

ANALYSING ISLAMIC RADICALISM IN SEA: FROM A SOCIOLOGY TO A PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

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- This study is to examine the conceptual theory in understanding of religious experience that could be connected with the tension between Islam and the impact of social sciences within Islamic community, especially among Islamic radicalism.
- Much of data for this study are taken from field work on *Jama'ah Tabligh* in Malaysia and Indonesia

TREND OF STUDY

- First, there are those who investigate it in the context of internal conflicts – Indonesia and *Dārul Islām*, Malaysia and Islamic activism, and Thailand with its unresolved problems with Malay-Muslims in the south.
- Second, there are studies that consider how the global panic has led to a change in the image of Islam in the region.
- Third, there are scholars who see Islamic movements as a replacement for communism in Western policy after the end of the Cold War.
>>> “American Islam”
- Finally, most studies of Islam argue that Muslims must change their way of life if they want to escape being classified as fundamentalist, radicals, terrorists, and salafists.

PROBLEMS:

- "High level of terminological confusion."
- Wahabi[ism] (Ibn Taymiyyah – Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal). A response to those Muslim sought understanding of Islam through reason, not revelation, a approach promoted by Mu'tazilah.
- Social Sciences – (Western, post-Christian) origins in the Protestant reformation, European Renaissance and European Enlightenment.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- Can social sciences understand RE?
- Syari'ah, Yes! 'Aqidah and Haqiqah, No!
- Sociology and anthropology may be able to help us analyse the Syari'ah (*Dhahir*). But, not for *bathin* (esoteric), which is more concerned with the mystical life (*sufi*).
- But, phenomenology enable us to examine religious experience as a phenomena of human consciousness.

- [R]eligious experience as a response to what is experienced as Ultimate Reality, ... involves four things. The first is the assumption that there are degrees of awareness, such as apprehension, conception, and so on... Second, the response is considered as part of an encounter...Third, the "experiencing" of supreme reality implies a dynamic relationship between the experiences and the experienced ... Finally, we have to understand the situational character of religious experience, that is, we must conceive of it in its particular context (Wach, 1958:31).

- Jackson: "an attempt to describe human consciousness in its lived immediacy before it is subject to theoretical elaboration or conceptual systematizing" (Jackson, 1996: 2).
- Schimmel: "I believe that the phenomenological approach is well suited to a better understanding Islam...to enter into the heart of religion by studying first phenomena and then deeper and deeper layers human responses to the Divine until he reaches the innermost sacred of each religion, the centre..." (Schimmel, 1994: xii).

PYRAMID OF *KESADARAN*

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

- 1 Human as animal
- 2 Human as animal with reason
- 3 Human as animal with reason and belief
- 4 Human as animal who worships his creator
- 5 Human as animal of good behaviour
- 6 Human as animal becoming human
- 7 Human as human who humanised humanity
- 8 The perfect man (*insān kāmil*)

- *wa laqad dzara'nā katsīrān min al-jinn wa al-ins lahum qulūbun lā yafqahūn bihā wa lahum 'a'yun lā yubshirūna bihā wa lahum 'adzān lā yasma'ūna bihā ulā'ika kal'an'ām bal hum adhal ulā'ika humum al-ghāfilūn*
(Many are the Jinns and men we have made for hell: They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like – nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning) (al-A'rāf (7):179).

LEVEL 1

- The pyramid represents different levels of awareness: "Animal" here is a metaphor for a human consciousness that does not employ its heart, eyes and ears according to the aims of human beings on the earth.
- In Islamic logic, man is also considered as an animal with reason (*al-nas hayawan nāthiq*).
- Thus, according to Sufi philosophy human consciousness at levels 1 and 2 (?) is of the kind that anthropology used to call primitive.

LEVEL 2

- This level of human awareness, religious experience does not involve a belief in God, but is rather involved in a search for a power in nature which determines what is "good" and "bad" for the religious community.

LEVEL 3

- At level three humans find their own interpretation of God according to their social circumstances. Magic is used to control the relationship between humans and nature. Thus, the exercise of reason leads to a belief in the supernatural. The attitude associated with levels one and two is still there, especially when the head of community has magic powers as a manifestation of "their God".

- These first three levels are, therefore, not present among 'primitive', 'un-civilized' and 'illiterate' peoples only.

LEVEL 4

- When we reach level four, humans define their God in their minds according to the reproduction and regeneration of their understanding. At this level, the target of worship is "defined" and becomes "closer to God", and more complicated rituals must be performed in order to get a clear "definition". The "holy man" acts as a transformer of magic power through ritual and thus differs from ordinary people.

LEVEL 5

- Magic is then transformed into prayer and regulated for those at level three. At this stage, it can be said that religious awareness is produced and inherited.
- Thus, charisma and authority are parts of the way of being a religious person. Rationality is not the main issue here because religion is already embedded in the minds and souls of people and must be rationalised by "holy men" in the community.
- Their charisma and authority may be questioned. It is not perfect religion in the sense that the ritual process is still fragile.
- Believers still require mediation and a mediator to be able to worship their God. God must be seen or made as an idol. Certain rules were made by the "founder" of religion.
- God may be worshipped at home or in special places such as temples. At this level, God can be everywhere and may take any form. But the main objective of this process is to gain spiritual power through religious men who have authority and power.

- This level religion is a social product that is reproduced from one generation to another - children take on the religion of their parents, social custom acts to transmit religious truth to each successive generation, etc. - this form of religious practice may be analysed in social scientific terms.
- Level five is the last destination of the spiritual journey of humans as animals

LEVEL 6

- At level six a person produces his own understanding of the path to becoming a religious person. By utilising “active intelligence” in his mind and soul. A person at level five may return to a lower level if he or she does not have a means the meaning of humanity.

LEVEL 7

- At level seven, a person gains the “three aspects” of life and a believer enters the process gnosis, the unification of man with God and nature (cosmology).

LEVEL 8

- This level is called *insān kāmil* (the perfect man).
- Buchman states that "the sacred journey can only be safely accomplished through becoming a disciple of a spiritual master, who is considered a perfect human, *insān kāmil*, having made the journey to God and returned to guide disciples on the way, to divinity through his religious instructions" (Buchman, 2004: 131).
- At level eight, the person subject is more focussed on both, which suggests we need to understand "the mapping of *bāthin*" in order to study "the mapping of *dhāhir*."

WEBNER (2003)



CONCLUSION

- I suggest can be called *Islamic Anthropology* through the utilization of a spiritual hermeneutic (*ta'wīl*).
- Thus, by returning to the original meaning (*ta'wīl*) of written and un-written words in Islamic scholarship, we are better able to understand private religious experiences.
- In sum, I propose that *Islamic Anthropology* be understood as the study of humans who submit themselves to Allāh and that this can be achieved by combining the social sciences and Islamic scholarship.