

Anthropology as an Approach in Islamic Studies

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Abstract

God sent down revelation as a means of guiding the life of mankind. Revelation is gathered in the form of religion that provides harmony in human life. This research is a research with qualitative methods and uses a descriptive approach. This research uses relevant books and articles in collecting data so that this research is a literature research with references to articles of various relevant journals as a primary data source. Anthropology is a term that is no less interesting in the world of research. The word derived from the Greek anthropos means man and logos which means science. So, it can literally be argued that anthropology is a science that studies humans. Religion has an existence that is never detached from the social reality that surrounds it. Religion is a cultural phenomenon, in which the religious practices that arise in a society are the result of understanding the doctrine of the teachings of the religion itself. As a scientific discipline, the anthropological approach has characteristics. Among the characteristics in the modern anthropological approach is holism, that is, the view that social practices should be researched in context and essentially seen as related practices in those societies. The area of anthropology is limited only to the study of emerging phenomena. The study or study of religion with an anthropological approach seeks to study about humans and society related to religion and culture that develops in that society. In other words, religious anthropology examines the relationship between man and supernatural power, human thought, attitudes and behavior in relation to unreal power.

Keywords: anthropological approach, islamic studies, social, religious.

1. Introduction

God sent down revelation as a means of guiding the life of mankind. Revelation is gathered in the form of religion that provides harmony in human life. Religion provides a way of looking at people to solve various problems of life as well as being a means of dealing with all the unrest experienced. Various problems that exist, then a solution is achieved by being sourced from revelation, then there is science that comes from religion itself.

As a religion that is an affection for all nature, Islam views science as something universal and rational. Islam becomes a guideline and outlook on life that not only stops at the beliefs of its adherents, but is more than present in any activity involving issues of worship, politics, trade, culture, and other complex life activities. Islam exists and is present to participate in such activities.

The phenomenon of the complexity of human life gave rise to a discipline that examines all matters related to Islam. This special discipline was then referred to as Islamic Studies which is a translation of the Arabic *dirasah Islamiyah*. In the beginning, Islamic Studies was normative and doctrinal so Islam was seen as a religious doctrine that should be practiced ideally (Potabuga, 2020: 19-20).

Islamic studies is experiencing rapid development. Events in the Islamic world in different parts of the world prompted this study to study them. The Islamic community views that scientific reality requires Muslims and Islamic educational institutions to be aware of the role and existence of the study so that an in-depth study of Islam is needed.

Islam as a religion and a way of looking at life, it is inseparable from man as the subject of the perpetrator. The nature of religion is that of man himself as a subject who performs religious worship and other activities. Human beings who carry out practices and thoughts that all come from Islamic studies themselves (Harahap & Kahpi, 2021: 50). Therefore, anthropology is needed in studying Islam as a method of interpreting human reality with all its diversity.

Based on the description above, the writing of this article tries to discuss in detail the anthropological approach in Islamic Studies. This writing uses qualitative research methods of literature studies with documentation as a method of collecting data, namely collecting archives or sources from articles and books relevant to the topic of study.

2. Research Methods

This research is a research with qualitative methods and uses a descriptive approach. This research uses relevant books and articles in collecting data so that this research is a literature research with references to articles of various relevant journals as a primary data source. The secondary data sources are books related to themes and phenomena in everyday life. In analyzing data, this study uses Miles and Huberman data analysis techniques consisting of data reduction, data presentation, data analysis, and providing conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Concept of Anthropological Approaches in Islamic Studies

Anthropology is a term that is no less interesting in the world of research. The word derived from the Greek *anthropos* means man and *logos* which means science. So, it can literally be argued that anthropology is a science that studies humans. According to the big Indonesian dictionary, it is stated that anthropology is a science about humans, especially about the origins, various colors of physical forms, customs and beliefs in the past (Mahyudi, 2016: 23).

As for according to William A. Havilland, anthropology is a science that addresses about humanity and seeks to compile useful generalizations about the human being with all his behaviors as well as to obtain a complete understanding of human diversity. This science discusses everything about human beings complete with the diversity that exists as a people. Mankind is an important topic in research as a subject that lives.

David Hunter discusses that anthropology is a science born of an infinite curiosity about mankind (Mahyudi, 2016: 207). Man with his infinite desires, then he is able to make his civilization so that progress is found, not only in his life, but in the world he lives in. This will make the world change with the times.

In addition, Koentjaraningrat also mentioned that anthropology or the science of humans is a term that originally had another meaning, namely the science of the characteristics of the human body. In subsequent developments regarding anthropology, the term mainly began to be used in England and America with the same meaning as in the beginning. In England, the term anthropology then pushed towards the term ethnology, while in America, anthropology got a very broad sense because it covered both physical and social parts of the science of man. In Western Europe and Central Europe itself, the term anthropology is only interpreted as the science of man viewed from his physical features (Chaer, 2014: 3).

With the understanding according to the experts above, a common thread can be drawn that everything that discusses mankind with all its diversity and cultural activities can be studied with a discipline, namely anthropology. Human beings are constantly developing so that the human world becomes more complex and interconnected. Anthropology examines everything related to humans who have the widest perspective. Therefore, anthropology also has a wide affordability regarding the concept of life.

Human beings are social beings who are interdependent on each other. Human beings cannot live alone and certainly need dependence on others. With reason, man surpasses the degree of being the supreme being. Human beings can think about looking for useful things and not doing things that make them lose. Man can think how to take advantage of the universe without having to damage it so as to cause harm to himself. Human beings also have feelings. The purest feeling is to feel and realize that there is a higher power governing this universe. More than that, man even always wants to know the essence of power, and according to Hamka, the human soul and reason who always want to know this essence are called *fitrah* (Saihu, 2019: 197-217).

Because man's intellect, feelings, and soul cause man to be complex in every life. This complexity exists in every activity of life so that civilization is built. Thus, humans need guidelines that become a perspective in living every activity of their lives. Guidelines and perspectives became so important that God gave man the rules which are all set forth in scripture. From worship, political, legal, social, and cultural activities, religion becomes a container. Religion, in this case Islam becomes an important guideline so that humans carry out their worship activities. In this activity, a culture arises born from religious activity.

Thus, the anthropological approach in Islamic studies functions in examining human beings with all their activities while living a religious life. And religious life is also a complex life, so studying it also uses special disciplines of a complex nature. Religion cannot stand alone. Religion requires humans as adherents, where humans are complex in the presence of their respective cultural systems. So, anthropology in Islamic studies has an important role in understanding religion with its social interactions in various cultures.

3.2. Anthropological Approaches in Islamic Studies

Religion has an existence that is never detached from the social reality that surrounds it. Religion is a cultural phenomenon, in which the religious practices that arise in a society are the result of understanding the doctrine of the teachings of the religion itself. The religious teachings are then adapted to the cultural environment of the adherents.

The confluence of religious and cultural teachings of the adherents is illustrated in the existing traditions. For example, the sungkem tradition in Java during Eid al-Fitr celebrations as a form of visit or friendship to the elders. Or the most ater tradition in Madura society, namely sharing food menus with relatives and neighbors.

The existence of this tradition gives a sign that the existence of religion cannot be separated from human intervention. This, however, does not mean that religion is a human creation, but rather an inseparable relationship. Between religious teachings or normative dimensions, namely verses of the Qur'an and the interpretation of doctrinal values and representations on religious ritual practices or historical dimensions, it is something that cannot separate religion from humans.

Religious teachings and human behavior that reflect the practice of religious teachings themselves make anthropology important as a science that studies man with all his activities in the phenomena of religion itself. With this anthropological approach, a relationship was found between belief in religion and economic and political conditions. According to the conclusions of anthropologists' research, people who come from the underprivileged or other poor groups are generally more interested in religious movements that are messianic in nature or that promise changes in their social order. Meanwhile, the richer group is more likely to maintain the already economically established order of society because the existing order is considered more profitable (Faidi, 2021: 5).

Thus, something that a religious society believes in can be supernatural and cannot be studied, but people's beliefs in the form of beliefs in the supernatural are empirically experienced by humans, so they can become objects of scientific study (Rosidah, 2011: 26). Anthropology can be part of the science that studies religion because its adherents are human subjects who live a religious life. Therefore, the study of understanding of religion can be carried out with this anthropological approach.

3.3. Characteristics of Anthropological Approaches in Islamic Studies

As a scientific discipline, the anthropological approach has characteristics. Among the characteristics in the modern anthropological approach is holism, that is, the view that social practices should be researched in context and essentially seen as related practices in those societies. In studying religious phenomena, cultural and social anthropological approaches can be used for the purpose of understanding the behavior of Muslims themselves. In addition, it is also in the context of building the religious life of Muslims.

In relation to the relationship between religion and culture, religion has a function as an ethical and moral guideline that manifests as cultural values that converge and animate every cultural and social fulfillment of citizens (Leni, 2018: 242).

The anthropological approach in its application needs to conform to the values of islamic religious teachings. Anthropology seeks to conduct studies on the relationship of religion to social institutions that occur in society, and about the relationship of religion to economic and political conditions. By using this approach, it can also be seen that religious doctrines and phenomena cannot stand alone and are never separated from the network of social institutions or institutions that support its existence. This is the meaning of the anthropological approach in understanding religious phenomena.

Or it can be said that the methods used in the discipline of anthropology in seeing a problem used in religious disciplines include the following (Potabuga, 2020: 27-28).

a. Descriptively and not normatively patterned

The anthropological approach starts from field work, dealing with people, communities, local groups that are observed and observed over a long and deep period of time. This is then called a thick description (observations and observations in the field that are carried out seriously, structured, deep and continuous). This method is done by, among others, Living in or living together with the community under study, following their rhythms and daily life patterns for a long time.

b. Concrete and real practices in the field

In addition to having a descriptive pattern, there is a way for the discipline of anthropology to study a second problem, namely concrete and real practice in the field. Daily life practices, among others, there are weekly, monthly and yearly agendas, especially during daily activities. Not only that, the pattern of concrete practice also examines the practices carried out in important events of a society such as birth, marriage, death, burial.

c. Comparatif

This means that the study and approach of anthropology requires a comparison of different traditions, social, cultural and religious. This was once done by Clifford Geertz who compared Islamic life in Indonesia and Marokko. Not just to look for similarities and differences, but the main thing is to enrich perspectives and deepen the weight of the study. In today's global world, comparative studies are helpful in providing new perspectives from both outsiders and insiders. Anthropology always seeks connections and connections across social domains (Mahyudi, 2016: 210).

3.4. Objects of Anthropological Approach in Islamic Studies

In its development, the anthropological approach in Islamic studies has the following objects of study (Mahyudi, 2016: 211-213).

a. *The creation of man*

In this case, it will be studied about the beginning of human creation and how man later developed. Of course, Darwin's theory of evolution will be part of the study of this point. Also the question of whether it was before Adam as there are other Adams. Like Iqbal's tendency, for example, to say in his book "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam", that Adam mentioned in the Qur'an is more of a historical concept.

b. *Human structure*

In this object, it will be examined about the arrangements that make up man, namely body, soul, spirit, reason, heart, eyes of heart and conscience. From this, the concept of a complete human being can be obtained in accordance with the concept of Islam. So that with it humans will be different from angels, jinns, animals, plants and inanimate objects. While explaining the differences between humans and these creatures.

c. *Miscellaneous human beings*

Examine the human differences between men and women, tribes, nations, language differences, and the wisdom behind these differences.

d. *The purpose for which man was created*

This object examines the purpose for which man was created and what mission he carried on earth. While explaining the meaning of worship, caliphate, earthing the power of the world and so on.

e. *Man's relationship with the universe*

At this point, we will examine the concept of the universe for humans. Is it with this concept that man is the center of this universe, as well as about the equilibrium between man and the universe with all its contents. This will be related to the science of living environment.

f. *Man's relationship with his God*

In this object it will be studied whether religion is a fithrah in man. Also about the role of prophets, scriptures and worship in this connection.

g. *Future man*

In this case, it will be studied about future human engineering. Among others about artificial breeding, biotechnology, robotic man and other things.

h. *Man after death*

At this point, it will be studied about how man is after death, and what he must prepare in this world for his life in the future. If the culture is associated with religion, then the religion studied is religion as a cultural phenomenon, not a religious teaching that comes from God. Anthropology does not address the misrepresentation of a religion and all its devices, such as beliefs, rituals and beliefs in the sacred.

The area of anthropology is limited only to the study of emerging phenomena. According to Atho Mudzhar, there are five religious phenomena that can be studied, namely (Mahyudi, 2016: 211-213):

- a. Scripture or manuscript or source of religious teachings and symbols.
- b. Adherents or leaders or religious leaders, namely the attitudes, behaviors and passions of their adherents.
- c. Rites, institutions and worship, such as prayer, hajj, fasting, marriage and inheritance.
- d. Tools such as mosques, churches, bells, peci and the like.
- e. Religious organizations where religious believers gather and play a role, such as Nahdatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Persis, Protestant Church, Shi'ah and others

3.5. People of Anthropological Studies

a. *Koentjaraningrat*

He was born in Yogyakarta in 1923. He graduated with a Bachelor of Letters Indonesian University of Indonesia in 1952. received an MA in anthropology from Yale University (United States) in 1956, and a Doctor of Anthropology from the University of Indonesia in 1958. Before retiring in 1988, he was a professor of Anthropology at the University of Indonesia. He has also been an outstanding professor at Gajah Mada University, Military Law Academy, Police Science College, and has been invited as a visiting professor at the University of Utrecht (Netherlands), Columbia University, Illinors University, Ohio University, University of Wisconsin, University of Malaya, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, and Center for South East Asian Studies, Kyoto University. The scientific awards he received were the degree of Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Utrecht (1976) and the Fukuoka Asian Cultural Price (1995).

b. *Parsudi Suparlan*

Prof. Parsudi Suparlan is a national anthropologist, a true scientist, who has contributed to making anthropology in Indonesia have a firm figure and pattern as a scientific discipline, which is none other than the importance of mastering theory. He graduated with a Bachelor of Anthropology from the University of Indonesia in 1964. Then he graduated in 1972 and his PhD graduated in 1976 in the United States. He achieved the title of Professor of Anthropology, University of Indonesia in 1998. According to him, anthropology is a strong discipline, because of the importance of theory, the acumen of analysis, the accuracy of methodology, and not just parsing data. In addition, it is also important to have a strong understanding of cultural concepts and social structures.

c. Clifford Geertz

Professor Clifford Geertz is an anthropological figure from the United States. He was dubbed the All-Season Anthropological Figure. This is because his thinking is always up to date. His work entitled *The Religion of Java* is a work that has a strong characteristic of classical functionalism. Geertz is also recognized as one of the pathfinders for postmodernism in the social sciences. Almost every work and discussion of anthropological theory in the world cites his works, even if the conversation is criticizing/contradicting his thinking. One of his thoughts that contains revelation and reflects on the condition of today's urban society and culture is a thesis on agricultural involution that can be traced in the book *Agricultural Involution, The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia* (1963).

d. James Danandjaja

He was born in Jakarta on April 13, 1934. He was the first Folklor Nusantara figure. The cultural part called folklor is in the form of folk language, traditional expressions, puzzles, legends, fairy tales, jokes, folk songs, fine arts, and so on. He introduced the knowledge of folklor to students of the Department of Anthropology, FISIP, University of Indonesia since 1972. In this course, the students, among others, are tasked with collecting various folklorists in the country. The results of that collection, among others, were those he used for his book. He earned a Master's from the University of Berkeley in 1971 with a paper that was later published as a book, *Annotated Bibliography of Javanese Folklore*. He obtained his Doctorate in Psychological Anthropology from the University of Indonesia in 1977, with a dissertation on *Trunyan Village Farmer Culture in Bali*

4. Conclusion

The study or study of religion with an anthropological approach seeks to study about humans and society related to religion and culture that develops in that society. In other words, religious anthropology examines the relationship between man and supernatural power, human thought, attitudes and behavior in relation to unreal power. The fruits of human thoughts and behaviors about religion and belief can in fact be seen in the form of behaviors, actions and behaviors carried out by religious or religious actors, either individually or socially

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