
- 3) The cure of ain illness must be carried out in ways that are in accordance with Islamic teachings.
- 4) Belief in magical powers or sorcery is an act of shirk which is prohibited in Islam.
- 5) Destiny is a decree of Allah that cannot be changed.

Therefore, it is important to learn about the correct Islamic teachings on ain from reliable sources. Be aware of information or beliefs that are not in line with Islamic teachings. Consult a scholar or ustadz if you have any questions or doubts about ain.

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