



Contextual Hermeneutics of Beauty Privilege in Hadith through Gadamer's Lens

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Abstract: This article aims to interpret the hadith, "Allah swt. does not look at your appearance or your wealth, but rather at your heart and your deeds," through Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutic approach. This approach emphasizes the importance of dialogue between the historical context of the hadith (the horizon of the text) and the social reality of modern readers (the horizon of the reader) as a dynamic process of understanding. This study employs a qualitative library-based method with a descriptive-hermeneutic analysis technique. The hadith is examined within its historical and social context, then brought into dialogue with the contemporary phenomenon of beauty privilege in the digital era. The results show that the message of the hadith remains relevant in critiquing the visual and materialistic culture that values individuals based on physical appearance and economic status. The deeper meaning of the hadith affirms that human worth is determined by sincerity of heart and righteous deeds, not by appearance or wealth. Gadamer's hermeneutical approach enables this hadith to remain alive, relevant, and transformative within modern socio-religious discourse.

Keywords: Gadamer's Hermeneutics, Hadith, Beauty Privilege, Fusion of Horizons, Contextual Meaning.

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menafsirkan hadis "Allah swt. tidak melihat kepada rupa dan harta benda kalian, melainkan kepada hati dan amal kalian" melalui pendekatan hermeneutika filosofis Hans-Georg Gadamer. Pendekatan ini menekankan pentingnya dialog antara konteks historis hadis (horizon teks) dan realitas sosial pembaca modern (horizon pembaca) sebagai proses pemahaman yang dinamis. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif kepustakaan dengan teknik analisis deskriptif-hermeneutik. Hadis dikaji dalam konteks sosial zamannya, kemudian dipertemukan dengan fenomena beauty privilege yang berkembang di era digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pesan hadis tersebut relevan dalam mengkritik budaya visual dan materialistik yang menilai manusia berdasarkan penampilan fisik dan status ekonomi. Makna mendalam dari hadis ini menegaskan bahwa nilai manusia ditentukan oleh ketulusan hati dan amal saleh, bukan rupa atau kekayaan. Pendekatan Gadamer memungkinkan hadis ini tetap hidup, aktual, dan transformatif dalam wacana sosial-keagamaan modern.

Kata kunci : Hermeneutika Gadamer, Hadis, Beauty Privilege, Fusion of Horizons, Makna Kontekstual.

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Introduction

Hermeneutics is a distinctive method for interpreting sacred texts, which is why it is often used in religious contexts such as biblical exegesis and theology. In practice, hermeneutics seeks to uncover the deepest meaning of a text through dialogue between the text and the interpreter. Religious figures, such as scribes, biblical interpreters, and Quranic scholars, use hermeneutics to understand the divine message contained in the text. Sacred texts are viewed as divine revelations containing values and laws of life for believers, thus requiring a deep and reflective interpretive approach to ensure their moral messages remain relevant across time (Hardiman, 2015).

In the philosophical tradition, hermeneutics evolved from a mere method of interpretation into a theory of knowledge (epistemology) about meaning. Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey represent Romantic hermeneutics, which focuses on the intentional understanding and historical context of the author. Meanwhile, Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer developed philosophical hermeneutics, which views understanding as an existential dialogue between the historical horizon of the text and the reader's horizon of experience. Heidegger emphasized *das Sein* (being) as the basis for interpretation, while Gadamer introduced the concept of the fusion of horizons, which is the dynamic encounter between past traditions and the reader's present historical consciousness (Palmer, 2005).

Gadamer's hermeneutic approach becomes highly relevant in interpreting the hadith "*Allah swt does not look at your appearances or your wealth, but at your hearts and deeds*" because the phenomenon of beauty privilege (social advantage based on physical appearance) is a form of social bias that is becoming increasingly prominent in modern society. Several empirical studies show that physical attractiveness influences a person's socioeconomic and academic achievement. Adrian Mehic found that attractive students received higher grades than those who were not, especially in face-to-face learning, indicating appearance-based discrimination (Mehic, 2022). Social psychology studies also confirm that social pressure toward beauty standards leads to body dissatisfaction and unhealthy eating behaviors among adolescents (Tanguay et al., 2025).

This phenomenon is intertwined with a systemic bias called appearance discrimination, where individuals considered attractive receive more favorable treatment in their careers, social relationships, and even education (Eisenmann & Colón, 2024). Philosophically, Matteo Ravasio calls this condition a form of "*lookism*," which is discrimination that favors those considered beautiful or handsome, and

suggests an ethical reconstruction of beauty standards to make them more socially just (Ravasio, 2023).

This research is based on the assumption that the hadith is not only an individual moral message about piety, but also contains the potential for social criticism against the construction of values that judge people based on appearance and wealth. Through Gadamer's fusion of horizons framework, the hadith text is brought into contact with contemporary social realities that practice beauty privilege. The dialogue between the horizon of Islamic tradition and the horizon of digital society is expected to produce an understanding that is not merely textual, but also contextual, namely how the spiritual values in this hadith can negate materialistic visual culture and reaffirm the equality of human value before God.

Previous studies have applied Gadamerian hermeneutics to the study of hadith, but few have linked it to social phenomena such as physical appearance. For example, Nafisatul Muawwanah interprets the hadith "The Involvement of Angels in Sexual Relations" using Gadamer's hermeneutics, but her focus is limited to theological aspects, not contemporary social contexts (Mu'awwanah, 2018). Meanwhile, Moh. Muhtador uses Gadamer's productive hermeneutics to examine misogynistic hadiths, but has not yet addressed modern sociocultural dimensions (Muhtador, 2018). Both studies have not yet bridged the gap between hadith interpretation and social issues such as beauty privilege.

Therefore, this research offers novelty in the first two aspects, objectively examining hadiths that explicitly state that human value is determined by the heart and deeds, not by appearance or wealth. Second, methodologically, applying Gadamer's hermeneutics is not only for reading hadith texts philosophically, but also for critiquing the social construction of physical appearance in modern Muslim society. With this approach, the research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the study of hadith hermeneutics as well as a practical contribution to the socio-religious discourse on aesthetic justice and the equality of human values.

Method

This study employs Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics approach, which emphasizes the dialogical process between text and reader through the concept of the fusion of horizons. In this context, the hadith "Allah swt. does not look at your appearance or your wealth, but at your hearts and your deeds" is understood not only as a normative doctrine, but as a historical text that continues to interact with new social realities. This type of research is qualitative library research. The primary data sources come from hadith books and Gadamer's hermeneutical literature, while the secondary sources include academic studies on beauty privilege and social values in digital society. The analytical technique used is descriptive-hermeneutic analysis, with the first stage being to identify the historical context of the hadith and its original meaning during the time of the Prophet (textual horizon). Secondly, to examine the horizons of modern readers through the phenomena of

beauty privilege and the social construction of beauty and economic status. Third, to merge the horizons of both to find the relevance of the hadith's meaning in the contemporary context. Through this method, interpretation does not stop at literal understanding but produces a critical and applicable contextual meaning to modern social phenomena.

Result and Discussion

Result

Genealogy of the Science and Thought of Hans-Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutics

Hans-Georg Gadamer was born on February 11, 1900, in the city of Marburg, Germany, toward the end of the 19th century. He was the son of Dr. Johannes Gadamer (1867–1928), a pharmaceutical chemist who served as a Privatdozent at the University of Marburg and later became a professor at the University of Breslau. His father was known as a harsh, disciplined, and very strict person. While his mother, Emma Caroline Johanna Gewiese (1869–1904), was a devout Protestant, she practiced her faith in secret. The combination of his parents' characters also shaped Gadamer's humanist personality. Since his youth, Gadamer was not interested in following in his father's footsteps in mathematics or natural sciences. He actually showed great interest in the humanities, especially philology and literature (H. Hasanah, 2017).

His academic journey began at the University of Breslau, where he studied under Richard Höningwald, a figure in Neo-Kantianism. Then, he continued his studies at the University of Marburg and studied under Paul Natorp and Nicolai Hartmann. At the age of 22 years old, he completed his dissertation titled *The Nature of Pleasure* based on Plato's Dialogs. As for the figure who most deeply influenced his thinking, it was Martin Heidegger, who was his teacher and intellectual friend when they were in Freiburg. It was Heidegger who shifted Gadamer's philosophical orientation from the Neo-Kantian current toward a phenomenological and hermeneutical approach. On April 20th, 1923, at the age of 23 years old, Gadamer married Frida Kratz (1898–1979) (Hahner & Dawing, 2021).

Gadamer's career journey was not without the political and academic challenges that occurred during the Nazi era in Germany. He had to move from one city to another to stay active in the academic world. Despite facing numerous obstacles, the pinnacle of his contribution to philosophy was reached when he published his magnum opus, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method), in 1960 (Ni'am & Mustikawati, 2022). In this book, he formulated the foundations of philosophical hermeneutics.

Gadamer lived an academic life for eight decades, from 1922 to 2002. He was involved in numerous intellectual dialogs and debates with other major figures such as Heidegger, Habermas, Ricoeur, Derrida, and Barthes. Gadamer passed away at the age of 102 years old, due to a heart attack on March 13th, 2002, at Heidelberg

University Hospital. He was buried in the city where he lived in his final years, Heidelberg. Some important works by Hans-Georg Gadamer include *Truth and Method*, *Reason in the Age of Science*, *Heidegger's Ways*, *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, and *Dialog and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies on Plato* (Kurniawan, 2021).

Gadamer's primary inspiration in developing his hermeneutics came from Heidegger, particularly in terms of phenomenology and the ontology of understanding. He adopted Heidegger's concept of hermeneutics of facticity and then developed it into the social and linguistic realms. For Gadamer, language is the primary medium of understanding, and every understanding is always bound to a historical context (Damanik, 2023). As explained by Palmer and cited by Ni'am and Mustikawati, understanding from a Gadamerian perspective is historical, dialectical, and linguistic. He rejects the notion that understanding is a subjective activity that can be completely controlled. Conversely, understanding is an experience that involves openness, participation, and continuous dialogue between the reader and the text (Ni'am & Mustikawati, 2022).

Gadamer's contribution to the world of philosophy is the development of hermeneutics as a philosophical approach to understanding text (Silalahi, 2024). Hermeneutics aims to create a bridge between what the reader already knows and the new things contained in the text, in order to achieve a more complete and dynamic understanding (Ayer, 1976). Gadamer emphasizes the importance of the involvement of three elements in the interpretation process: the world of the text, the world of the author, and the world of the reader. Understanding will be superficial if only one aspect is considered. Language and historical experience are key elements in understanding history and art more deeply, as human existence is always connected to reason and language (Ni'am & Mustikawati, 2022). Although influenced by Heidegger, Gadamer formulated a more systematic and relevant hermeneutical approach for the study of both literary and philosophical texts. (Damanik, 2023).

In his monumental work, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method), Hans-Georg Gadamer fundamentally shifted the focus of hermeneutics from a mere set of methodologies toward affirming the ontology of understanding, namely the original structure of human existence (*Dasein*) itself. According to Gadamer, understanding is not an activity applied to an object, but an event conditioned by historical experience and mediated by language as a universal medium. The core of this view is enshrined in the concept of Effective Historical Consciousness (*Wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*), which asserts that the interpreter's consciousness is constantly "*shaped*" and "*produced*" by the flow of history. This concept rejects the idea of a perfect enlightenment utopia and instead states that

understanding is never final, but rather a continuous dialectical process between the past and present that inherently generates new meaning, considering human existence is within history, not in control of it (Gadamer et al., 2011).

The process of deep interpretation always begins with the Theory of Pre-understanding or, as rehabilitated by Gadamer, Prejudice (Vorurteil) (Gadamer et al., 2011). Prejudice here is not the negative stigma of the Enlightenment, but rather a condition that enables understanding, meaning pre-meanings that inevitably shape the interpreter's horizon (Syamsuddin, 2017). The task of hermeneutics is then to clarify productive prejudices from those that are hindering, thus paving the way for the dialogical stage, namely the Fusion of Horizons (Gadamer et al., 2011). This is a realization of effective historical consciousness, where the horizon of interpretation is at stake and dialogues with the horizon of the text to master the subject matter (Sache) it reveals. This back-and-forth dynamic between initial understanding and mastering the meaning of the text is known as the Hermeneutic Circle, which indicates that understanding always means understanding differently in a transcendent movement (Gadamer et al., 2011).

The culmination and integration of this entire process is realized in Application Theory. Gadamer explicitly states that understanding is always application; it is not a secondary step after interpretation is complete, but rather the essence in which the meaning of a text, especially one containing normative values, is concretized into the specific and temporal situation of the interpreter (Gadamer et al., 2011). Drawing on legal hermeneutics, Gadamer explains that the universal message in a text must be adapted and actualized within contemporary social, political, and cultural contexts. This process of application is an integral part of hermeneutics, making it a dynamic and existential practice inseparable from life, where connection to the broader tradition (belonging) reflects meaning that transcends individual subjectivity.

Authenticity of Hadith "Allah swt. does not look at your appearance or your wealth"

Before applying Gadamer's hermeneutics concept to this hadith, the initial step that needs to be taken is to ensure the authenticity of the hadith. The hadith in question is the only text that states that Allah swt. does not look at your appearance or wealth, but rather at your heart and deeds. Here is the text of the hadith in question.

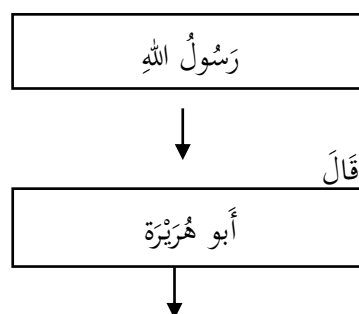
حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو النَّاقِذُ، حَدَّثَنَا كَثِيرُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ، حَدَّثَنَا جَعْفَرُ بْنُ بُرْقَانَ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ الْأَصَمِّ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ» (al-Qusyairi, 1955)

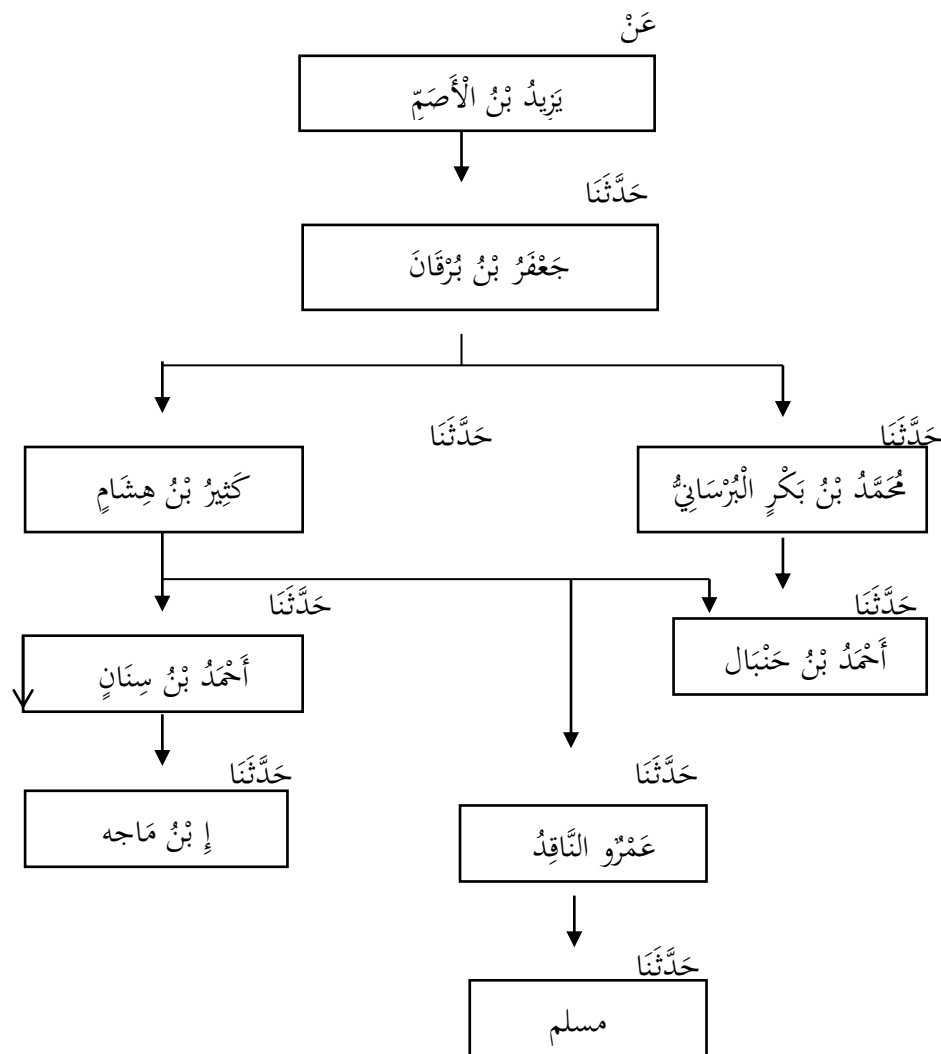
'Amr al-Naqid narrated to us, saying: Kathir bin Hisham narrated to us, saying: Ja'far bin Burqan narrated to us, from Yazid bin al-Asam, from Abu Hurairah, who said: The Messenger of Allah swt. said: "Indeed, Allah swt. does not look at your appearances or your wealth, but Allah swt. looks at your hearts and your deeds."

After conducting a takhrij al-hadith search in the nine books, the above hadith has four chains. The first chain is narrated by Muslim, index number 2564 (al-Qusyairi, 1955). In this chain, there are six narrators: 1) Abu Hurairah is considered a companion of the Prophet and is considered by al-Bukhari (al-'Asqalani, 2004) to have narrated approximately eighty men or more of knowledge from the companions, the followers, and others. 2) Yazid bin al-Asam is considered trustworthy by Ibn Hibban (al-'Asqalani, 2004). 3) Ja'far bin Burqan is considered trustworthy by al-Maimun bin Ahmad (al-'Asqalani, 2004). 4) Kathir bin Hisham is considered trustworthy by Abu Dawud (al-'Asqalani, 2004). 5) Amr al-Naqid is considered trustworthy by Abu Hatim (al-'Asqalani, 2004). 6) Muslim is considered trustworthy by Ibn Abu Hatim (al-'Asqalani, 2004).

The second chain is from Ibn Majah, index number 4143 (al-Qazwayni, 1431). This chain has six narrators: narrators 1, 2, 3, and 4 are the same as in the first chain; 5) Ahmad bin Sinan was considered reliable by al-Nasa'i (Al-'Asqalani, 2004); 6) Ibn Majah was considered a great, reliable narrator by al-Khalili (Al-'Asqalani, 2004). The third chain is from Ahmad bin Hanbal, index number 7827 (Hanbal, n.d.). In this chain, there are five narrators; narrators 1), 2), and 3) are the same narrators in the first chain, 4) Muhammad bin Bakr al-Bursani was considered reliable by Abu Dawud (al-'Asqalani, 2004), and 5) Ahmad bin Hanbal was considered reliable by al-Ijli (al-'Asqalani, 2004). The fourth chain of narration is Ahmad bin Hanbal with index number 10960 (Hanbal, 2001). In this chain, there are five narrators: narrators 1), 2), 3), 4), and 5) are the same narrators as in the first chain, and 5) is Ahmad bin Hanbal.

Here is an overview of the hadith's chain of transmission, after the chain of transmission has been examined.





Based on the study of the chain of narrators, this hadith is considered authentic because all of its narrators have no defects ('*illat*') and the chain is well-connected. Although no martyrs were found, as only Abu Hurairah among the companions narrated it, there are limited supporting narrations (*mutabi' qasirah*) at the fourth level of narrators, namely Kathir bin Hisham and Muhammad bin Bakr. From a quantitative perspective, this hadith is considered a solitary hadith (*ahad*), more precisely a rare one (*gharib*), because only one companion narrated it individually, namely Abu Hurairah. This assessment refers to the majority opinion of scholars who accept the justice of all companions (*kullu al-sahabah 'udul*) and avoid controversy regarding the credibility of Abu Hurairah as a narrator. Considering this, this hadith is acceptable in terms of its chain of narrators and is suitable for interpretation in terms of its text.

Discussion

Understanding the hadith "Allah swt. does not look at your appearance or your wealth": Horizon Fusion and Finding Meaningful Sense Text Horizon In Gadamer's view

Text Horizon

The text horizon encompasses the entire background of tradition and history that shapes the text, such as practical interests, language, culture, and specific social situations. In the context of hadith, this horizon corresponds to the concept of *asbāb al-wurūd*, both micro (the specific context behind the emergence of the hadith) and macro (the broader socio-historical conditions during the time of the Prophet). Not all hadiths contain information about micro *asbāb al-wurūd*—not because it doesn't exist, but because it wasn't recorded or didn't reach us through classical Islamic literature. For example, the hadith about Allah swt. not looking at appearances and wealth is not known for its specific (micro) cause. However, it can still be believed that the formation of these hadiths was influenced by the social and cultural situation of that time (macro *asbāb al-wurūd*).

However, scholars understand that this hadith was delivered in a general context as moral and spiritual teaching for Muslims. The purpose is to emphasize that God's judgment of humanity is not based on outward aspects such as physical appearance or wealth, but rather on the condition of their hearts and their deeds. This aligns with Islamic principles that emphasize the importance of piety and sincerity in charitable giving.

In the commentary on Sahih Muslim, it is explained that physical actions alone are not a measure of a person's piety. Piety is measured by the sense of reverence for Allah swt. present in the heart, which gives rise to fear of sin and awareness of Allah swt.'s surveillance. The phrase "*Allah swt. sees*" is interpreted as Allah swt.'s attention and recompense, whose parameters are the heart and not the physical, and this is the essence of the hadith about the heart and deeds. This is in line with the words of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

أَلَا إِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً

"Know that in the body there is a piece of flesh..."

According to al-Maziri, some scholars use this hadith as evidence that the intellect is located in the heart, not in the head. This opinion has been discussed extensively in hadith studies (An-Nawawi, n.d.). In his commentary on Sunan Ibn Majah, al-Sindi also interprets the meaning of "*seeing*" in the hadith not as physical sight, but as attention to deeds and the condition of the heart. In other words, one

should improve their deeds and intentions, not merely pursue appearances and wealth. Perhaps the meaning of "does not look" is that God does not judge someone based solely on their beauty or wealth, but rather on the goodness of their deeds and the sincerity of their hearts (al-Suyuti et al., 2007).

In the book *Mu'allim al-Tanzil fi Tafsir al-Quran*, it is explained that the hadith about God not looking at appearance and wealth is related to Abu Hurairah (may God be pleased with him), who said: *"The Messenger of God saw. was asked, Who is the most noble person?" He replied, "The most noble in the sight of God is the most pious among them."* It is also related to the Quranic verse about faith and Islam (al-Baghawi, 1417, p. 349) (Surah Al-Hujurat: 14):

"The Bedouin Arabs say, 'We have believed.' Say, 'You have not believed, but say, 'We have submitted (Islam),' for faith has not yet entered your hearts. However, if you obey Allah swt. and His Messenger, He will not diminish your deeds in the slightest. Indeed, Allah swt. is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."

The occasion for the revelation of this verse is related to a group of individuals from the Bani Asad bin Khuzaimah tribe. They came to the Messenger of Allah, swt. during a famine, which is when the natural conditions are experiencing a drought. In that situation, they formally declared their Islam, but it was not accompanied by true faith that was truly internalized in their hearts. Their presence in Medina had a negative social and economic impact. They pollute the city streets with waste and cause a surge in the prices of essential goods. They also frequently visited the Prophet saw, claiming their contributions were greater than those of other tribes. They said, *"The Arab tribes came to you only with themselves on mounts, while we came with our wealth, families, and children. We did not fight you like certain tribes."* (al-Baghawi, 1417).

These statements reflect their sense of self-importance and their desire for special treatment, particularly in the form of aid or charity. They said, *"Give us (help)!"* reflecting the instrumental motive behind their declaration of Islam. In response to such attitudes and claims, Allah swt. revealed this verse to correct and rectify their understanding of true faith (al-Baghawi, 1417). It is understood that the hadith in this study is a hadith that affirms how God is to humans. Not in terms of physical appearance, but in terms of faith and deeds.

Reader Horizon

If the hadith in this study is viewed in the 21st century, the term that will come to mind is *"beauty privilege."* The reality is that this practice of beauty privilege is widely applied, both in real-world social interactions and online. Beauty privilege refers to the social, economic, and psychological advantages gained by individuals who are considered to meet dominant beauty standards, both physically and

visually, within the context of digital platforms. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly real and powerful with the development of visual technology (high-resolution cameras, filters, facial recognition algorithms), as well as visual-driven popular culture, such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

So it's no wonder expressions like *"you're handsome, half your life's problems are solved," "you're beautiful, you have power," "if you're looking good, you're saved,"* and many other expressions have emerged. Everything is judged by appearance. It's also not uncommon for people to feel insecure about those who are wealthier, because in today's social media landscape, beauty often goes hand in hand with luxury. An attractive appearance combined with a glamorous lifestyle is seen as a symbol of success and happiness. This creates the illusion that a person's worth is determined by physical appearance and economic status, rather than by qualities of character such as integrity, intelligence, or social contribution. As a result, many people feel inadequate, constantly compare themselves to others, and feel they must *"chase"* false standards to be accepted or recognized. This phenomenon poses a significant challenge to maintaining mental health, especially for young people who are growing up under pressure to appear perfect in the virtual world.

Beauty privilege has the potential to be a form of discrimination within the social structure. A person's job opportunities are often influenced by preferential treatment given to individuals with attractive appearances. Bunga Sabrina Eka and her colleagues, in their article, reveal that in the workplace, beauty privilege is evident from the initial recruitment process, such as when applying for a job, through the selection, evaluation, and interview stages. At each of these stages, the applicant's physical appearance is often an aspect that is considered. This can then impact performance evaluations, regardless of actual competence. (Bunga Sabrina Eka Abelia, Ulilababil Ulilababil, & Raully Sijabat, 2025)

Research conducted by Kim Seon Woo and Choi Na Hong involving a sample of school students in Korea showed that discrimination or bullying in the school environment generally occurs in groups. The main benchmark used in this process is physical attractiveness. The higher a person's level of physical attractiveness, the less likely they are to be a target of bullying (Kim & Choi, 2022). The findings suggest that physical attractiveness plays a significant role not only in the workplace or social media but also profoundly influences social dynamics in educational settings. Students considered physically attractive tend to receive better treatment, are accepted into more dominant social groups, and are rarely targeted for ridicule or exclusion.

Conversely, students whose appearance is considered non-conforming to prevailing beauty standards are more vulnerable to both verbal and social bullying,

such as being ostracized, belittled, or made fun of. This shows that esthetic standards also create social hierarchies from an early age, shaping children's experiences and self-confidence in the long run. Furthermore, such discriminatory practices can have serious psychological impacts such as low self-esteem, anxiety disorders, and even depression. This serves as a warning that beauty privilege is not merely an aesthetic issue, but also concerns social justice and mental health, which educational institutions and the wider community need to address critically. Inclusive education and anti-body shaming campaigns are important for fostering a healthier emotional and social environment.

Meaningful Sense in the Fusion of Horizons

Understanding the hadith "*Allah swt. does not look at appearance or wealth, but at the heart and deeds*" is a hermeneutic event that continues to live in the flow of history. This means it doesn't stop at the initial context of revelation, but is constantly mediated by the social, cultural, and linguistic situations of contemporary interpreters. Effective historical consciousness (*Wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) shows that the meaning of this hadith was formed in a dialogue between the horizon of 7th-century Arab society, which judged people based on status and outward appearance, and the horizon of modern society, which is dominated by the phenomenon of beauty privilege. Both exhibit a similar structural pattern: judging people based on outward appearances, which is criticized by transcendental Islamic values.

The interpreter's prejudice (*Vorurteil*) is always an unavoidable starting point in the process of understanding. Modern readers' initial views often position this hadith as merely a moral-spiritual teaching without relevant social meaning. Through the hermeneutic circle, these prejudices are filtered and revised as the text is confronted with contemporary social reality. The phenomenon of beauty privilege opens up new avenues for dialogue, revealing that the message of this hadith actually rejects discrimination based on appearance and wealth, and affirms the value of human equality before God.

The meaningful sense that emerges from the meeting of two horizons affirms the ethos of human ontological equality. This hadith speaks of more than just individual morality; it contains a social critique of hierarchical structures built on the basis of bodily esthetics and capital. This resonance of meaning demonstrates that religious texts have the vitality to reinterpret modern phenomena of injustice, making them part of an ethical discourse that transcends time and culture.

The application of meaning is the final stage of the hermeneutic understanding process. This hadith can be actualized as an ethical framework for a more inclusive digital culture, rejecting human judgment based solely on

appearance. The Islamic values contained within it provide direction for the formation of a society that values individuals based on their honesty, sincerity, and moral contributions. This process makes hadith a living tradition, continuously interacting with human history, and presenting new meaning for social challenges in the modern era.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics approach to the hadith "Allah does not look at your appearances or your wealth, but at your hearts and deeds" yields three main findings. First, theoretically, this hadith is understood through a dialogical process between the text's historical horizon and the contemporary reader's horizon, forming a fusion of horizons. Second, hermeneutical interpretation reveals that this hadith serves a dual function: as individual ethical teaching and as epistemological critique of the visual-materialistic culture that dominates social judgment based on appearance and wealth. Third, practically, the reinterpretation of this hadith offers a spiritual paradigm that rejects beauty privilege and affirms the principle of human value equality before Allah based on sincerity of heart and righteous deeds.

The implications of this research are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, Gadamerian hermeneutics proves relevant as a methodological framework for bridging the temporal gap between classical texts and modern contexts while maintaining the vitality of hadith meanings. Practically, these interpretive results contribute to contemporary religious discourse by providing a conceptual foundation for critiquing aesthetic biases and social inequalities in the digital age, increasingly dominated by image culture and visual capitalism.

This study recommends further development in three directions: (1) application of Gadamerian hermeneutics to other hadith corpus related to social justice issues, (2) comparative studies with other hermeneutical approaches such as Ricoeur or Schleiermacher, and (3) empirical investigation of the impact of philosophically-based hermeneutical reinterpretation of hadiths on Muslim attitudes and behaviors in confronting lookism and materialism phenomena on social media.

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