

THE MINIATURE OF GOD AND THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE BIBLE TEXT FROM THE ISLAM PERSPECTIVE

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***Abstract:** The characteristic of a religion never been far from the textual influence of a holy book as its absolut fundamental. The religious figures of accross time seemed to have given a tremendous effect to the religions itself. Moreover, according to the religious research, religions have become a spirit of the civilizations. Most people consider religions as an alternative solution to a political polemic, social dilemma, or conflicts between groups. What is more interesting is that between two religions, they share quite similiar relevance and terminology, but their perspective are substantially different. For one example, the chronicle of Ibrahim, the sacrificial of his son, theological concept terminology, textual suitability and fact-finding science, and some prophets chronicles. Given from the explanations above, it is a responsibility for every people to determine the characteristic of their religions. Therefore, this article is aimed to give an explicit explanation about Islam as the ultimate religion to correct and to complement the previous holy books, particularly to observe the miniature of God within the Holy Bible in Christianity, as well as the the credibility of Islamic expression in the perspective of the Holy Bible.*

***Keywords:** God's miniature; Bible text; Islam*

I. INTRODUCTION

The growth of the science in such era makes the researchers easily to conduct their research. However, pro and contra in the religions literacy become the main topic for intellectuals who applied a compromised approach, as well as for the scientists who prefer to apply a contradictive approach, cross ideas of theologies, social, religions, politics, history and other fields of study. This is a major issue to the researcher if they took this subjectively. This writing aims to correct the misunderstanding between two Holy Books in terms of their similarities, particularly in the terminology of Allah (God) in both religions as they are two dominant religions in the world today.

To make it more relevant and objective, this research took a thorough measure in citing and extracting textual religious information from two holy books. They would be a fundamental reference to elaborate the formulations of the problems. Moreover, the literature study of this research attributed to H.A.R. Gibb, a professor in Oxford University, in his research, in which he considered Alquran as a base of thinking. Gabb conceived that Alquran contains commands from God, given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad for 20 years presenting Islam in his life. It consisted of verses about Islam, moralities, proofs of His existence to those the unbeliever, social and law orders. Gibb did not mentioned that religion and rational mind are inseparable, but it is more like the rational itself is controlled by religion or just a mere subjectional delusion. Rational plane considered the religion is one of its object. (Nata Abudin, 1998: 97)

This writing is expected to be a contribution in the Islamic knowledge and that positive outcome can be extracted from this research by communities in every point of

view. We realize that this research is far from perfect, and for that we do apologize. May Allah granted us blessing and forgiveness.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative, using a literature study. The data obtained in this research is sourced from history books and journal articles. The data was collected by summarizing and formulating the opinions from the experts written on the books, journals etc. The data analysis is similar to Gibb's which is using Holy Books as the fundamental base of thinking.

III. RESEARCH RESULT

1. The miniature of Allah in Bible

In the Great Dictionary of Bahasa Indonesia, the term *miniatur* means a smaller replica or painting from its actual size.¹ From that definition, the point of this subtitle is an understanding effort and focus analysis to the miniature of Allah in The Bible published by Indonesian Bible Institution. The word of *Allah* (God) is very interesting in The Bible to analyze in order to make a distinctive meaning between two religions. This is also to avoid misunderstanding of both terms. It is also important to know that both holy books similarly use the term of *Allah* (God), but the characteristic and the substantial are utterly different in contrast. If we look closely to the Genesis Bible published by Indonesian Bible Institution and King James version, the miniature of Allah (God) is explained as a man in Genesis 1: 26-27

*"Then God said : Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*²

Based on the Bible terminology of the miniature of God, Murni Hermawaty Sitanggang wrote in the *Jurnal Teologi Injili* and her service to the people that she agreed with the miniature of God that is further explained as follows:

*"The phrase saying that men were created according to His image is basically taken from The Genesis Bible 1: 26. "Image" in Hebrew is written צֶלֶם (selem), whereas in Greek, it uses eikon tou qeou (eikon tou Theou). In Latin, "image" mentioned in this Bible is Imago Dei, means God created mankind likening His own characteristics (Gen. 1: 26-27) (Siringo-ringo, 2013, p. 39). This indicates that there is similarity between God and human kind regarded to their characteristics, the quality. Therefore, created according to His image can be considered as "resembling God."*³

Based on the explanation above, we know that The Genesis Bible which is part of the Old Testament has an arguable history, because The Old Testament was once lost but

¹See : Kamus Bahasa Indonesia, *Miniatur*, accessed on 18 January 2020, 20.49 WIB. On the website, <http://kbbi.web.id>

²Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Al-Kitab*, (LAI, 2013), p. 2.

³Murni Hermawaty Sitanggang, *Citra Diri Menurut Kejadian 1 : 26-27 dan Aplikasinya Bagi Pengurus Pemuda Remaja GPMI Hebron Malang*, Vol.3 No.1, January 2019, p. 49

then was found again in the age of King Josiah.⁴ That is why, bringing up the the book of Genesis which is rooted from The Old Testament cannot be separated from its historical review. Professor Abdu'L-had said that historical approach is very essential in conducting textual research from a holy book. He also stated that:

*"The Most wonderful and, perhaps, the most manifest prophecy about the divine mission of the greatest man and the apostle of god, constained in the seventh chapter of the Book of the Prophet Daniel, deserves to be seriously studied and impartially considered. In it great events in the history of mankind, which succeed each other within a period of more than a thousand years, are represented by the figures of four formedable monsters in a thousand years."*⁵

From that previous literature, it is understood that the terminology of *Allah* (God) used to depict the miniature of God is totally different from the concept of God (Allah) in Islam. Regarding them as the same terminology is a mistake. It is because there is no ground parity of both terminology, both historically and substantivally.

2. The miniature of Jesus Christ

Erham Budi Wiranto wrote in his article published by *Jurnal Religi* UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta about the miniature of Jesus Christ, it is located in Dura Europus Church:

*"The earliest picture of Jesus as a man is located in Katakome in Rome, precisely in the church of Dura-Europus nearby Euphrate river. Jesus was conceived as a young, personable sheperd with oval face, short hair without beard. In some pictures, He often shouldered a lamb."*⁶

Another source about the picture of Jesus is uniquely various that is influenced by Christian culture. For example, a picture of Jesus crusade in Javanese Christian *wayang*,⁷ this indicates there is no fixed description about Jesus picture in art painting.



Figure 1.1 Jesus style art in *wayang Purwa*⁸

⁴Al-Azami, *The History of The Qur'anic Text From Revelation To Compilation A Comparative Study With The old and New Tastament*, (Depok: Gema Insani,2015), p. 256.

⁵Abdu' L-Ahad Dawud, *Muhammad In The Bible*, (Sarawak : BINA,1978), p.59.

⁶Erham Budi Wiranto, *Ragam Pencitraan Diri Yesus Sebagai Kontekstualisasi Dalam Kristen*, *Jurnal Religi* Vol.IX No.2 Juli 2013, p. 220

⁷Bayu Edvara Paskalis, *Membangun Kristologi Melalui Seni Rupa Kristus Tersalip Gaya Wayang Purwa*, *Jurnal Teologi* Vol.6 No.1 , May 2017, p. 26.

⁸Bayu Edvara Paskalis, *Membangun Kristologi Melalui Seni Rupa Kristus Tersalip Gaya Wayang Purwa*, *Jurnal Teologi* Vol.6 No.1 , May 2017, p. 26

Based on the explanation above, we can see that the exact picture of Jesus is ambiguous among Christian. Insan L.S. Mokoginta stated in his book *Mustahil Kristen Bisa Menjawab* (means, *unanswerable question to Christianity*) that all the picture of Jesus is a merely imagination.⁹ Mokoginta argued if you ask a person from Asmad tribe in Papua to depict Jesus Christ based on their own imagination, He could be a short, frizzy black man without an outfit.

3. The miniature of the Holy Spirit

In Christianity, The Holy Spirit is one of the God in Trinity. The Bible of Indonesian Bible Institution explains that The Holy Spirit is a spirit than can arouse certain people.¹⁰ Al-A'zami, in his personal statement, saying that verses about Trinity in The Bible has become an interpolation included in the New Testament, according to the Christian scholars.¹¹ An ex-journalist as well as a doctor in the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, Adian Husaini, assumed that many of the Bible text cannot be identified due to the unknown author whom their credibility is historically verified.¹²

Furthermore, if we look at the Bible, specifically there are few verses tells about The Holy Spirit. On the *Sarapan Pagi* website, they express the concerning mistakes among Christians regarding to the Holy Spirit and the substance of the Christ.

*"We, Christians, often depicted The Holy Spirit as a dove, eagle, or oil etc., giving opinion that God can be anything because He Is Almighty. Therefore, there is some statement that Jesus is just a man and God the Holy Spirit can be anything. This misunderstanding is sometimes criticised by nonchristian. Fortunately, there are no verses in Bible tells about inappropriate shape of the Holy Spirit."*¹³

In this website, we can clearly say that The Holy Spirit has many form; a dove, fire, or a light. To highlight the arguments, an anonymous named Apolos cited few verses in Bible; Mathew 3: 16; Chronicles 2: 1-4; and 1 John: 1-5. The conclusion is that this Apolo tends to believe that the form of The Holy Spirit is a light.

4. Critics and Islam perspective

From all the explanations above, we can tell that the depiction, both textually and religious application, is a religious manner in Christianity. An additional reference from *Jurnal Wardah*¹⁴, the researcher had explained about the difference between Islam and Christian to get us understand more about them. For a brief explanation, the author would explain the outline of the Islam perspective about miniature terminology of The Trinity in the Holy Bible.

To muslim, such concept about the depiction of God is void, because Islam believes in *Tawhid* (indivisible oneness of God). This is explained in the Quran, al-Ikhlâs, that the

⁹Insan Ls Moko Ginta, *Mustahil Kristen Bisa Menjawab*, accessed online on 19 January 2019. 7:57 WIB, <https://www.facebook.com/notes/-kristologi/>.

¹⁰Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Al-Kitab*, (Jakarta: Lai, 2013), p. 379

¹¹Al-A'zami, *The History of The Qur'anic Text From Revelation To Compilation A Comparative Study With The old and New Testament*, (Depok: Gema Insani, 2015), p. 330

¹²Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat Dari Hegemoni Kristen Kedominasi Liberal-Sekular*, (Depok : Gema Insani, 2005), p. 297

¹³Apolos, *Wujud Roh Kudus Adalah Cahaya*, accessed on 19 January 2020, 20.34 WIB. website [Http://www.sarapanpagi.org](http://www.sarapanpagi.org)

¹⁴Eko Nopriyansa, *Analisis Teks Bible dan Al-Qur'an dalam Menjelaskan Sejarah Kenabian*, *Jurnal WARDAH* Vol.20 No.2 year 2019

depiction of God is strongly prohibited. Building, creating, or designing the miniature of God is also prohibited.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the references the author delivered before, we can simply conclude few problems relating to understanding the miniature of God in the textual terminology of the Bible as the distinction between Islam and Christian. After all, this writing has given answers to the misunderstanding in the society that the terminology of Allah (God) in both Holy Books are identical. This is because the difference perspective between two religions about this terminology is very contrast, both terminology and historically.

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