

Religious Aspects Behind the Behaviour of Swearing ‘Anjing’: The Perspective of Indonesia’s Religious Leaders

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ABSTRACT

Swearing can be seen in the objects chosen for insults, which are often animals. In Indonesia, the term “Anjing” or Dog is frequently used in swearing by both students and the general public. This choice is believed to be influenced by the beliefs of the majority Muslim population, who consider dogs to be impure and forbidden. The goal of this study is to explore the religious aspects of using ‘Anjing’ as an insult from the perspective of religious leaders in Indonesia. The research aims to show that using “Anjing” as an insult is not only based on Islamic beliefs but is also connected to other religions. This study uses a qualitative approach with document analysis and interviews with five religious’ leaders from different faiths. The findings suggest that in Islam, dogs are not inherently unclean, but their saliva is considered impure. In Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, ‘Dog’ has been used historically as an insult by Jews against other religions. In Hinduism, dogs are used in rituals to remove negative energy, and in Buddhism, dogs represent karmic punishment for failed reincarnation. In Confucianism, dogs can be both helpful and harmful, so they are allowed to be eaten. All religions agree that swearing is harmful and has negative effects, both immediately and in the future.

Keywords: Anjing, dog, object of invective, religious leaders, and swearing

ABSTRAK

Ditinjau dari perilaku manusia, mengumpat yang merupakan produk bahasa yang berkaitan dengan emosi. Intensi mengumpat dapat dilihat dari penggunaan objek umpatan, yang kerap terdengar dalam bentuk binatang. Di Indonesia, penggunaan objek ‘Anjing’ kerap mewarnai perilaku mengumpat yang dilakukan oleh pelajar maupun awam. Pemilihan objek ‘Anjing’ diduga dipengaruhi oleh pemaknaan pemeluk agama Islam yang merupakan mayoritas yang menganggap Anjing adalah binatang haram dan najis. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah melihat tinjauan aspek religi terkait pemaknaan umpatan ‘Anjing’ dari perspektif para pemuka agama di Indonesia, yang mengarah kepada manfaat penelitian yang diharapkan dapat menunjukkan kepada khalayak bahwa penggunaan objek umpatan ‘Anjing’ tidak hanya berasal dari pemaknaan pemeluk agama Islam namun memiliki keterkaitan dengan agama lain. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengambilan data studi dokumen serta wawancara mendalam dengan lima pemuka agama berbeda. Temuan penelitian mengarah pada pemikiran bahwa Anjing adalah binatang yang dianggap suci dalam ajaran Islam, walaupun air liurnya mengandung najis yang dapat membatalkan ibadah. Sedangkan, dalam ajaran Nasrani baik Katolik dan Protestan, Anjing sejak dulu sudah menjadi objek umpatan yang digunakan bangsa Yahudi untuk merendahkan pemeluk agama lain. Selain itu, dalam Hindu, Anjing menjadi media ritual untuk melepas energi jahat, dan dalam Buddha, Anjing menjadi simbol hukuman karma manusia ketika mengalami kegagalan proses reinkarnasi. Agama Konghucu memaknai Anjing sebagai binatang yang menguntungkan dan merugikan manusia, sehingga agar tidak berbahaya maka Anjing diperbolehkan untuk dikonsumsi. Adapun pandangan seluruh agama, menilai bahwa mengumpat adalah perilaku yang merugikan manusia dan memiliki dampak negatif baik secara langsung maupun dalam masa mendatang.

Kata kunci: Anjing, mengumpat, objek umpatan, pemuka agama, dan religi.

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INTRODUCTION

There is nothing inherently wrong with the act of swearing. Similar to eating, drinking, or walking, swearing—often associated with the act of cursing—is an activity that stems from neural responses in the brain and is expressed as a response through one of the five senses: the mouth, which produces sound (Reiman & Earleywine, 2022). Swearing can help relieve tension within an individual, specifically a human subject. This motor activity involves uttering one or more words believed to hold a particular meaning, conveying emotions accumulated over (Stapleton et al., 2022). When repeated frequently and intensely, swearing can lead to an emotional release, providing a sense of relief (Stephens & Umland, 2011).

For those who swear, the process of expressing and releasing emotions can be rapid, spontaneous, and cost-free, without the need for material resources to achieve calmness. There is also an underlying power in the choice of swear words used, where word selection can target the emotional dominance over another subject (Weimer et al., 2022). Through swear words rooted in language and socially understood, diverse emotional responses may arise in the listener.

The emphasis on the subject who utters the swear word involves identifying who is swearing, allowing us to view the subject through the lens of their social hierarchy. Differences in "class" or feelings of being on an "equal footing" may lead to varied interpretations of each swear word (Shakiba & Stapleton, 2022). The intent or purpose behind choosing certain swear words also contributes to creating new interpretations and nuances of meaning. Additionally, the medium used to deliver swearing, whether it be verbal or through mass media, influences how these words reach an audience (Fägersten & Bednarek, 2022). Finally, the impact that swearing has—whether in terms of the moment it occurs or its subsequent reactions—affects both the person swearing and their target. Emotional release for the person swearing can provoke opposite reactions, sparking responses from the target (Stephens et al., 2022). However, it is essential to understand that all elements in this context are interconnected and unfold over a specific period.

Swear words are always associated with the context surrounding (Lafreniere et al., 2022). If a swear word is not directed toward another person, it may serve solely as an outlet for the speaker's emotions. However, if directed toward a particular individual or group, the swear word holds meaning and establishes a shared understanding among those involved. The swear word being examined in this article is "Anjing" (literally meaning "dog" in Indonesian), which should generally carry a shared understanding among the subjects.

The term "Anjing" as a swear word can be philosophically understood as a word rooted in the essence of language. Words contain abstract concepts that serve as the basis for their various meanings, referred to as "langue." The materialization of this abstract concept into a spoken or written word is known as "parole" (Anshari et al., 2024). As both langue and parole, "Anjing" has evolved from being simply an animal, often kept as a pet, into a social swear word.

As language evolves, the usage of "Anjing" can be empirically studied and observed in practical contexts. The word is used socially by people, from students to the general public, to fulfil social functions (Generous & Houser, 2019). Historically, the word "Anjing" has also become a symbol of familiarity within certain groups, especially in Indonesian case studies (Sapanti & Suswandi, 2022). For example, in group settings, such as football matches at stadiums, not using "Anjing" as an exclamation may lead others to view a person as an outsider because their visible support and emotional expression are not apparent (Anshari, Purnama, & Sari, 2023).

According to data on religious affiliations (Hefner, 2018), Indonesia has a majority Muslim population (87.51%), followed by Christians (Catholic/Protestant, 9.90%), and a small percentage of Hindus (1.69%), Buddhists (0.72%), and Confucians (0.05%). Thus, Islam's dominant presence may influence general perspectives on concepts of prohibition or forbidden objects (Mufrodah & Adinugraha, 2021). Therefore, the use of "Anjing" as a swear word may stem from an intention to degrade the listener. Another hypothesis is that the use of "Anjing" as a swear word is influenced by the Islamic view—being the majority religion in Indonesia—that considers dogs to be forbidden, impure, or unclean.

In Islam, the cultural association of dogs as forbidden, impure, or haram (Ropi, 2017) is not necessarily shared by other religions such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Confucianism, which may regard dogs differently. Therefore, this study aims to explore the perspectives of various religions in Indonesia on the term "Anjing" as a swear word, focusing on the understanding of all recognized religions in Indonesia regarding swearing and the use of "Anjing" specifically. Furthermore, this research will delve into interpretations from religious leaders and analyse religious texts for relevant references.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, focusing on real findings from phenomena observed in the field, where the researcher acts as a human instrument by being present to directly observe the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Neuman, 2014). For data collection, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with five religious leaders and document analysis through an in-depth examination of religious texts foundational to each faith. The selected informants are religious leaders (with recognized titles such as Ustadz, Pastor, Pinandita, Bhante, and Wen Shi) who have dedicated at least five years of their lives to understanding and disseminating the teachings of their respective religions. The interviews were conducted face-to-face over a six-month period (from July to December 2023) at various places of worship in the Jakarta, Bogor, and Depok areas. During the data processing phase, the researcher revisited various references and scriptures cited by the informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Swearing with “Anjing” from the Perspective of Islamic Religious Leader.

As the religion with the largest number of followers in Indonesia, with approximately eight out of ten Indonesians identifying as Muslims, Islamic teachings and understandings—through both oral tradition and written texts (such as the Quran)—gradually permeate the mindset of its adherents. This majority influence often shapes public perspectives, both individually and collectively. As the dominant religion, it is natural for Muslims to influence interpretations of phenomena based on religious knowledge and life experiences.

Islamic teaching’s view swearing as a behaviour that brings no benefit to the speaker. Although psychology might suggest that swearing can release the speaker’s emotions, Islamic teachings assert that swearing may lead to a negative view of the speaker and potentially harm the person being cursed. Islam emphasizes the intention and impact behind human actions.

“...essentially, swearing is a harmful and sinful act. According to the command of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Mukminun, the punishment is that they will suffer for their action.” (Ustaz Sofyan, 2023).

The focus is on the intention behind the swearing, specifically the desire to belittle the subject being cursed. Here, the target need not always be another person; swearing can also be directed toward situations or other living beings. Followers of Islam are advised to guard their language by filtering the words that come out of their mouths in social interactions, with the understanding that “whatever” is spoken can affect themselves, others, and even the divine destiny arranged by God. The object of the swear word itself is not debated within Islamic

teachings, as the act of swearing is already considered sinful and prohibited. However, this study also examines the use of metaphorical objects in swearing. The dog, for example, has become a popular choice as a swear word in Indonesian social contexts, which is predominantly Muslim. The use of the term "Anjing" in public spheres has spread, as people use it to express emotions tied to specific moments (Anshari, Purnama, & Patiyah, 2023).

The dog as an object of swearing can be a complex issue from an Islamic perspective. In the Quran, dogs are depicted positively in stories, such as the one about loyal dog who guarded several companions of the Prophet (Isnawan, 2021). This story, found in Surah Al-Kahf, highlights the loyalty of dogs as living beings, and dogs are even assured a place in paradise. However, as Islamic teachings evolved, supported by cultural influences among Muslims at the time, certain Hadiths impacted the changing views of dogs in Islam.

“...in the Quran, dogs are mentioned four times, portrayed as loyal animals who protect humans (the Ashabul during their 309-year sleep in the Cave of Kahf), and this is all documented in Surah Al-Kahf, verses 18-24. However, within the Shafi’i school of thought, dogs are also viewed as animals that carry major impurities (Najis Mughallazah), specifically because of their saliva, not their bodies or characteristics...” (Interviewed with Ustaz Sofyan, 2023).

The role of dogs as both necessary and avoided animals within Islam presents a dichotomy that gives rise to various interpretations about their place in the lives of Muslims. Certain Hadiths permit dog ownership under specific circumstances, such as for hunting (a practice found within the Minangkabau culture in West Sumatra, Indonesia (Forth, 2019)), or for guarding crops and livestock. However, dogs do not occupy the same status as other pets, such as cats, birds, or fish. According to Islamic teachings in Hadith, Muslims are advised to avoid dog saliva, as it is believed to contain impurities that may compromise ritual purity in worship.

Although, from another perspective, the issue of a dog's saliva can actually be avoided or removed by washing with water seven times, followed by one washing with soil—a purification concept in Islam to cleanse impurities deemed prohibited (Kharputly, 2020). The underlying principle is to enable followers to worship (Salat) in a pure and clean state. This understanding is clarified through insights from Hadith, which delve into the origins of dogs and the impurity associated with their saliva.

“...its saliva can be cleansed with ablution, and the seventh wash with soil. The meaning behind this isn’t just about the dog itself but serves as a reminder for humans to avoid what is harmful, as anything impure is not easily cleansed...” (Interviewed with Ustaz Sofyan, 2023).

Individual and group dynamics within the social sphere also shape perceptions and thinking patterns, associating the dog as an animal whose entire body is considered ‘najis’ (impure) and therefore prohibited in religious teachings. However, upon closer examination, the forbidden element of a dog is primarily its saliva (only one part of its physical being), not the entire body. This impurity can also be remedied through a cleansing process (ablution) outlined in the sacred texts and teachings. Viewing the entire physical body of a dog as ‘haram’ (forbidden) has influenced many Muslims’ perspectives, leading to a view of dogs as animals to be avoided ‘completely,’ disregarding other qualities such as loyalty (as mentioned in the Quran) or their role in protecting human belongings (Wheeler, 2022).

Essentially, from an Islamic viewpoint, dogs do not occupy a degraded position or one of fear. In Islam, dogs were created to guard humans, meaning dogs are literally born for human companionship. Despite this, the categorization of a dog’s saliva as an impure element (najis) serves as a reminder, rather than portraying dogs as a total object to avoid or an evil symbol.

Overview of Swearing “Anjing” from the Perspective of Christian Religious Leader.

Through research findings, several Christian perspectives regarding dogs were identified. Social views often perceive that Christians are close to dogs, with a perception that Christians are ‘white people’ or societies near European civilizations where dogs are kept as pets, leading to the assumption that dogs are ‘worshipped’ by Christianity. Based on the Bible and early Christian scriptures, this perspective is not entirely correct or incorrect, as there are references that view the position of dogs differently within Christianity.

“...in the biblical tradition, both the Old and New Testaments, early Christian attitudes considered dogs as impure animals, not equal to humans. When the term dog is used for humans, it is meant to demean them...” (Interviewed with Reverend Daniel, 2023).

The Christian view of dogs is explained based on the Bible, divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Jews, who practiced Christianity, did not consider dogs as pets, as they were regarded as impure animals. This view arose because dogs were associated with their street-dwelling habitat and their behaviour of consuming carrion for survival, creating an association of dogs as vile animals to be avoided. Another perspective found in the Old Testament is the use of dogs as objects of speech or slurs aimed

at denigrating non-Jews or non-Christians. The term “dog” was also used toward fellow Jews who did not follow Christianity or abide by the teachings in the Torah, intending to disparage others.

In contrast, the New Testament, which emerged about 400 years after the Old Testament, during the period when Christianity began to spread in Europe through Jewish expansion into Roman territories, shows a gradual change in the depiction of dogs (Miller, 2018). Dogs started being allowed into homes, though not kept as pets, and their role was limited to that of small dogs (referred to as ‘Kuon’) who consumed leftover food. However, dogs were still not considered equal to humans, as they continued to be used as objects of scorn by Jews against non-Christians.

The journey of dogs from initially being a forbidden animal to becoming pets among Christians has historical roots, tied to the arrival of Christianity in Europe and its establishment as the official religion of the Roman Empire. The political undertones here highlight how Christianity "followed and aligned with" Roman supremacy at the time, which allowed the teachings of the Bible to spread widely, reaching diverse nations, including those in Europe.

As Christianity became entrenched within European society and influenced social norms and mindsets, Jewish followers of early Christianity divided into two groups with differing views: the Puritan, which held firmly to Christian purity, and the Moderate, which accepted changes in favour of religious growth. The Puritans maintained that dogs were animals to be avoided and should not come into contact with Christians (Ackerman-Lieberman & Zalashik, 2014). In contrast, the Moderate group believed that for Christianity to flourish, it needed “adaptation” and had to accept the cultures of the lands it encountered. By the time Christianity arrived, Europeans had already established a close relationship with dogs, treating them as pets.

This perspective underscores that, in Christian teachings in both the Old and New Testaments, the use of curses was allowed to dispel bad luck for believers. Animals became closely linked with swearing, with dogs often serving as a slur used to insult others by associating them with impurity. This impurity stemmed from dogs' behaviour, including scavenging carcasses and living in wild conditions, which made them an object of disdain in religious contexts.

Yet, fundamentally, cursing is forbidden in ancient Christian teachings. This is expressed in several passages, such as “Let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth” (Ephesians 4:29), which explicitly prohibits swearing or cursing, considering the harm it brings to both the speaker and the subject of the curse (Adilang & Kalundang, 2023).

“...in Christianity, cursing is actually forbidden. Especially swearing. The foundational belief is that when a person swears, they are staking something. Yet, what could a human offer up as a stake? Even their body belongs to God. Thus, in Christianity, the term 'promise' is more commonly used...” (Interviewed with Reverend Daniel, 2023).

This understanding emphasizes that swearing is akin to betting or wagering, but humans have nothing to offer, as everything they possess, including their bodies, belongs to God. Meanwhile, in ancient Christianity, dogs were synonymous with impurity because of their scavenging behaviour, making them unfit to be kept as pets. Consequently, dogs became a term of insult used by Jewish people to demean others (non-Jews) who did not share the same belief.

Overview of Swearing “Anjing” from the Perspective of Hindu Religious Leader.

In Hinduism, the relationship between humans and animals is framed with a unique context compared to other religions. Hindu teachings explain that the human-animal relationship often involves sacrifice, explicitly manifested in various religious rituals. However, animal sacrifice, which involves the act of killing, holds a specific meaning and purpose directed towards worshiping God, rather than glorifying humanity (Wiranata, 2020). Thus, the concept of animal sacrifice is generally accepted and understood within the religious framework, as its purpose serves religious interests. Hindu teachings, especially those practiced in Bali, emphasize the foundational belief in animals as part of nature, which also belongs to God. Therefore, when animals are used in rituals, they serve as "purifiers," aimed at creating balance between humans, nature, and God.

“...this understanding is known as Titi Hita Karana, which means the balance of nature. In this context, animals are sacrificed not because they are seen as contemptible but because of the 'energy' they possess to transform negative elements into positive...” (Interviewed with Pinandita Nyoman, 2023).

Furthermore, Hindu teachings regard animals not merely as objects of sacrifice but as beings worthy of respect, sharing an equal position with humans as part of nature and as living beings created by Sang Hyang Widhi, the Supreme God. Rituals such as *Tumpek Kandang* illustrate this perspective, emphasizing an exchange of energy and a cleansing process aimed at purging negative energies (Wiranata, 2020). In Hinduism, dogs are seen as a "sacred" animal with a caste apart from other animals, alongside the cow. This elevated position of the dog within Hindu teachings is supported by stories in the Bhagavad Gita, which narrate a dog's role

in Arjuna's journey to nirvana. The dog is depicted as a loyal companion to humans and is later symbolized as a deity because of its loyalty.

Dogs thus hold a dual role, both revered as sacred and sometimes used as an object of insult. This latter use as an insult does not stem from the dog's role or religious status but rather from the specific traits attributed to dogs. Hindu teachings also address the issue of cursing. In general, Hinduism aligns with other religions in advising against harsh language, as stated in the Tri Sandhya, which urges adherents to avoid causing harm through words and to be cautious in speech. This advice is further underscored by the belief in karma, where a person who fails to watch their words is thought to incur karmic consequences (Suhardi et al., 2020).

There is also an emphasis on the repercussions of self-directed curses or curses aimed at unfavourable situations. Hinduism teaches that humans coexist with other dimensions, meaning that curses directed at oneself or at unfavourable situations may also inadvertently affect unseen entities in other realms. This doctrine underscores the potential for both explicit and implicit effects. Therefore, Hindu teachings advise against cursing, whether a target is specified or not. This belief in karma likens it to a savings account that each person holds, filled with "credits or debts," representing good or bad deeds. Cursing is considered unwise behaviour, and when a person curses, it is believed that they will eventually face consequences, either directly or in the future time. This effect may even manifest as a chain reaction that unfolds in due course.

Overview of Swearing "Anjing" from the Perspective of Buddhist Religious Leader.

Through various teachings within Buddhism, particularly in the Theravada school, the relationship between two living beings (humans and animals) is fundamentally linked to the law of karma, which is a core ideology of Buddhism. This law applies not only to humans but also to animals, deities, and other beings. It is said that even the highest leader, the Buddha, is not exempt from the influences of karma. The context of this relationship is tied to the world one will inhabit during reincarnation. It is described that, after death, if a person lives poorly due to their wrongful actions, they may be reborn as an animal (Beasley, 2019). This implies that their next life may be in the animal kingdom rather than as a human.

"...in Buddhism, the essence is to avoid bad karma, so as not to be reborn as an animal. The law of karma is shaped by the bad actions, words, and thoughts of humans during their lifetime. The form of action should be compassion towards all beings; animals are not born for humans..." (Interviewed with Bhante Khemacara, 2023).

Karma serves as a guideline for thoughts, speech, and behaviour, emphasizing that humans and animals are created by God and hold equal status. Both humans and animals can be actors or victims of good and bad karma. However, the primary difference lies in the moral capacity unique to humans, which animals do not possess. Thus, Buddhism teaches that humans should strive to behave better than animals, including refraining from consuming them (Beasley, 2019). The act of killing animals for any purpose, whether for consumption or ritual, is deemed unacceptable and results in bad karma. While dogs are mentioned in various religious texts, Buddhism does not view the presence of dogs as a symbol of certain traits. Instead, dogs are seen as beings that exist alongside other life forms.

“...dogs are frequently referenced in various scriptures, though they are not implicitly depicted as symbols of any specific trait. However, explicitly, in the monk’s code of ethics, it is stated that dog meat is forbidden to eat...” (Interviewed with Bhante Khemacara, 2023).

The closest relationship of dogs in Buddhism is their role in delivering a "punishment" when humans are reborn. The presence of a dog in the animal realm signifies a state that humans should avoid, as they are believed to possess superior moral qualities compared to other beings. Human actions, thoughts, and words are fundamental to Buddhist ideology regarding the "account" those individuals hold, reflecting their good and bad deeds that impact their karma in future lives. The assessment of karma, determining whether it is good or bad, relies on three main elements: the subject or object affected by the actions, words, and thoughts; the intentions of the actor; and the extent of the harm experienced by the victim.

This framework leads to the understanding that cursing is a behaviour to be avoided, as it encompasses all elements that could tilt one's karma scale towards the negative. Buddhist teachings emphasize speaking kindly to others and not making them the target of harmful words.

“...there are four types of speech forbidden in Buddhism: harsh speech, which includes cursing; lying speech that aims to harm others; divisive speech; and frivolous speech intended solely for amusement...” (Interviewed with Bhante Khemacara, 2023).

Thus, from this explanation, it is clear that cursing, even if it releases positive emotions, is not permissible, especially when it does not invoke negative perceptions of others. Cursing in Buddhist teachings is believed to stem from negative intentions of the speaker, potentially leading to conflicts among individuals (Sukarti, 2023). The law of karma, which underpins the process of reincarnation, also influences one’s status in future lives. Among the layers of existence—deva (gods), humans, and animals—humans aspire to be reborn as humans or to

"ascend" to the realm of deities, ultimately seeking Nirvana, the ultimate goal for all beings in Buddhism. The belief that one could be reborn as an animal indicates that their actions, words, and thoughts during life were very poor, akin to animals lacking moral understanding.

Overview of Swearing “Anjing” from the Perspective of Confucian Leader.

As one of the oldest philosophies to circulate in China, Confucianism is recognized as one of the most ancient ideologies in the world (Hefner, 2018). The teachings propagated by their principal prophet, Kong Fu Tze, led to the formation of the name Confucius (Ro, 2021). Confucian views on the existence of humanity and its behaviour in the world are closely tied to their belief in Tian (God in Confucianism). In Confucian thought, humans are placed in the highest position among all creatures created by Tian. This understanding suggests that humans possess a special status compared to other living beings, allowing them to act according to their will.

However, Confucian teachings always connect human actions and behaviour with spiritual issues, particularly harmony with nature and unity with Tian. The teachings outlined in the Wu Jing emphasize that humans are deeply intertwined with the earth, body, family, and society, and must not ignore their need to remain aligned with cosmic order. Human existence is believed to be linked to elements present in nature, so all human actions are thought to have repercussions for all elements of nature, including plants and animals.

When an action such as cursing is committed, it is thought to affect the movements of other living beings, not just the human target of the insult. As stated in the Liji, humans, as beings approaching perfection, have received sparks or derivatives of the four primary virtues of Tian (Yuan, Heng, Li, and Chan). These virtues include Ren (humanity or compassion), Yi (the ability to discern truth), Li (the principle of propriety), and Zhi (wisdom).

Thus, when a person curses, Confucianism views this behaviour as contrary to the four virtues bestowed by Tian. This is especially true for violations of the first virtue, Ren, which emphasizes compassion towards others. There is also a belief in the effects on plants, animals, and nature, which may not be immediately visible but occur gradually. Overall, this teaching bears similarities to the karma concept taught in Buddhism. However, within the framework of Yin and Yang, leads to a fluid interpretation.

“...Confucianism believes in regeneration rather than reincarnation. This means there is an ongoing cycle. The main principle is Yin and Yang, indicating that everything is fluid and aims to create harmony. Thus, cursing can be viewed from two sides: when

directed at oneself, it may be seen as positive, but when aimed at others, it reflects a lack of virtue...” (Interviewed with Wen Shi Urip, 2023).

The similarities in understanding human behaviour and its impact on nature, as well as the journey of humanity, place Confucian views on the relationship between humans and animals on par with other religions. Although Confucian texts permit the consumption of animals and recognize them as created to assist humans (Ro, 2021)—for instance, oxen for labour and dogs for guarding property—the teachings of Confucius state that animals may be killed (slaughtered) only at the appropriate time (Kristan, 2021). This means their deaths should serve a specific purpose that benefits humans. In Confucian teachings, dogs are also regarded as valuable creatures that contribute to human existence. The Confucian understanding, closely tied to Chinese culture, leads to the image of the dog as a loyal guardian to its owner, in this case, humans. The Wu Jing describes dogs as loyal animals and highlights their various roles.

“...dogs can be viewed in terms of Yin, while in Yang, they have four important roles in life. Dogs can serve as objects of consumption, religious ritual, domestication, or wildness. All of these aspects exist in harmony...” (Interviewed with Wen Shi Urip, 2023).

Confucian teachings, shape the image of dogs as symbols within the teachings. The religious understanding that has taken root as tradition depicts and attributes to dog’s symbolic qualities associated with the Chinese New Year, embraced by the Confucian community. As a symbol cherished by its followers, the 'Earth Dog' is depicted as possessing many positive traits, including loyalty. Additionally, the dog is associated with patience and foresight, which are linked to the ability to plan and strategize effectively.

CONCLUSION

In general, human behaviour associated with language, particularly the act of cursing, is a behaviour that is often prohibited and avoided from various religious perspectives in Indonesia. The prohibition against cursing addresses the impact it has on oneself, on others who are the targets of the cursing, and on its influence on other living beings and the environment. There is a shared belief that engaging in harmful or negative actions will receive a corresponding response from God, and such responses can be felt both directly and indirectly, regardless of time.

One reference point is that cursing is closely related to hurtful and sinful speech, which can create unseen effects in the present moment, as it may relate to the law of karma (the placement of a person in another realm upon reincarnation). The core message is that actions prohibited by religious teachings should be avoided, as they can affect all subjects involved, as well as the broader object, which is the environment.

Meanwhile, the position of dogs as a species and animals within various religious teachings creates differing views. These perspectives ultimately lead to the formation of associations by followers of those religions. For Muslims, the association formed is that dogs are forbidden animals, as one of their bodily fluids (saliva) is considered impure. However, in some contexts, dogs are viewed as noble creatures in Islam. Conversely, the Christian perspective has shifted toward viewing dogs as pets, influenced by cultural factors that have transformed dogs from wild animals into symbols of derision among followers of other religions, particularly as they became pets for Catholics and Christians in Europe.

In Hindu and Buddhist teachings, dogs serve as symbols of energy exchange and the law of karma in human life. In Confucianism, dogs are viewed through the lens of Yin and Yang, understood as creatures that can be both beneficial and harmful. Consequently, to mitigate potential dangers, the consumption of dogs is permitted. Thus, the views on dogs and the behaviour of cursing reflect diverse values and beliefs within society, highlighting the importance of mutual respect among different faiths.

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