



## From Jurisprudential Reasoning to Universal Reasoning: M. A. S. Abdel Haleem's Euphemistic Interpretation of QS. al-Baqarah [2]:222-223

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### Abstract

*This study seeks to analyse the euphemistic style present in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222-223 from the perspective of Abdel Haleem, with particular emphasis on marital relations, menstruation, and sexuality in the Qur'an. The significance of this research lies in the fact that interpretations of these verses have predominantly been shaped by fiqh-oriented approaches, which focus primarily on legal aspects and consequently neglect the linguistic features and humanitarian values embedded within the text. Employing a qualitative methodology grounded in library research, this study utilises Abdel Haleem's "Exploring the Qur'an" as its primary source. The data are analysed through the application of Sunarso's theory of euphemism, encompassing the domains of cause, contextual analysis, and linguistic form. Additionally, the research is supported by a range of classical and contemporary tafsir works as secondary sources. The findings demonstrate that Haleem's interpretation of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222-223 incorporates euphemistic expressions in two principal aspects: the bodily aspect, exemplified by the terms "azā" and ḥarṭhun, and the action aspect, represented by expressions such as i'tazilū, i'tū, lā taqrabūhunna, wa qaddimū li anfusikum, annā shi'tum, wa ittaqū Allāha wa i'lamū annakum mulāqūh, wa bashshiri al-mu'minīn, and inna Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn wa yuḥibbu al-mutaṭahhirīn. These two dimensions convey messages of empathy and protection towards women. Furthermore, Haleem's approach exemplifies a universal mode of Qur'anic interpretation, rendering the resulting exegesis pertinent to contemporary contexts and receptive to multiple perspectives. This study thus contributes to the enrichment of contemporary Qur'anic exegesis by adopting a linguistic approach that is more humanistic, contextualised, and relevant to modern issues concerning gender relations.*

### Keywords:

Euphemism;  
Abdel Haleem;  
Qur'an Sūrah  
Al-Baqarah [2]:  
222-223;  
Contemporary  
Tafsir; Gender  
Relations

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji gaya eufemistik dalam Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222-223 melalui perspektif Abdel Haleem, khususnya dalam pembahasan relasi suami istri, menstruasi, dan seksualitas dalam Al-Qur'an. Kajian ini penting dilakukan karena penafsiran terhadap ayat tersebut selama ini cenderung didominasi pendekatan fikih yang berfokus pada aspek hukum, sehingga dimensi linguistik dan nilai kemanusiaan dalam ayat sering terabaikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka dengan sumber primer berupa buku "Exploring the Qur'an" karya Abdel Haleem. Data dianalisis menggunakan teori eufemistik Sunarso yang mencakup aspek bidang, sebab, analisis kontekstual, dan bentuk kebahasaan. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga didukung oleh berbagai kitab tafsir klasik dan kontemporer sebagai sumber sekunder. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penafsiran Haleem terhadap Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222-223 mengandung bentuk eufemisme yang terdiri dari dua aspek: aspek tubuh meliputi kata *azā* dan *ḥarṣun*, sedangkan aspek perbuatan seperti kata *i'tazilū*, *i'tū*, *lā taqrabūhunna*, *wa qoddimū li anfusikum*, *annā syi'tum*, *wa ittaqū Allāha wa i'lamū annakum mulāqūh wa basyiri al-mukminīn* dan *inna Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn wa yuḥibbu al-mutaṭahhirīn*. Dari kedua aspek ini menunjukkan bahwa ayat tersebut mengandung pesan empati dan proteksi terhadap perempuan. Selain itu, pendekatan yang digunakan Haleem menggambarkan cara memahami Al-Qur'an secara universal, sehingga pemahaman yang dihasilkan relevan dengan zaman serta terbuka dalam berbagai sudut pandang. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memperkaya studi tafsir kontemporer melalui pendekatan linguistik yang lebih humanis, kontekstual, dan relevan dengan isu relasi gender modern.

### Kata kunci:

Eufemisme;  
Abdel  
Haleem; Q.S.  
Al-Baqarah  
[2]:222-223;  
Tafsir  
Kontemporer;  
Relasi  
Gender

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## Introduction

To date, the understanding of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 has predominantly concentrated on aspects of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), resulting in the linguistic features and the meanings inherent in its language structure being largely neglected. This tendency is evident in the exegeses of scholars such as Sayyid Qutb,<sup>1</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahallī,<sup>2</sup> and Ibn Kathīr,<sup>3</sup> who primarily highlight the legal implications, especially concerning the regulations governing marital relations during menstruation. Their interpretations focus on delineating what is permissible and what is prohibited. Consequently, these verses are frequently interpreted solely in terms of lawful and unlawful matters, without due consideration of the broader significance conveyed through the Qur'an's linguistic style. In other words, the disproportionate emphasis on legal aspects has led to interpretations of these verses remaining repetitive from past to present, while other dimensions of the verses have received considerably less scholarly attention.

From a health perspective, M. Quraish Shihab interprets these verses as emphasising cleanliness and sperm quality,<sup>4</sup> whereas Hamka adopts a patriarchal viewpoint, portraying women primarily as reproductive objects and linking them to the criteria for selecting a suitable wife to produce righteous offspring.<sup>5</sup> Such interpretations frequently serve to justify male dominance within the household. Consequently, there is a pressing need for an interpretative approach that considers both the linguistic features and humanitarian values of the Qur'an, thereby fostering a more comprehensive understanding that extends beyond purely legalistic considerations.

This phenomenon is exemplified by the concept of euphemism, which denotes the use of milder words or expressions to substitute terms deemed taboo or harsh, without altering their underlying meaning. Euphemism frequently emerges in discussions of sensitive topics such as sexual relations, death, or certain social issues.<sup>6</sup> A somewhat distinct perspective on this linguistic strategy is provided by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, a Western exegete and Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. In his work "Exploring the Qur'an",<sup>7</sup> he offers a novel interpretation of the Qur'an's use of euphemistic language. Abdel Haleem challenges the notion that the Qur'an employs vulgar language or marginalises women, arguing instead that it addresses sensitive aspects of human life with language characterised by politeness and refinement. This is exemplified in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222–223, which illustrates ethical conduct in marital relations through subtle expressions.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, this

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *Fī Zīlāl Al-Qur'ān: Di bawah Naungan Al-Qur'an*. terj, Asad Yasin dkk. (Depok: Gema Insani, 2000): 287.

<sup>2</sup> Jalaluddin al-Mahalli dan jalaluddin al-Suyuti, *Tafsir Jalalain*. (Sinar Baru Algesindo, 2010): 34.

<sup>3</sup> Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar ibn Kathīr, "Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-'Azīm, Juz I. Terj, Dr. Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abdurrahman bin Ishaq Al-Sheikh". (Jakarta: Pustaka Imam Asy-Syafi'i, 2003): 430.

<sup>4</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002): 488.

<sup>5</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1983): 427.

<sup>6</sup> Sunarso Sunarso, "Eufemisme: Referensi dan Latar Belakangnya," *Humaniora* 0, no. 9 (June 21, 2013): 70–76, <https://doi.org/10.22146/JH.2056>.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Abdel-Haleem, "Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact," (London, New York, 2017), 111–18, <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350986329>.

<sup>8</sup> M.A.S Abdeel Haleem, "Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact" (London, New York, 2017):

linguistic style demonstrates how the Qur'an conveys commands and prohibitions not in a rigid or harsh manner, but through a gentle and nuanced approach.

Although Haleem provides a novel perspective on euphemism, research on this subject remains relatively scarce, with the majority of studies concentrating primarily on translation. For instance, Luqman Ibnul Hakim addresses the challenges involved in translating euphemisms into Malay,<sup>9</sup> while Rahaf Al-Ahmad and colleagues highlight that the meaning of euphemisms is highly context-dependent, thereby complicating direct translation.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, Ahmad Hakami compares the translations of Abdullah Ali and Arthur Arberry, revealing that Ali tends to include supplementary explanations to clarify intended meanings, whereas Arberry's translations are generally more concise and accessible.<sup>11</sup> A review of the existing literature indicates that no study has yet explored euphemism as a hermeneutical tool for interpreting the Qur'an. Moreover, Haleem's conceptualisation of euphemism, particularly in the chapter entitled "Euphemistic Style: Sexual Etiquette", has not been examined in depth. This study seeks to address this gap by analysing the linguistic features of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 from Haleem's perspective, thereby advancing an understanding of the verses that transcends mere textual interpretation to encompass the intentions underlying the linguistic style of the text.

This study adopts a qualitative methodology, drawing primarily on library research. The principal source of data is M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's "Exploring the Qur'an", which serves as the main reference for analysing his perspectives on the linguistic style of the Qur'an, with particular emphasis on the discussion of euphemistic style in relation to sexual etiquette in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223. Secondary data were gathered from a range of exegetical texts, including "Tafsir Jalalain",<sup>12</sup> "Fi Zilal al-Qur'an",<sup>13</sup> "Tafsir al-Munir",<sup>14</sup> "Tafsir al-Azhar",<sup>15</sup> and "al-Mishbah",<sup>16</sup> as well as from books, journals, and scholarly articles addressing euphemism and Haleem's interpretations. Furthermore, this research utilises Sunarso's theory of euphemism, which comprises four principal components: domain, cause, contextual analysis, and linguistic form.<sup>17</sup>

The methodology of this study comprises several stages. Firstly, it involves identifying Haleem's discussion of the concept of euphemism in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223. Secondly, the research analyses Haleem's contribution to the interpretation of these verses,

112-114, <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350986329>.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Luqman et al., "Klasifikasi Semantik dan Jenis Permasalahan dalam Penterjemahan Eufemisme Al-Quran Ke Bahasa Melayu Semantic Classification and Type of Problems in the Translation of Quranic Euphemisms into Malay Language," *Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2023): 1–13, <https://jsass.uis.edu.my/index.php/jsass/article/view/231>.

<sup>10</sup> Rahaf Al-Ahmad and Adel Awadh Alharthi, "The Interpretation of Euphemism in the Holy Quran," *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies* 5, no. 3 (September 30, 2023): 100–116, <https://doi.org/10.36892/IJLLS.V5I3.1290>.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmed Hakami, "Strategies and Problems of Translating Euphemism in Two Selected English Translations of the Holy Quran: An Analytical Study," *Saudi Journal of Language Studies* 4, no. 1 (March 15, 2024): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJLS-09-2023-0038>.

<sup>12</sup> Jalal al-Din Al-Mahalli, Jalal al-Din dan Al-Suyuti, *Tafsir Al-Jalalain*, 34.

<sup>13</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an: Di bawah Naungan Al-Qur'an*. terj. Asad Yasin dkk, 287.

<sup>14</sup> Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Al-'Aqidah Wa Al-Syari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*. terj. Abdul Hayyie Al-Kattani, dkk (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2013): 516.

<sup>15</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, 427.

<sup>16</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 488.

<sup>17</sup> Sunarso, "Eufemisme: Referensi dan Latar Belakangnya", 70-76.

subsequently comparing his exegesis with other tafsirs to underscore the significance of his insights. Thirdly, the study examines Sunarso's theory of euphemism as an analytical framework. Regarding the literature review, this research utilises pertinent data sources, including various books—among them Haleem's publications—scholarly journals, and exegetical texts relevant to the research theme and published in recent years. The collected data are then analysed employing the qualitative analysis model developed by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, which involves selecting data from "Exploring the Qur'an", presenting the data through analytical interpretation of the findings, and ultimately drawing conclusions. These procedures aim to elucidate the intended message of the Qur'an that has been subject to misinterpretation, particularly with respect to the linguistic style evident in these two verses.

## Results and Discussion

### *An Examination of Haleem and an Exploration of the Qur'an*

Muhammad A.S. Abdel Haleem, born in 1930 in the village of Al-Idsiyya, Abu Hammad, Egypt, was a distinguished Muslim scholar.<sup>18</sup> Raised in a family that placed great emphasis on the study of the Qur'an, he had memorised the entire text by the age of eleven. He received his primary and secondary education at Al-Azhar institutions before undertaking undergraduate studies at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, specialising in Qur'anic exegesis and the Arabic language.<sup>19</sup> Following the completion of his bachelor's degree, Haleem pursued doctoral studies at the University of Cambridge, England, where he subsequently taught Arabic for five years beginning in 1966. In 1971, he commenced teaching at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, where he was later appointed professor. His academic career progressed further when he served as a senior lecturer at SOAS from 1991 to 1995 and also held a teaching position at King Fahd University in Saudi Arabia. Haleem founded the Centre for Islamic Studies and was the founding editor of the Journal of Qur'anic Studies in 1997.<sup>20</sup> In recognition of his significant contributions to Islamic studies and interfaith dialogue, he was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by the British government. Moreover, Haleem has been an active participant in numerous international conferences; notably, in April 2024, he delivered a keynote address at the Conference of the Arabic Language Academy, focusing on the themes "Problems of Translation and Greening the Hajj."<sup>21</sup>

Haleem's intellectual contributions are exemplified by his prolific authorship of numerous books and scholarly articles.<sup>22</sup> Among these, "Exploring the Qur'an" stands out

<sup>18</sup>AS Ibrahim, *A Concise Guide to the Quran (Introducing Islam): Answering Thirty Critical Questions*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2020), 81 .

<sup>19</sup> NN Afifah, "The 'Sword Verse' in Contemporary Tafsir Discourse: Analysis of Muhammad Abdel Haleem's Interpretation in Understanding the Qur'an and Exploring the Qur'an" (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2024): 36-37, <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/70036/2/210204110033.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> MS Shah - Al Qalam, "A Critical Study of Abdel Haleem's New Translation of the Holy Qur'an," *Islamhashtag.ComMS ShahAl Qalam, 2010•islamhashtag.Com*, no. 1 (2010), <https://islamhashtag.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/1.-Dr.-Muhammd-Sultan-Shah.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> NN Afifah, "The 'Sword Verse' in Contemporary Tafsir Discourse: Analysis of Muhammad Abdel Haleem's Interpretation in Understanding the Qur'an and Exploring the Qur'an" (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2024): 38-39, <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/70036/2/210204110033.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A New Translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): 25. M Abdel-Haleem, "The Qur'an: English Translation with Parallel Arabic Text," (Oxford University

as one of his most significant works. This 352-page volume, published by I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd on 21 April 2017, was composed with the intention of rectifying various misconceptions prevalent in the West, including those held by Orientalists such as Richard Bell, Theodor Nöldeke, and John Burton. These scholars tended to interpret the Qur'an textually, often neglecting its linguistic and social contexts. Haleem argues that many inaccurate interpretations stem from a failure to appreciate the Arabic linguistic style of the Qur'an, from extracting brief statements from their textual contexts, and from disregarding the social and cultural circumstances surrounding the revelation of the verses. To address these challenges, "Exploring the Qur'an" is structured into three sections: the first, comprising chapters 1 to 4, addresses global issues in Qur'anic interpretation; the second, chapters 5 to 10, explores linguistic styles, including frequently misunderstood aspects of euphemism; and the third, chapters 11 to 13, critically examines English translations of the Qur'an that often distort its original meaning.

Moreover, in his discussions, Haleem employs classical sources such as *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī,<sup>23</sup> *al-Burhān* by al-Zarkashī,<sup>24</sup> and *al-Itqān* by al-Suyūṭī.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Haleem cites several exegetical works, including *Tafsīr Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* by Imam al-Qurṭubī, which he references when analysing the "verse of the sword" in Q.S. al-Tawbah [9]:5.<sup>26</sup> Further exegetical references are evident in his utilisation of *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* by Ismā'īl Ibn Kathīr,<sup>27</sup> *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,<sup>28</sup> *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* by Sayyid Qutb,<sup>29</sup> and *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* by Abū al-Qāsim al-Zamakhsharī. The incorporation of these diverse sources demonstrates that, although "Exploring the Qur'an" is a contemporary work, Haleem does not neglect earlier exegetical scholarship; indeed, many of his references are drawn from classical tafsīr literature. Consequently, the interpretation he offers is both contextually informed and academically rigorous.

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Press, 2010), <https://soas-repository.worktribe.com/output/408850>. Haleem MA, "English-Arabic Business Dictionary," (New York: Springer Publishing, 1984) Cir.Nii.Ac.Jp, 1984, <https://cir.nii.ac.jp/crid/1130000796726470016>. Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style*. (London: I B Tauris, 1999): 43-44. 'Amr Ibn-Baḥr al-Haleem, A, Ḡāḥiz, *Chance or Creation?: God's Design in the Universe*, 1995, <https://ixtheo.de/Record/1619646110>. M Abdel-Haleem, "The Creed of Islam," 1978, <https://soas-repository.worktribe.com/output/393576>. M Abdel-Haleem and GR Smith, *The Superiority of Dogs over Many of Those Who Wear Clothes (Edition, Translation and Introduction)*, 1978, <https://soas-repository.worktribe.com/output/411166>. MASA Haleem - Journal of Qur'anic Studies and undefined 2018, "The Role of Context in Interpreting and Translating the Qur'an," *Eupublishing.ComMASA HaleemJournal of Qur'anic Studies, 2018•eupublishing.Com* 20, no. 1 (February 1, 2018): 47-66, <https://doi.org/10.3366/JQS.2018.0320>. Muhammad Abdel Haleem, "The Prophet Muhammad as a Teacher: Implications for Hadith Literature," *Islamic Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (January 1, 2002): 121-37, <https://soas-repository.worktribe.com/output/446423>. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'anic Orthography: The Written Representation of the Recited Text of the Qur'an*, ed. DR. A. A. Mughram, vol. 38 (London: The Islamic Quarterly, 1994): 171-192.

<sup>23</sup> Shaikh Abdul Qahir Jurjani, *Dalail Al-I'jaaz Fi Al-Quran* (Masyhad: Astan Quds Razavi, 1368), <https://archive.org/details/dalail-ul-ejaaz-fil-quran-shaikh-abdul-qahir-jurjani/mode/2up>.

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad bin 'Abdullah Al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burhan Fi Ulum Al-Qur'an* (Kairo: Maktabah Dar al-Turats, 1994), 40-46, <https://archive.org/details/Maqashidulfalasifah/boq0/>.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Suyuthi, *Al-Itqan Fi 'Ulum Al-Quran* (Beirut, 1987): 370-375.

<sup>26</sup> Abū 'Abdillāh al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an*, vol. IV (Beirut: al-Risala, 1999): 72.

<sup>27</sup> Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Adzim*, (Beirut: Daar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah, 1992): 333.

<sup>28</sup> Fakhr al-Din Muammad ibn Umar, *Al-Tafsir Al-Kabir. Juz 6* (Misr al-Matba'ah al-Bahiyah al-Misriyah, 1938), : 71-72. <https://archive.org/details/altafsirkabir07rzfauoft>.

<sup>29</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān*, (Dar al-Syuyukh: Cairo1985), 1601.

### **The Euphemistic Style in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222–223 as Interpreted by Abdel Haleem**

Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:222–223 is among the verses analysed by Haleem to illustrate how the Qur'an addresses sensitive topics through refined and courteous language. According to Haleem, these verses extend beyond the mere prohibition of sexual intercourse during menstruation; they also underscore mutual respect, responsibility, and empathy towards women. Furthermore, through the metaphor of farmland, the Qur'an depicts marital relations as a collaborative endeavour in building life together, rather than as an assertion of male dominance over women. Haleem contends that misunderstandings of this metaphor frequently arise because readers detach the verses from their linguistic and socio-cultural contexts, isolate brief statements from their broader textual framework, and fail to appreciate the Qur'an's rhetorical style in engaging with various issues. This was particularly evident during Haleem's teaching experience at SOAS, where he encountered undergraduate students who perceived these verses as marginalising women, while some Christian polemicists regarded the language of the verses as excessively vulgar.<sup>30</sup> Such interpretations, in fact, serve to reinforce a patriarchal culture that positions women as subordinate.<sup>31</sup> In reality, both perspectives stem from a lack of comprehension of Qur'anic Arabic, which often employs metaphorical expressions to address sensitive subjects.

To elaborate further, Haleem categorises these verses into two types of euphemistic indicators: linguistic and socio-cultural. The linguistic indicator encompasses the use of the word *azā*, which signifies "something painful."

Before instructing them, the Qur'an gives justification for the instructions; it gently directs men that menstruation is a painful condition (*adhā*), which has also been interpreted as 'a messy condition' or 'a pollution'.

Haleem interprets this term not solely as biological pain but as denoting an uncomfortable state encompassing both physical and psychological dimensions. From this viewpoint, menstruation renders women vulnerable, necessitating considerate and empathetic treatment.<sup>32</sup> This interpretation corresponds with medical evidence indicating that hormonal fluctuations during menstruation contribute to mood swings, fatigue, and impaired concentration. Consequently, the prohibition of sexual intercourse in this verse should be understood not merely as a religious injunction but also as a measure to safeguard women's physical health and to mitigate psychological distress during menstruation.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, Haleem interprets the terms "*i'tazilū*" and "*lā taqrabūhunna*" as euphemistic expressions, as they denote the abstention from sexual intercourse during menstruation.

<sup>30</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 111.

<sup>31</sup> Ade Rosi and Siti Zakiah, "Interpretasi Kontekstual Makna Qawwā m dalam Al-Qur'an Qs. An-Nisa':34 (Aplikasi Hermeneutika Abdullah Saeed)," *Al-Qudwah* 1 (2023): 129–46, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/alqudwah.v1i2.22972>.

<sup>32</sup> Aldi Ramdan et al., "The Menstrual Period in Qur'an: Interpretation of Al - Baqarah Verse 222" 2, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54801/juquts.v2i1.175>.

<sup>33</sup> Aldi Ramdan et al. "The Menstrual Period in Qur'an: Interpretation of Al - Baqarah Verse 222". 10.

Then comes the instruction for husbands therefore to keep away (i'tazilū), a euphemism for avoiding intercourse at that time. 'Do not approach them (lā taqrabū hunna)' is lexically listed<sup>6</sup> as a euphemism in Arabic for 'having sexual intercourse with women'.<sup>34</sup>

Textually, both expressions may appear similar in meaning; however, contextually, they convey more specific nuances. The term i'tazilū, meaning "keep away," does not imply isolating or alienating women. This contrasts with the practices of certain Jewish communities, who regarded menstruating women as impure and unclean, thereby distancing themselves and even socially isolating them.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, this verse was revealed to rectify such interpretations, as they were inconsistent with Islamic teachings. Similarly, the phrase *lā taqrabūhunna*, meaning "do not approach them," is explained by Haleem as a linguistic indicator of euphemistic style. Within the classical Arabic context, this expression functions as an idiom prohibiting sexual intercourse. In other words, the phrase reiterates that spouses should refrain from sexual relations during menstruation. However, this restriction is temporary: once menstruation has ceased and the wife has purified herself, sexual relations become permissible once more.

Conversely, both expressions also encompass medical rationale for abstaining from intercourse during menstruation. Medical research indicates that, as the uterine lining sheds blood, the female reproductive organs become more sensitive and susceptible to contamination by pathogens and bacteria. Engaging in intercourse during this period may result in infections or inflammations that pose significant health risks, including urinary tract infections, kidney infections, cervical cancer, and others.<sup>36</sup> These health risks affect not only women but also their partners. Consequently, the prohibitions articulated in these verses are intended to safeguard the health of both individuals. Following the explanation of the prohibition, the Qur'an proceeds with the euphemistic expression *fa'tūhunna*, which translates as "approach them."

'When they are cleansed, you may approach them as God has directed you' (Q. 2:222): this is another gentle hint to announce the following instruction that intercourse should be done in the way God has allowed. God has ordained for them to fulfil their sexual urge, but in a lawful way.

In this context, Haleem interprets the term as a subtle indication that marital relations may recommence following the cessation of menstruation. According to Imam al-Qurthubi, the word "approach" conveys a gentle invitation, framing sexual intercourse not merely as the fulfilment of desire but also as an act of care intended to restore harmony between husband and wife after the menstruation period has concluded.<sup>37</sup> This interpretation is supported by medical perspectives, which suggest that the resumption of sexual relations once the wife is physically purified provides both physical comfort and psychological tranquillity.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, the term "approach" functions almost as a form

<sup>34</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 112.

<sup>35</sup> Ismā'il ibn 'Umar ibn Kathīr, "Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-'Azīm, Juz I. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr. 1999. 430"

<sup>36</sup> Ramdan et al., "The Menstrual Period in Qur'an: Interpretation of Al-Baqarah Verse 222."

<sup>37</sup> Abū 'Abdillāh al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jamī' Li Ahkām Al-Qur'an*. 91.

<sup>38</sup> Mayo Clinic, "Menstrual Cycle: What's Normal, What's Not," 2024,

of glad tidings, signalling the end of menstruation and the restoration of marital harmony after a temporary pause during the waiting period. Furthermore, the verse concludes by emphasising these values with the statement “*inna Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn wa yuḥibbu al-mutatahḥirīn*”, which translates as, “Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and those who purify themselves.”

Before it specifies this, it reminds the husband that ‘God loves those who come back to Him [after erring, that is] and who keep themselves clean’ (Q. 2:222). All this is introduced in the wake of the instruction that they should abstain from intercourse during menstruation.<sup>39</sup>

The structure of the verse extends beyond legal regulations to convey a message concerning the maintenance of cleanliness and respect for women’s conditions.<sup>40</sup> This underscores Islam’s strong emphasis on balance in life. The Qur’an utilises gentle language to instruct couples on preserving both physical and mental well-being. Fundamentally, these verses advocate that the most effective expression of love for one’s partner is founded upon mutual respect and shared cleanliness. Unlike the linguistic indicators, Haleem interprets the following verse, *nisā’ukum ḥarthun lakum* (“your wives are a tilth for you”), through socio-cultural indicators.

‘Your women are [like] fields to you’ (Q. 2.223). The use of the image of fields in fact further reinforces the instruction to abstain during menstruation since it is not a time for sowing or casting seeds to grow.<sup>41</sup>

According to Haleem, the metaphor of farmland serves two primary functions. Firstly, it reinforces the prohibition of sexual intercourse during menstruation, as menstruation is regarded as a period of cleansing and thus deemed an inappropriate time for the sowing of seeds. Secondly, it repudiates the practice of sodomy, which was prevalent in society at the time. Consequently, the farmland metaphor employed in the Qur’an conveys two interrelated messages concerning cleanliness and propriety. Haleem further elucidates that this verse was revealed in the context of cultural differences between the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina, who intermarried and encountered divergent sexual customs. Medianan women, who were generally more modest, experienced discomfort with the more permissive sexual practices of Meccan men. This verse was therefore revealed as a response to these differences, clarifying that freedom within marital relations is circumscribed by empathy and mutual respect between spouses.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, Haleem interprets the phrase *wa qaddimū li anfusikum* (“send forth [good deeds] for yourselves”) as a euphemistic expression that subtly encourages husbands to consider their wives’ psychological and physical readiness prior to intercourse.

‘Send forward [good deeds] for yourselves’ in the Qur’an means that by obeying God’s commands so far mentioned they would be storing up good rewards for

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/womens-health/in-depth/menstrual-cycle/art-20047186>.

<sup>39</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur’an: Context and Impact*. 112.

<sup>40</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur’an: Context and Impact*. 112.

<sup>41</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur’an: Context and Impact*. 112.

<sup>42</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur’an: Context and Impact*. 112.

their next life.<sup>43</sup>

In other words, this phrase can be interpreted as an encouragement towards foreplay or preparation, serving as a demonstration of attentiveness to one's partner. This interpretation is consistent with the Prophet Muhammad's instruction that prohibits husbands from approaching their wives harshly. Consequently, husbands are encouraged to offer gentle signals and tenderness in advance. Through this expression, the Qur'an illustrates that the use of euphemism in these verses extends beyond sexual relations to underscore the significance of care and mutual respect between husband and wife.<sup>44</sup>

Another socio-cultural euphemistic element is evident in the phrase *annā shi'tum*, which is translated as "however you wish."

This is the context in which the Qur'an tells husbands that approaching one's wife is like going to one's field to sow it, from whichever direction or way they may desire (*anna shi'tum*). Be mindful of God. Know that you are going to meet Him. [Prophet] give good news to those who believe.<sup>45</sup>

Haleem interprets this phrase as referring to freedom within marital relations, contingent upon the seed being sown in a place conducive to growth, rather than elsewhere. From this interpretation, it can be inferred that sexual intercourse is prohibited during menstruation, as this period is deemed unsuitable for sowing seeds. Similarly, sodomy is prohibited as it transgresses the boundaries established by the Qur'an. Furthermore, the socio-cultural dimension is also evident in the phrase *wa ittaqū Allāha wa i'lamū annakum mulāqūh wa bashshir al-mu'minīn*. Haleem understands this as a subtle reminder that husbands must treat their wives well, including in sexual relations, since even private matters will ultimately be accounted for in the Hereafter.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, the Qur'an employs this construction as a softened form of command, ensuring that the message remains clear despite the absence of explicit detail.

Furthermore, Haleem elucidates that these verses were revealed in response to questions posed by the Companions to the Prophet Muhammad concerning sexual relations during menstruation. These inquiries were part of a broader series of questions in Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 215, which addressed topics such as charity, intoxicants, gambling, and menstruation. Notably, the primary question was not about menstruation per se, but rather the permissibility of engaging in sexual relations with wives during menstruation. In this context, the Qur'an employs euphemistic language to convey to husbands the importance of empathy towards women's biological and psychological conditions, rather than marginalising them.<sup>47</sup>

Drawing upon the aforementioned discussion of euphemistic lexical choices, Haleem's interpretation reveals that Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 is intrinsically linked to humanitarian principles, particularly justice and respect for all individuals, including women. Haleem contends that when the Qur'an addresses women, such verses ought to be

<sup>43</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 113.

<sup>44</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 113.

<sup>45</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 113.

<sup>46</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 113.

<sup>47</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact*. 111.

comprehended as manifestations of empathy and protection, rather than as prescriptive measures designed to restrict or demean them. This perspective is evident in his critique of interpretations that construe *azā* in Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 as impurity or filth, given that such readings risk marginalising menstruating women. Instead, Haleem advocates for an empathetic understanding of *azā*, recognising it as a reference to the painful and uncomfortable condition experienced by women during menstruation, which necessitates care and compassion.<sup>48</sup> This empathetic stance underpins the interpretation and accommodation of other key terms such as *fa‘tazilū, lā taqrabūhunna, i‘tū,* and *inna Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn wa yuḥibbu al-mutaṭahhirīn*. Through these expressions, the Qur’an conveys concern for menstruating women. Haleem’s approach thus underscores that these verses are not intended to demean women but rather to acknowledge and respect their biological experiences.

Furthermore, the humanitarian dimension in Haleem’s interpretation is exemplified by the term *ḥarthun* (“tilth” or “field”). He challenges the notion that the field metaphor reduces women solely to reproductive entities. Instead, he contends that this metaphor underscores responsibility and care towards women, analogous to a farmer who tends his field diligently, avoiding reckless exploitation and ensuring the preservation of its fertility. From this vantage point, Haleem interprets the field not merely as a reproductive object but as a symbol of protection and nurture. This perspective also encompasses other significant concepts, such as *annā shi’tum, wa qaddimū li anfusikum,* and *wa ittaqū Allāha wa‘lamū annakum mulāqūh,* which collectively affirm that attentive care cultivates comfort and preparedness within marital relations. Consequently, Haleem’s interpretation illustrates that the Qur’an addresses not only legal injunctions but also a marital relationship founded upon mutual protection and respect.

The various interpretations of Haleem discussed above—including the central concept of euphemism, his woman-friendly approach, and his emphasis on humanitarian values—reveal that his exegesis is characterised by two distinctive features: universality and integration. Universality denotes elements that possess broad applicability without becoming confined to debates centred solely on one aspect, such as *fiqh*. This is exemplified in Haleem’s understanding of Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]:222–223, which he interprets not merely as a legal ruling concerning the permissibility of sexual intercourse during menstruation, but also as guidance for husbands to demonstrate greater sensitivity towards their wives’ conditions through empathy, attentiveness, and consideration of both physical and psychological readiness in marital relations. Meanwhile, according to Kuntowijoyo, integration refers to knowledge that bridges divine revelation and human discoveries, thereby forming a unified body of knowledge that neither negates God nor humanity.<sup>49</sup> In this context, Haleem’s interpretation of Q.S. al-Baqarah through the concept of euphemism—which itself originated in Western scholarship—exemplifies this integrative approach. Unlike many other exegetes who predominantly employ Eastern disciplines such as *balāghah, kināyah,* and *tashbīh* in Qur’anic interpretation, Haleem introduces the notion that the Qur’an may also be examined through various interdisciplinary methodologies.

<sup>48</sup> Haleem, *Exploring the Qur’an: Context and Impact*. 112 .

<sup>49</sup> Tri Agung Mulyono, “Integrasi Islam dan Sains Menurut Kuntowijoyo,” *AL-MUSTAQBAL: Jurnal Agama Islam* 2 (2025): 121–30, <https://doi.org/10.59841/al-mustaqbal.v2i1.61>.

Haleem's contribution becomes particularly evident when compared with other exegetes. For example, in relation to the term *azā*, scholars such as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahallī,<sup>50</sup> al-Suyūṭī,<sup>51</sup> Ibn Kathīr, al-Jazā'ir,<sup>52</sup> Sayyid Qutb,<sup>53</sup> and the commentary issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs<sup>54</sup> predominantly focus on its biological and legal connotations, interpreting *azā* as impurity, filth, or illness. Similarly, they understand *ḥarthun* as either a place for sowing seeds or as a reproductive organ. This interpretative approach is also reflected in their understanding of *annā shi'tum*, which they regard as permission to engage in marital relations from any direction, provided it occurs within the appropriate context. These interpretations chiefly highlight reproductive and hygienic aspects. In contrast, Haleem offers an interpretation grounded in empathy and responsibility, thereby articulating meanings that extend beyond the regulation of marital relations to encompass the significance of humanitarian values.

Conversely, Haleem's interpretation diverges markedly from that of other exegetes regarding the phrase "*wa qaddimū li anfusikum*". Several scholars, including Sayyid Qutb,<sup>55</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahallī,<sup>56</sup> Ibn Kathīr,<sup>57</sup> and M. Quraish Shihab,<sup>58</sup> understand this phrase as an exhortation to engage in righteous deeds—such as reciting the basmalah in the context of marital relations—for the attainment of both worldly and spiritual benefits, rather than merely fulfilling desire. In contrast, Hamka<sup>59</sup> and al-Jazāir<sup>60</sup> interpret the phrase as an encouragement to cultivate a harmonious family, exemplified by seeking a virtuous wife capable of bearing righteous offspring. Haleem, however, interprets the phrase metaphorically, viewing it as a reference to the emotional and physical preparation of spouses prior to intercourse. Accordingly, the Qur'an addresses not only legal issues and progeny but also the ethics of marital life. Through this lens, Haleem's perspective assumes a more humanistic character, emphasising that a healthy marital relationship is founded upon mutual respect, protection, and shared responsibility.

### **The Concept of Euphemism and Sexuality in the Interpretation of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 from Haleem's Perspective**

Haleem's interpretation of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 implicitly illustrates the application of euphemistic theory. This is evident in his explanation that the Qur'an utilises refined expressions when addressing sensitive topics such as menstruation and marital

<sup>50</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn Al-Mahallī, Jalāl al-Dīn Al-Suyuti, Tafsīr Al-Jalālain (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algesindo, 2010): 34.

<sup>51</sup> Wahbah al-Zuhaili, Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqida Wa Al-Syariah Wa Al-Manhaj. terj. Abdullah Hayyie Al-Kattani, dkk. (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2013): 516.

<sup>52</sup> Abū Bakr Jābir Al-Jazā'irī, Aysar Al-Tafāsīr Li Kalām Al-'Aliyy Al-Kabīr (Madinah: Maktabah al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam, 2003): 365.

<sup>53</sup> Qutb, Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān: Di bawah Naungan Al-Qur'an. terj. Asad Yasin dkk, 287.

<sup>54</sup> Departemen Agama RI, Al-Qur'an dan Tafsīrnya (Jakarta: Widya Cahaya, 2011), [https://dn790002.ca.archive.org/0/items/kumpulan-kitab-buku-tafsir/Kemenag\\_Al-Quran\\_dan\\_Tafsirnya\\_02.pdf](https://dn790002.ca.archive.org/0/items/kumpulan-kitab-buku-tafsir/Kemenag_Al-Quran_dan_Tafsirnya_02.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> Sayyid Qutb, Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān: Di bawah Naungan Al-Qur'an. terj. Asad Yasin dkk, 288.

<sup>56</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn Al-Mahallī, Jalāl al-Dīn Al-Suyuti, Tafsīr Al-Jalālain, 34.

<sup>57</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, Tafsīr Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an. Volume I, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002): 488.

<sup>58</sup> Ismā'il ibn 'Umar ibn Kathīr, "Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-'Azīm, Juz I. (Beirut: Dār Al-Fikr, 1999): 430.

<sup>59</sup> Hamka, Tafsīr Al-Azhar, 428.

<sup>60</sup> Al-Jazā'irī, Aysar Al-Tafāsīr Li Kalām Al-'Aliyy Al-Kabīr, 490.

relations. His analysis aligns with the components identified in Sunarso's theory of euphemism, which include domain, cause, contextual analysis, and euphemistic form.<sup>61</sup> Regarding domain, Haleem categorises these into two groups: the body and actions. The bodily domain is represented by the terms *azā* and *ḥarthun*, whereas the domain of actions is reflected in prohibitive and prescriptive expressions such as *i'tazilū*, *lā taqrabūhunna*, *i'tū*, *annā shi'tum*, *wa qaddimū li anfusikum*, *inna Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn wa yuḥibbu al-mutatahḥirīn*, and *wa ittaqū Allāha wa i'lamū annakum mulāqūh wa bashshir al-mu'minīn*. Through these lexical choices, the Qur'an conveys its message without resorting to coarse language, whilst simultaneously demonstrating sensitivity and acknowledging the cultural context of Arab society at that time.

The subsequent component in Sunarso's theoretical framework pertains to the origin of euphemism.<sup>62</sup> This aspect is exemplified in the manner in which the Qur'an utilises gentle expressions to uphold propriety when addressing sensitive topics. Haleem posits that the employment of such expressions reflects empathy towards menstruating women. He elucidates that the term *azā* ("something painful" or "messy") should not be interpreted negatively but rather as an expression of concern for women's biological condition. In pre-Islamic Arab society, menstruation was frequently perceived as impure, resulting in the seclusion of women. Consequently, the Qur'an adopts refined language to challenge this perception and to affirm that menstruating women ought to be treated with dignity and respect. Therefore, the function of euphemism in this context is to transform societal attitudes by substituting harsh perspectives with empathy and by converting coarse language into polite expression. This approach corresponds with Sunarso's fundamental conception of euphemism, which emphasises the maintenance of ethical communication and the avoidance of expressions that may cause offence.

Furthermore, the element of euphemistic analysis is evident in several euphemistic expressions within these verses. This interpretation aligns with Sunarso's theoretical framework, which categorises analysis into two types: context-bound and context-free.<sup>63</sup> In this instance, the euphemistic forms present in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 pertain to context-bound analysis, as their meanings can only be comprehended in relation to the condition of women during menstruation. For example, the phrases *i'tazilū* ("keep away from them") and *lā taqrabūhunna* ("do not approach them") do not imply physical or emotional separation; rather, "keeping away" in this context refers to abstaining from sexual intercourse during menstruation.<sup>64</sup> This interpretation arises when these expressions are considered in connection with issues of women's cleanliness and health during menstruation. In this regard, Haleem emphasises that the Qur'an does not mandate the isolation of women; instead, it regulates the ethical timing within marital relations. This context illustrates that euphemism not only serves to avoid harsh expressions but also conveys messages that correspond to the socio-cultural realities of Arab society at the time.

From a linguistic perspective, Haleem identifies several euphemistic forms in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223, which Sunarso categorises as metaphor, synonym, and euphemistic

<sup>61</sup> Sunarso, "Eufemisme: Referensi dan Latar Belakangnya", 70-76.

<sup>62</sup> Sunarso, "Eufemisme: Referensi dan Latar Belakangnya", 72.

<sup>63</sup> Sunarso, "Eufemisme: Referensi dan Latar Belakangnya", 73.

<sup>64</sup> Haleem, "Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact." 112.

phrase. The metaphorical form is exemplified by the term *ḥarthun* (“field” or “tilth”), employed to avoid direct reference to female reproductive organs through a refined expression. Similarly, the phrase *wa qaddimū li anfusikum* (“send forth [good deeds] for yourselves”) is interpreted as a subtle expression emphasising the importance of physical and psychological preparedness prior to marital intercourse. The utilisation of such metaphorical language indicates that the Qur’an’s linguistic style is not solely intended to soften sensitive topics but also to convey the underlying moral values. Consequently, Haleem interprets the purpose of euphemistic language in these verses as guiding marital relations towards mutual respect.

Within the context of Qur’anic perspectives on sexuality, some individuals regard sexuality as impure and a subject that is taboo to discuss.<sup>65</sup> Haleem associates Qur’an Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 with two principal functions of sexuality. The first function affirms the equal status of men and women, as articulated in Surah al-Najm [53]: 45–46. These verses elucidate that, although men and women differ, they are created from the same essence.<sup>66</sup> Consequently, neither men nor women are permitted to insult or demean one another; rather, both bear the responsibility to respect and complement each other. The second function pertains to reproduction, as outlined in Surah al-Nisā’ [4]: 1. This reproductive function is intrinsically linked to the first, involving men and women in procreation through sexual relations conducted appropriately and in accordance with divine injunctions.<sup>67</sup> From this perspective, sexuality in the Qur’an transcends mere biological considerations and encompasses humanitarian values that emphasise mutual respect and responsibility within the family unit.

The explanation of Qur’anic sexuality presented above aligns with Haleem’s interpretation of the key concepts *azā* and *annā shi’tum* in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223. Haleem interprets *azā* as a framework of social ethics, particularly in relation to the prohibition of sexual intercourse during menstruation, which is understood not merely as a legal injunction but also as an expression of empathy towards women experiencing pain and discomfort. Similarly, the euphemistic phrase *annā shi’tum*, translated as “approach your field from whichever direction you wish,” is not construed as granting unrestricted freedom; rather, it denotes flexibility exercised in a manner that is proper, respectful, and consistent with religious principles. Consequently, sexuality in the Qur’an is portrayed not solely as a biological phenomenon but also as encompassing care, empathy, and mutual respect within relationships. In this regard, Haleem’s approach contributes to reducing gender-biased interpretations and promotes a more equitable understanding of women.

<sup>65</sup> Salma Firdaus, Beni, “Analisis Kualitatif Konsep Seksualitas dalam Al-Qur’an dan Hadis,” *Afkaruna* 12 (2016): 43–66, <https://doi.org/10.18196/AIJIS.2016.0054.43-66>.

<sup>66</sup> Juhrah M Arib et al., “The Inheritance of Human Traits in the Qur’an,” *Al-Quds: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis* 6 (2022): 863–86, <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v6i2.4199>.

<sup>67</sup> Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jami’ li Ahkam Al-Qur’an*. Juz V, Terj. Fathurrahman dkk., vol. V (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2007).

## Conclusion

This study addresses the predominance of fiqh-oriented approaches in the interpretation of Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223, which often neglect the linguistic features and humanitarian values inherent in the Qur'an. Through an analysis of Abdel Haleem's perspective, the study reveals that the Qur'an's euphemistic language functions as a communicative strategy that emphasises empathy, respect, and protection towards women, particularly within the contexts of menstruation and marital relations. The findings indicate that terms such as *azā*, *lā taqrabūhunna*, and *ḥarthun* convey not only legal implications but also embody social ethics and linguistic politeness. Consequently, Haleem's approach constitutes a significant contribution to contemporary Qur'anic exegesis by offering a more humanistic, contextualised, and pertinent interpretation in relation to modern gender dynamics.

This study is subject to certain limitations, primarily due to its exclusive focus on Abdel Haleem's perspective and the analysis of only two verses. As a result, the findings do not comprehensively reflect the diversity of contemporary interpretations concerning marital relations in the Qur'an. Future research should therefore seek to expand the scope of analysis by incorporating additional Qur'anic verses pertaining to sexuality, family, and gender relations, as well as by undertaking comparative studies of Haleem's interpretations alongside those of other contemporary exegetes through interdisciplinary methodologies. Such endeavours are crucial for enriching the discourse on modern Qur'anic exegesis and for advancing Qur'anic linguistic studies as a nexus between text, culture, and social reality. Ultimately, this study underscores that a nuanced understanding of the Qur'an necessitates both linguistic sensitivity and humanistic awareness, thereby enabling its universal message to be apprehended in a just and contextually informed manner.

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