

EXPLORING THE UNSEEN: HAMKA'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE PARANORMAL

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Abstract. Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah) was one of the most significant Islamic scholars in the Malay-speaking world. Many of his publications received attention on a global scale. In this article, the researchers look at a totally different facet of Hamka's life, namely elements that can be called paranormal. The researchers used an approach that integrated aspects of the so-called phenomenological sociology, and in particular the concept of the lifeworld. It was detected that Hamka faced paranormal events during his lifetime. Some of these events were integrated into his work, while others were reported by family members. All of these events influenced his ideas about the concept of the ghaib (the invisible), an important aspect of Islamic belief. The research also discovered that Hamka's approach to encountering the unseen is an essential part of his epistemological approach to this kind of knowledge. Further research could look into a Hamka's view of other elements of the unseen like the concept of time.

Keywords: *al ghaib, Hamka, jin, paranormal*

Introduction

Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah) was a very influential Islamic scholar and a very productive author. He had a wide range of interests. As a consequence, he published numerous books on various topics in Islamic studies, such as philosophy, history, and the interpretation of the Qur'an. He even published some well-known novels. So, it is not surprising that scientists with diverse backgrounds studied his work and published research papers on Hamka. In this article, the researchers look at a field that was of less importance to many researchers. During Hamka's life, he had experiences that could be considered paranormal. These incidents will be described and afterwards analyzed by using the phenomenological concept of the lifeworld. By doing so, the researchers want to provide a new perspective on Hamka's work. Hamka was born on February 17th, 1908, in a small village community at Lake Maninjau in the interior of West Sumatra. He grew up in an Islamic environment: His father, Dr. Amrullah (Haji Rasul) was a famous modernist. When he was young, Hamka discovered that literature became one of his major passions. In the 1920s and 1930s, he published a number of novels, such as 'Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck' (Hamka, 2013), 'Merantau ke Deli' (Hamka, 2017), and 'Di Bawah Lindungan Kabah' (Hamka, 1975). These novels were a huge success. However, for many Islamic scholars, the interest in literature was controversial. Nonetheless, Hamka was not deterred and published both fiction and nonfiction. He also became active in politics and wrote books about many political and social topics.

During the Japanese occupation, he was willing to cooperate on certain questions. However, after the Dutch returned, he became actively involved in anti-colonial activities. After Indonesia became independent, he decided to become active in politics. He joined the Islamic Masyumi Party and became a member of parliament. He also began to give lectures at the Al Azhar Mosque in Kebayoran, Jakarta. Slowly, his lectures became increasingly popular. In the year 1958, there was a rebellion in West Sumatra, the homeland of Hamka (Doeppers, 1972). Masyumi was accused of playing a major role and was banned. At the beginning of the 1960s, Hamka faced some problems. In the year 1962, he was accused of plagiarism (Rizqa, 2025). For Hamka, this was a difficult situation as it was a direct attack on his reputation. However, the famous literary critic H. B. Jassin rejected these accusations (Rahman, 2017). Two years later, in the year 1964, Hamka was arrested for more than two years. During this time, he completed his Magnum Opus, 'Tafsir Al-Azhar.' During the era of the New Order, Hamka became an influential public figure. He became the head of the Assembly of Indonesian Islamic scholars (MUI). In the year 1980, he withdrew from his position as head of the MUI. In the following year, on 24 July 1981, he passed away.

Towards an understanding of major terms

One of the major terms in this research paper is the term 'paranormal'. The Cambridge Dictionary provides the following definition: "[...] all the things that are impossible to explain by known natural forces or by science" (Cambridge Dictionary 'Paranormal'). In this article, the researchers use the term 'paranormal' in this broad sense. Another important term is al ghaib (English spelling al ghayb). The term is closely connected to the unseen or hidden world. In the Islamic sciences, there is the following definition:

'In current usage, ghayb (and especially ghayba) may signify "absence" (and ghayba, correlated with shuhud, "presence", may be a technical term of Sufism); but more frequently ghayb may indicate what is hidden, inaccessible to the senses and to reason; thus, at the same time absent from human knowledge and hidden in divine wisdom.'

(MacDonald AND Gardet, 2026)

In Islam, the human being cannot see everything that surrounds them. There are creatures like the jin or the angels (malaikat) that cannot be seen. The term 'jin' is derived from the verb 'janna,' which means to hide (Philips, 2026). The Muslims have to believe in this unseen world. In the chapter about Hamka's perspective of the unseen, this topic will be discussed in more detail.

The local concept

In the Malay-speaking world, there is a belief in many different entities (Osman, 1989). Often, these entities are considered to be ghosts. There are different names that denote them. There is a huge variety of ghosts (Lim, 2008). From an Islamic perspective, the belief in ghosts can be problematic:

'In addition, the belief in ghosts is considered as a superstitious belief that relies on fantasy and imagination which leads to khurafat that contradicts the teachings of Islam.'

(Amin et al., 2014)

In the Malay-speaking world, superstitious beliefs are still widespread. Hamka opposed the practices that are widespread in Indonesia:

'That is why people who come bring flowers and put candles on graves that they say are sacred (kramat) and release livestock as gifts to those buried there, even though the person who collects them is the caretaker (jurukunci); and those who deliver offerings beneath the shelter of a great banyan tree, and those who call upon and seek help from devils to destroy other people (sorcery) [...] These are all people whose belief in tauhid (monotheism) is still incomplete.'

(Hamka, 1960)

Hamka lists examples and warns of the dangers of not following tauhid properly. In this research, the objectives are: (1) To describe the way Hamka encountered the unseen. (2) To provide a new perspective on the work of Hamka. (3) To apply the phenomenological approach of the lifeworld.

Literature review

There are plenty of publications about Hamka. In this literature review, it will be differentiated between primary sources and secondary sources. The first category comprises publications authored by Hamka himself or by eyewitnesses who came into contact with him, while the second category comprises books and articles written by the scientific community.

Primary literature

Hamka shared his experiences with the supernatural in several of his books. He wrote about his father, Dr. Amrullah (Haji Rasul) (1879-1945), an Islamic scholar who supported a modern approach to Islam. Because of his strict nature, Dr. Amrullah had many enemies and became a target for magicians and their spells. Hamka describes these events in his book 'Ayahku' (Hamka, 1982). In 'Kenang-kenangan Hidup' (Hamka, 2009), he talks about his own life and the local perceptions. These stories give readers a sense of what life was like in West Sumatra in the early years of the 20th Century. As a boy, Hamka even made fun of local ghost beliefs by dressing up as a ghost to frighten people. In addition to his biographical work, Hamka shared his experiences in his major work, 'Tafsir al Azhar.' He wrote this Qur'an exegesis while he was in jail from 1962 to 1964. What makes his exegesis notable is how he included local perspectives and his own experiences. Faizin et al. (2022) gave a good overview of how Hamka brought in Minangkabau wisdom. Izzan et al. (2025) also discussed this integration. In 'Tafsir Al-Azhar,' Hamka describes his encounters with the unseen, mentioning that he felt the presence of malaikat during his time in custody. Hamka's family members also wrote about his encounters with the ghaib. In particular, Irfan Hamka (2012), Hamka's son, wrote how Hamka dealt with a jin that disturbed their family in their new home in Jakarta.

Secondary literature

Hamka was a famous Islamic scholar in the 20th century, particularly in the Malay-speaking world. Therefore, it is not surprising that many researchers looked into his work with a specific interest. Some examined his contributions in Islamic sciences (e.g., Halimatussa'diyah et al., 2024), while others examined his contributions in history (Zakariya, 2023). In these fields, he usually uses a rationalist perspective. Interestingly, he also makes contributions in other fields of knowledge. A good example is anthropology. Hamka is interested in ideas about pre-Islamic beliefs and how parts of them are still influential, such as the belief in *semangat*, an invisible force worshipped in rituals to the rice goddess (Stark and Baharuddin, 2023). Hamka, as a proponent of modernist Islam, opposed elements of superstition. This article examines the interesting interplay between Hamka's efforts against superstition and his personal encounters with the paranormal.

Research gap

The literature review shows that Hamka has attracted many researchers because of his fame, and his ideas on a wide range of scientific topics have been widely studied. However, less attention has been given to how Hamka experienced the unseen. Exploring this aspect can offer a new perspective on his work, especially regarding his understanding of the *ghaib*. It will also provide an epistemological understanding of a well-known Islamic scholar. Usually, Western science rejects the idea of unseen creatures because there is no scientific way to prove them. Hamka, as a devout Muslim, does not reject such an idea. In this article, the Islamic approach will be outlined by examining Hamka's approach to encountering paranormal experiences.

Materials and Methods

The researchers collected data for this study through library research. This method focuses on publications found in both physical and digital libraries (Zed, 2008). A key part of this approach is finding and identifying sources on a specific topic (George, 2008). In this study, the researchers looked at the publications of Hamka and figured out whether it contains elements that are related to the paranormal. In this research, the following steps were used: (1) The researchers identified the books of Hamka in which he wrote about the unseen, (2) Secondary literature was searched that discussed these books, (3) A comparative perspective was applied, and (4) the books were put into a biographical context in order to be able to consider the influence of the lifeworld. In the field of phenomenology, the term lifeworld is significant. It can be defined as follows:

'Lifeworld means a person's subjective construction of reality, which he or she forms under the condition of his or her life circumstances.'

(Kraus, 2015)

The person lives in a certain environment that shapes how he or she perceives the world. It is not something static. Certain dimensions influence the perception, such as location or time (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974). Some people can be reached in the physical world, while others are only 'in our mind'. The first category is called the

'world within actual reach.' The other world can be the 'world within potential reach.' An example might illustrate that: A young boy grows up in a small village in Sumatra. He plays with his friends and family members. So, they are easily reached (world within actual reach). Sometimes, he hears about the events that happen in the capital (world within potential research). There is still the possibility that he can reach that place. However, the mentioned spatial sphere is not the only way in which someone perceives the world. There is also a temporal element:

'We read a book at a particular phase of our intellectual development, became acquainted with a person at a 'decisive' point in time, became ill at a certain time, became satisfied or disappointed 'too early' or 'too late' by another experience, etc.'
(Schutz and Luckmann, 1974)

Over time, an individual's perception changes. A young boy might not be worried about illnesses or the financial situation, while an elderly person might be. This also includes the way to perceive the unseen. A young child might have an invisible friend or believe that certain toys are alive. When the child grows older, this belief probably disappears. These examples show that there is not only a spatial sphere but also a temporal sphere. Both spheres need to be analyzed to get a better understanding of the lifeworld.

Results and Discussion

The Ghaib according to Hamka

The so-called 'paranormal' belongs to the element of the 'unseen' (ghaib). In this chapter, the researchers want to outline Hamka's element of the unseen first. In the second part, Hamka's personal encounters will be described. In his book 'Pelajaran Agama Islam' (Hamka, 1960), Hamka begins his discussions about the unseen with the first three verses of the second Surah (Surah Al Baqarah). The verses are as follows:

'Alif-Lam-Mim. This is the book! There is no doubt about it – guide for those mindful of Allah, who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and donate from what We have provided for them.'

(Qur'an 2:1-3)

The translation uses the word 'unseen' to denote the term ghaib. Hamka explains that believing in the ghaib is an essential component of Islam. It must be differentiated between the world that can be experienced with the senses (alam syahada) and the world that is unseen and cannot be experienced with the senses (alam ghaib). Nonetheless, Hamka seeks to convey the concept of al ghaib through his own experience. The first incident occurred when Hamka was 15 years old. During that time, he lived in the West Sumatran town of Padang Panjang. This was also where his father taught. One night, the young Hamka woke up around 3am and saw a kind of fire. It had the form of a sword. Hamka fell asleep again, and he could see the fire at a greater distance. Later, he heard that his father was shouting outside the house. However, in the morning, he was informed that his father had never left the house (Hamka, 1960). In the year 1940, Hamka was active as a consul in the Islamic movement, Muhammadiyah. In this function, he had to travel to different places. The second incident, however, happened at

his house in Medan. During his absence, someone threw small stones at his house. Even the police were called, and the younger sister of Hamka was bitten by something unknown. The bite marks could be seen by the surrounding people. Hamka mentions many more events (Hamka, 1960). However, for him, the ghaib is not limited to the jin or malaikat. During the independence war, he was with his companions on a small boat on Lake Maninjau when, suddenly, two planes appeared. Hamka writes about this incident:

'I said to my friends, 'Recite the shahada! Perhaps now is the time for us to part from the world. All of us were ready to die. But evidently our time (ajal) had not yet come. After we had been surrounded in such a way, the two airplanes apparently rose again and departed... In a material way of thinking, [the planes] might see no signs of soldiers [weaponry] in our boat. But thinking from the unseen realm gives rise to a firm belief in ajal and in God's protection over us.'

(Hamka, 1960)

There are many things that cannot be explained with the senses. An example was given in the cited excerpt by Hamka. The people do not know when or how they are going to die. In the excerpt, it seems that Hamka and his friends will die as there is no escape from the planes. However, this is not the case. Their time has not yet come. Furthermore, Hamka also mentions two ways to interpret this situation: the 'material' way of thinking and another that includes the unseen world. Both types provide knowledge, but the mere material way of thinking will not help to understand matters of the unseen.

Magic

In this chapter, Hamka's experiences with the paranormal will be illustrated. In the book 'Ayahku' (Hamka, 1982), Hamka describes the village of his father and the prevalence of all types of magic. He made a list of these different types (Hamka, 1990): (1) Pekasih was used so that a woman fell in love with the admirer. (2) Kebenci was a type of magic that caused a couple to begin to hate each other. (3) Gayung: It consists of reciting a spell so that the hated enemy dies after being struck by the gayung. (4) Tinggam: It is a potion. The victim will take it and become sick until he or she dies. (5) Gasing (a kind of yo-yo): It is a skull that gets a potion and will always be rotated so that the victim becomes dizzy. (6) Pitunduk: The victim obeys all the orders of the magician. (7) Pukau: It is used by thieves and robbers. The victims cannot think in a proper way and will not call for help. Hamka was aware that such un-Islamic practices were widespread at the turn of the 20th century. Often, these practices originated in the pre-Islamic period. Hamka's father was the victim of magic in several cases. The following incident is described by Hamka:

'When he married his first wife, Raihanah, he was struck by a spell of sorcery. One of the penghulu in Tanjung Sani had once proposed to the girl, but was rejected, and it was he who was accepted by the family. Thus, at the time of the wedding, he saw his wife as if she were a corpse and foul like a rotten egg. After this condition was treated and cured, he too suffered his share. He became unah (impotent), unable to have intercourse. So, he had to undergo treatment for a long time before he recovered. And after returning from Mecca the second time, when he married

Syafiah, his wife also fell under a spell, namely, she was struck (by tinggam) at the neck, and a great furuncle arose there, nearly bringing about her death.'

(Hamka, 1982)

This case, which was described by Hamka, showed that magic was widely practiced in the interior of West Sumatra. Hamka grew up in a small village community. His father was the well-known and influential modernist Dr. Amrullah. In his role as a religious leader, he 'fought' against superstitions (khurafat). Nonetheless, magic played an important role during that time, even in the suraus (prayer houses), where magic was sometimes taught (Radjab, 1995). Dr. Amrullah himself was attracted by magic; however, he learnt from his teacher in Mecca, Shaikh Ahmad Khatib, that it is evil. Nonetheless, Hamka's mentioning shows that magic was widely practiced at the beginning of the 20th century.

Hamka and the Malaikat

In his Tafsir Al-Azhar Vol. 8, Hamka explains Surah al Fussilat, Verse 30:

"Surely those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remain steadfast, the angels descend upon them, saying, "Do not fear, nor grieve. Rather, rejoice in the good news of Paradise, which you have been promised."

(Qur'an 44:30)

In addition to his traditional analysis of this verse, Hamka shares some personal experiences. While he was in custody, he had the following experience:

'[I was] sleeping alone in a secluded room in Puncak (Cipanas) [and I was] guarded by police who were sitting far away, keeping watch. But I felt puzzled, because as soon as I laid my head down to sleep, it felt as though someone was lying in the empty bed beside me. Even as I fell asleep and then woke up again for the pre-dawn meal, that person was still there accompanying me. I felt that I was not alone!'

(Hamka, 2001a).

According to Hamka, this feeling lasted throughout his entire custody, which lasted two years and four months. Even his son, Fakhri, could feel the presence of the malaikat. Hamka describes the following incident:

'Once, my son and I were driving from Surabaya back to Jakarta at night, from Cikampek to Jatinegara. It felt like someone was sitting on my left, and I was half asleep. When we arrived home at 3 am, my son, Fakhri, who was sitting in front of the driver, asked, "Did you feel anything on the trip?" "There was (such a feeling)!", I replied. "I feel like there's someone sitting to my left." "In white?" my son asked. "In white!" [I replied]. Fakhri felt that since Cikampek his eyes felt heavy, wanting to sleep but not falling asleep. Since then, he felt that there was someone in white sitting near his father behind him who he could see faintly in the rearview mirror, but he couldn't open his mouth to reprimand him and he didn't feel afraid either.'

(Hamka, 2001a)

Therefore, Hamka concluded that the malaikat will also visit people who are alive:

'And I also dare to say that we may also interpret that the angel comes not just when a person is about to die, not when the soul is separated from the body, not when Munkar and Nakir are greeted in the grave, and not when we hear the blowing of the trumpet in the second life, even when we are still alive [the angel can descend].'

(Hamka, 2001a)

Hamka's experiences gave him a personal view of the malaikat. He believed they were present during times of trouble, and he could feel their presence. They helped him get through the difficult times while he was in custody.

Hamka and the Jin

Irfan Hamka, one of Hamka's sons, described the experiences with a jin whom they called Inyia Batungkek (the grandfather with a walking stick). Hamka (2012) describes the encounters with him in a fascinating way. The following section provides a summary of the incidents described by Irfan:

'It all began with the construction of Hamka's new house in Jakarta. Strange incidents happened and were noticed by the workers. One worker described that he was beaten on the breast by some mysterious force. The workers decided not to stay in the house any longer. Therefore, it was decided that Zaki, one of Hamka's sons, should stay there. When he wanted to light matches, it was never possible. They were always blown out. So, Zaki moved outside to the place where the workers stayed.'

After some time, the family could move into the new house. However, the strange incidents continued. One night, Rusydi, another son of Hamka, went to the toilet. He heard that someone with a stick is outside. He did not dare to leave the toilet and waited. Hamka himself is aware that the situation must change and he proposes to meet the jin. Therefore, he prayed two rakaat. Then Hamka asks whether the jin can hear him. If yes, he should knock three times. Just after Hamka's sentence, the family hears three knocks. Then the incident goes on and Hamka says:

'I built this house with hard work and sweat. There's no way I'm leaving this house just because you often bother and scare my family. If that's what you mean, try give me another signal by knocking once instead of twice.' There was no answer for a long time. "If you want to scare my family, I'm willing to kick you out of my house." The answer was a double knock.'

(Hamka, 2012)

After that, the family was informed that the jin was also a Muslim. Slowly, the family accepted the fact that there was a jin in the house. Nonetheless, the presence of the jin could be felt. For example, in the middle of the night, the children looked out of the window and could see that the swing in the veranda moved on its own. Hamka sees belief in jin as an important part of Islam. He warns against Orientalist views that misrepresent jin, such as calling them fallen angels, which can confuse believers (Hamka, 2001b). Hamka also notes that in some Malay-speaking areas, people seek protection with the help of jin, but he rejects this practice. It can be seen in the event

that was described by Irfan Hamka. He did not seek the help of jin. Before he acted, he prayed to Allah and this shows the importance of monotheism.

Hamka and the case of Pangkruti Adji

In 1980, there was a famous incident that involved Hamka and Pangkruti Adji. Many local newspapers reported on this incident, amongst them were Kompas and Panji Masyarakat. Syuman Djaya (1933-1985) was a famous film writer. He wanted to produce a movie about the Wali Songo, the famous Muslim saints who brought Islam to Java. The issue was that his main informant was Pangkruti Adji. She claimed she could contact Sunan Kalijaga, one of the Wali Songo, who had passed away long ago. Hamka was very skeptical about such a project and criticized it. He even met a delegation and Hamka expressed his concerns (Muntaco, 1981). The case became of public interest, and many newspapers reported about it. During that time, Hamka was the head of the Assembly of Muslim scholars in Indonesia. He criticized the way knowledge was achieved namely by wangsit and dawuh. These two terms can be defined as follows according to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. (1) Wangsit: supernatural message (mandate). (2) Dawuh: Message/order. Hamka rejects this type of knowledge, as it might lead to false knowledge. This rejection led to a discussion in which Pangkruti Adji sought to refute Hamka's argument. For Hamka, many arguments are not valid. For him, the idea that Pangkruti Adji communicates with Sunan Kalijaga is similar to events more closely associated with folk beliefs. Moreover, it is not possible to know who communicates with her. It might be a jin. The knowledge that someone gets from such a source is not reliable. As a consequence, Hamka recommended that the film writer refers to historical books written by experts.

Hamka and the lifeworld

In this section, the influence of the lifeworld on Hamka's understanding of the unseen will be analyzed. There are four stages in his biography that can be differentiated: (1) Hamka's experience within the village and the highlands in West Sumatra when he was young. (2) Paranormal encounters in Sumatra, in the 1930s and 1940s. (3) His experiences when he moved to Jakarta and his experience during the reign of President Sukarno. (4) The time of the New Order. When Hamka was young, he learned about mysterious encounters and made sense of them through his father, Dr. Abdul Karim Amrullah's education. However, other local people also influenced how he perceived the world. He learned about the magical attacks on his father. Nonetheless, he adopted a modern approach and was critical of superstitious beliefs in ghosts. This can be seen in the event, when he disguised himself as a ghost (Yulianto, 2018). During that time, he was just 14 years old. He mostly heard about ghost stories from the locals. Even the magic-related events involving his father, Hamka had only heard about. During the time when he was young, he did not have many direct experiences with invisible entities. One of the few exceptions was the already-mentioned event in Padang Panjang when saw a fire-like light in the form of a sword while he was in bed (Hamka, 1960). This event happened when he was 15.

Many strange and mysterious events happened when he was older. Hamka provides many examples in his book 'Pelajaran Agama Islam' (Hamka, 1960). Hamka seems to be aware that there are things and events that cannot be explained. Particularly during guerrilla-style encounters with the Dutch colonial army, he faced many 'strange'

incidents that were difficult to explain rationally. When Hamka and his family moved to Jakarta, there were more experiences like the incident with the jin in his house. Hamka lived in another environment and had to deal with people from many backgrounds. Consequently, his perspective changed. He had to understand others' worldviews in his role as a leading scholar. A good example was the kebatinan movement (Hamka, 1990). According to Hamka, this movement emphasized a more symbolic understanding of Qur'anic verses. However, for Hamka, a more literal understanding was essential. Such an understanding should also be important in the realm of the unseen. Therefore, he rejected concepts like contact with unseen entities, as in the case of Pangkruti Adjis.

Hamka's epistemological approach

The discussion about the unseen offers an idea of how Hamka deals with knowledge. For him, religion was always something that had a practical element (Stark & Huszka, 2025). This implies that Muslims are required to observe Islamic practices such as prayer and fasting. However, in his encounters with the unseen, the believer faces an element of belief. The way to know this element is an epistemological question. Some scholars differentiate among three types of epistemological knowledge acquisition in Islam: bayani, burhani, and irfani methods (Munir et al., 2024). In contrast to a Western understanding that focuses mostly on the senses and empirical knowledge, Islamic epistemology also includes the element of irfani. Some scholars stress that it is related to a mystical approach:

'Irfani epistemology differs from rationalist and empirical epistemology in that it relies on mystical experience and intuition that transcend the limitations of logic and the human senses.'

(Ma'rifah and Sudirman, 2025)

Another essential feature of Islamic epistemology is that the Qur'an is the most important source of knowledge (Nasution et al., 2023). Hamka, for example, refers to specific verses when he discusses the topic of the unseen. He is also willing to accept intuition as a form of knowledge. Some events are mentioned in his book 'Pelajaran Agama Islam,' like the following incident that happened during the confrontation with the Dutch: Hamka was with his friends in a small village. He stayed overnight, and he heard 'a voice' that he should leave before 8 o'clock in the morning. They followed this 'order' and left. After they had left, they could see that the Dutch soldiers had attacked (Hamka, 1960). Hamka writes about these incidents:

'Experiences like these have strengthened my belief that Allah Almighty possesses several "invisible tools" that constantly remind us, or that always conceal and protect the enemy's eyes. This means our ajal has not yet come.'

(Hamka, 1960)

It is interesting that Hamka did not trust the intuition of Pangkruti Adji. He rejects the idea of taking knowledge from an invisible entity in the field of science. He stresses that there are authorities in the field of history who could serve as sources. So, there is no reason to rely on doubtful knowledge. On the other side, he knows that intuition is an essential part of Islamic epistemology as long as it does not contradict the Qur'an. The

unseen is an essential part of the Islamic aqidah. They cannot be seen with the mere eye, but this does not mean that they do not exist. Hamka mentions the atom:

'Even ordinary people like us would be astonished and puzzled if we asked for an explanation of where that atom is. For an atom cannot be seen with the naked eye. An atom is a substance that truly exists; yet it cannot be found through the five senses, and even with a microscope it will not be visible.'

(Hamka, 2001b)

In the Qur'an, the existence of the jin is mentioned. By giving the mentioned example, Hamka wants to stress that our senses are limited and knowledge must take this into account.

Conclusion

In this article, the main focus was on Hamka's encounters with the unseen and paranormal, i.e., all things that cannot be explained in a rational way. For Hamka, these experiences were significant as he mentions them in some of his major works, like 'Tafsir Al Azhar' and 'Pelajaran Agama Islam.' These major works were written after he had left Sumatra and was living with his family in Jakarta. Even though he witnessed many unexplainable events in Sumatra, it seemed that he did not give much attention to them when he was young. His perception changed. Probably, the Javanese society had integrated many mystical elements, as the incident with Pangkruti Adji showed. Nonetheless, as an important figure, Hamka has to protect Islamic values and therefore rejected the idea of accepting an approach that has no basis in the Qur'an. In this research, the major focus was on paranormal topics like magic or jin. However, the unseen also encompasses topics such as time, destiny, and other elements. Further research could reveal how Hamka experiences and sees such elements.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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