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Discourse On Eschatology Of Religions Other Than Islam In Selected 17th Century Malay Texts

Perbincangan Mengenai Eskatologi Agama-Agama Selain Islam Di Dalam Teks-Teks Melayu Terpilih Kurun Ke-17

Mohd Noh Abdul Jalil,* W. Mohd Azam Mohd Amin,** and Majdan Alias***

Abstract

This article analyzes the discourse on eschatology of religions other than Islam in selected 17th century Malay texts. The discourse on religions other than Islam was not common in early Malay texts. Malay scholars at that time did not discuss much about religions other than Islam. This could be due to the fact that the priority at that time was on educating the local people on Islam itself. The teachings of Islam were new to them. Among the topics that gained prominence at that time were discourses on Islamic theology (*tawhīd*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and Islamic mysticism (*taṣawwūf*). Despite the scarcity of the discussions on religions other than Islam, it was not totally neglected. Three 17th century Malay texts namely *Lubb al-Kasyf* of al-Sinkilī, the *Tibyān* of al-Rānīrī and *Hikayat Seribu Masalah* were found to have elements of such discourses. The religions other than Islam discussed in these texts were the Magian, Judaism and Christianity. Analysis on these three texts shows that those other religions were included in the main discourse on the Islamic eschatological issues. The discourse on religions other than Islam in these texts is concentrating on the danger posed to the Muslims. The discourse is short and not done throughout the texts. The contents of the texts are still on Islam and its teachings. The priority of the authors at that time is not to explain about religions other than Islam in their writings but to strengthen the faiths of the Malay Muslims.

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Discourse On Eschatology Of Religions Other Than Islam In Selected **222** 17th Century Malay Texts

Keywords: Malay Archipelago, Islam, Magism, Judaism, Christianity, Malay texts.

Abstrak

Artikel ini menganalisa perbincangan mengenai eskatologi agama-agama selain Islam di dalam teks-teks Melayu terpilih kurun ke-17. Hakikatnya, perbincangan mengenai agama-agama selain Islam bukan sesuatu yang biasa di dalam teks-teks awal Melayu. Sarjana-sarjana Melayu pada masa itu kurang menumpukan perbincangan mengenai agama-agama selain Islam di dalam karya mereka. Salah satu sebabnya ialah keutamaan pada masa tersebut diberikan kepada kepada proses pendidikan masyarakat tempatan tentang agama Islam. Di antara topik-topik yang sering dibincangkan di dalam teks-teks mereka adalah mengenai akidah, fikah dan tasawuf. Walaupun kurang diberi tumpuan, perbincangan mengenai agama-agama selain Islam masih ada. Terdapat tiga teks Melayu kurun ke-17 iaitu *Lubb al-Kasyf* ditulis oleh al-Sinkilī, *Tibyān* oleh al-Rānī dan *Hikayat Seribu Masalah* yang tidak menyatakan penulisnya mengandungi perbincangan-perbincangan tersebut. Agama-agama yang dibincangkan ialah Majusi, Yahudi dan Kristian. Analisa terhadap teks-teks ini menunjukkan agama-agama tersebut dibincang di dalam konteks perbincangan mengenai eskatologi di dalam Islam. Perbincangan mengenai agama-agama selain Islam menjerus kepada bahayanya kepada orang-orang Islam. Penerangannya pendek dan tidak di dalam keseluruhan teks-teks tersebut. Tujuan utama penulisan teks-teks ini masih lagi untuk mendidik masyarakat Melayu Islam mengenai agama Islam tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Kepulauan Melayu, Islam, Majusi, Yahudi, Kristian, Kitab-kitab Melayu.

Introduction

The strategic location of the Malay Archipelago which located in the middle of busy shipping line connecting the East and West at the Straits of Malacca was always seen as the main factor of the emergence on important early kingdoms such as Aceh and Malacca between the 16th and 17th century. Both kingdoms flourished as ports of call for ships from all over the world. Traders who called at these ports brought together not only trading goods but also their cultures and religions on the shores of the Malay Archipelago. Despite the dominance of Islam at that time, it was possible that other religions might be practiced by these international traders coming from all over the place. One of the tools to analyze the influence of religions other than Islam during the early period of Islam in the Malay Archipelago is by looking at the discourse on these religions in the classical Malay texts. It would be interesting to know the extent of discourse of religions other than Islam in the Malay Archipelago at the time of the rapid development of Islam there.

For that reason, this paper will analyze three 17th century Malay texts namely *Lubb al-Kasyf* of al-Sinkilī, the *Tibyān* of al-Rānīrī and the *Hikayat Seribu Masalah* which without information on the author. These three texts were chosen because of its contents on the discourse of eschatology of religions other than Islam. Those other religions are the Magian, Judaism and Christianity. The finding of this paper will let us know the interest and priority of the people at that time in the Malay Archipelago on the importance to get to know religions other than Islam.

The *Lubb al-Kasyf* of al-Sinkilī

‘Abdul al-Ra’ūf bin ‘Ālī al-Jawī al-Fansurī al-Sinkīlī was born in the Western Sumatran coastal town of Singkel. Undoubtedly, he was one of the most influential Muslim scholars during the early period of Islam in the Malay Archipelago. His mastery in Islamic sciences was evident when he was appointed as the Mufti of Aceh the moment he returned to Aceh in 1661 until his death in 1693.¹

Al-Sinkilī’s educational journeys to many centres of Islamic education in Arabia had shaped him intellectually and spiritually. His mastery on Islamic sciences was evident in his fifty six writings. Riddell has categorized his writings into eight different subjects namely Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Sufism (*tasawwūf*), Quranic exegesis (*tafsīr*), Islamic Law (*sharī‘a*), Eschatology (*sakharat al-maut*), the purpose of prayer, the doctrines of Ibn al-‘Arabi as well as the duties of teacher and students.² The focus in the paper will be on one out of his many other writings namely *Lubb al-Kashf wa al-Bayan lima Yarahū al-Muhtadar bi al-‘Iyan* (The Essence of the Exposition and Explanation of what the Dying sees in His Vision). He had included discussions on religions other than Islam in this text, albeit briefly.

‘Abdul Ra’ūf wrote this book in Arabic, and it was translated into Malay by Katib Seri Raja.³ It is based on *Kitāb al-Tadhkirah bi umūr al-Ākhirah* (The Book of the Reminder of the Events in the Hereafter) by al-Qurṭūbī (d. 1272). It focuses on the experience of every human being while on his deathbed. This text also includes an elaboration of the

¹ Zulkifli Aini, “Pendekatan Al-Wasatiyyah Syekh Abdul Rauf Ali Al-Fansuri Dalam Dakwah Di Alam Melayu” (paper presented at the International Conference on Islamic Thought IV, 9-10 Disember 2014, Akademi Pengajian Islam Universiti Malaya), 6.

² Riddell, P., *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Singapore: Horizon Books Pte. Ltd., 2001), 129.

³ Braginsky, V., *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature: A Historical Survey of Genres, Writings and Literary Views* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004), p. 651.

essential preparations of a Muslim who is about to face death. These preparations are important in protecting Muslims from Satan, who will try to change the belief of the dying Muslims from Islamic faith to others. For this analysis, we will be using Voorhoeve's edition of the text which was published under the title *Bajan Tadjalli*.⁴

Al-Sinkilī explains that Satan will come in three different faces to the dying Muslims to persuade them to change their religion. These three faces will be in three different colours as well, which are black, red and yellow. Black represents Satan itself, while red and yellow represent Judaism and Christianity.

*"The moment when someone meets death, he will see a lot of different faces, and when the one with the black face approaches him, indeed that is the devil and he must say, "there is no God except Allah and Muhammad -peace be upon him- is His messenger. And when the one with the red face approaches him, that is indeed the Christian and he must say "there is no God except Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger". And when the one with the yellow face approaches, indeed that is the Jew and the parted soul must say "there is no God except Allah and Muhammad is His messenger". And when the one with the fair skin approaches, indeed that is the Messenger, he must say "MasyaAllah, he was indeed one of the true believers.""*⁵

Thus, it is important for the dying Muslims to remember God every time these evil temptations come to him by repeating the prayer *lā ilāha illā Allah* (There is no God but Allah). Furthermore, al-Sinkilī also mentions that at the moment of death Satan will come to the dying

⁴ Voorhoeve, P., 'Bajan Tadjalli', *TBG* 85 (1952) 91.

⁵ "Telah datang kepada manusia pada ketika sakarat al-maut beberapa rupa jang amat banjak, maka apabila datang kepadanya rupa jang hitam maka jaitu iblis maka hendaklah ia mengutjap la ilaha illa'allah (Muhammad rasulu'llah) huwa huwa huwa. Dan apabila datang kepadanya rupa merah maka jaitu nasrani maka hendaklah mengutjap la ilaha illa'allah Muhammad rasulu'llah huwa huwa huwa. Dan apabila datang kepadanya rupa kuning maka jaitu jahudi maka hendaklah ia mengutjap la ilaha illa'allah (Muhammad rasulu'llah) huwa huwa huwa. Dan apabila datang kepadanya rupa jang putih maka jaitu rupa nabi kita Muhammad rasulullah maka hendaklah ia mengutjap masja'Allah kana min al-mu'minina'l-hakk" (*Bajan Tadjalli*, p. 91).

person in the faces of their relatives to influence him from his right hand side to convert to Christianity and from his left hand side to Judaism.

“Sjaich Djamaluddin may Allah be pleased with him said in the book titled "Reminder", that some of the religious scholars said that when someone is on his deathbed, there will be two Satans sitting by his side; one on his right and the other on his left side. The devil on his right will take the form of his father and will say: My child, I love you and care for you, therefore, die as a Christian for it is the best religion out of all. And the devil on his left would take the form of his mother and say to him: "My child, my womb is where you reside, and my milk is your drink, and my lap is your sit, but please die as a Jew as it is the best religion of all.”⁶

In this text, al-Sinkilī includes a quotation from his source of Shaykh Jamaluddīn’s book of *Tazkirah* (Reminder) on other religions such as Judaism and Christianity, to tell his readers that they should prepare themselves, and not be tempted by Satan to deviate them from their faith during their very last moment of life before death. Satan will try to change the belief of a dying Muslim either to Judaism or Christianity.

Thus, Muslims should prepare themselves by remembering God all the time, and not fall into Judaism or Christianity. Although al-Sinkilī considered Judaism and Christianity deviationists, his response to these two religions is different from the way al-Rānirī treated them in his texts. He did not use the word ‘*kāfir*’ or ‘disbeliever’ to the followers of these two Abrahamic religions. The selection of these two religions is simply a quotation from a different source, mentioned above. Moreover the

⁶“Kata Sjaich Djamaluddin radija’llahu ‘anhu tersebut dalam kitab Tadhkirah tjeritera daripada setengah ulama’ bahwasanja seseorang hamba Allah apabila adalah ia pada ketika sakarat al-maut maka duduk disisinja dua orang setan seorang dari kanannja dan lagi seorang dari kirinja. Maka setan dari pehak kanannja itu merupakan dirinja seperti rupa bapanja pada hal berkata ia akan dia: Hai anakku, bahwa sanja adalah aku menjajangi dikau dan mengasihi dikau, tetapi matilah engkau atas agama nasrani, dan ialah sebaik-baik daripada segala agama. Dan setan daripada pehak kirinja itu merupakan dirinja seperti rupa ibunja pada hal berkata ia akan dia: Hai anakku bahwasanja adalah perutku bedjanamu dan air susu minumanmu dan pahaku tempat kedudukanmu, tetapi matilah engkau atas agama jahudi, dan ialah sebaik-baik daripada segala agama.” (Bajan Tadjalli, 92)

discussion about these two religions is common to the Qur'ān, as well as in the prophetic traditions.

The important message which al-Sinkilī wishes to convey to his readers is to prepare themselves properly before death, by remembering God all the time. Otherwise, there is a chance that they will deviate. If that is the case, they will have to face the consequences similar to all other deviationists in the Hereafter which is in the Hellfire. Again, the highlights of the two Abrahamic religions in this text have nothing to do with the author's direct reference to the followers of these religions in the Malay world at that time. Rather, it was simply the continuation of a tradition of the Qur'ān to inform Muslims to safeguard their faith against any other religions such as Judaism and Christianity. The reminder from the Qur'ān to Muslims on this matter is clearly mentioned in the following verse:

'Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with thee unless thou follow their form of religion. Say: "The Guidance of Allah,-that is the (only) Guidance." Wert thou to follow their desires after the knowledge which hath reached thee, then wouldst thou find neither Protector nor helper against Allah' (Qur'ān, 2:120)

The above analysis indicates that the discussions on Satan and death were included simultaneously. The description from al-Sankilī on the colours representing Satan indicates that Satan can appear in different forms. The role of Satan is similar to the role of other deviated religion namely Judaism and Christianity which is to guile people into believing in them. In short, Muslims should be aware of the threats brought by the Jews and Christians while they are alive. They must also be firm with their belief in Islam especially when they are on their deathbed as threats still exist and in different forms.

The *Tibyān* of al-Rānīrī

Nūr al-Dīn ibn 'Ālī ibn Hasan-Ji ibn Muḥammad Ḥamīd al-Shāfī'ī al-Ash'ārī al-'Aydarūsī al-Rānīrī was a well-respected 17th. century Muslim scholar in the Malay Archipelago. He was one of the

most influential Muslim scholars during the golden period of Islam in the Malay Archipelago, between the sixteenth and seventeenth century.⁷

Al-Rānīrī's contributions to the Malay Archipelago and also to Islamic heritage in general, are significant. He assumed the highest religious position in Aceh as the Shaykh of Islam. The appointment was made by the Sultan of Aceh himself at that time, Sultan Iskandar Thānī (1636-1641). After the death of the Sultan, the throne was succeeded by his queen, Sultanah Tāj al- 'Ālam Ṣafīyyat al-Dīn Shāh (1641-1675). Al-Rānīrī also won favour of a new ruler and retained his position at the court until his abrupt departure from Aceh in 1644.

Al-Rānīrī's scholarly works particularly his writings are in various disciplines of knowledge. He had mastered various branches of the Islamic knowledge such as *Fiqh*, *Hadith*, Islamic Theology, History, Sufism, and Comparative Religion. Most of the themes in his writings are from these disciplines with a special emphasis on the field of Islamic theology and Sufism. There are at least three different periods taken by al-Rānīrī to write his scholarly works. It includes the period before he arrived in Aceh (before 1636), the period he was in Aceh (1636-1644) and the period after he left Aceh and return to his homeland (1644 onwards).

In his *Tibyān fī Ma'rifat al-Adyān*, al-Rānīrī discusses the role of Satan which eventually led to the emergence of Magism as a religion. According to al-Rānīrī, Magism existed since the time of Prophet Ib-rāhīm (p.b.u.h). The story began shortly after God saved the prophet from the fire.

*“From that on emerged a sect named Magism. It was then divided into three other sects. The first sect is Zamzamiyyah. The people from this sect cover their face while worshipping the fire to prevent their breath upon themselves. The origin of that practice in the religion was based on the incident of the burning of Prophet Ibrahim.”*⁸

⁷This is according to Osman Bakar mentioned in his article “Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian World.” In *Islamic Spirituality – Manifestations*, ed. S.H. Nasr (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991), 259. This is due to the intensification of missionary activities lead by the Sufis.

⁸“Kemudian dari itu maka jadi pula satu taifah bernama Majusi. Maka jadilah taifah Majusi itu terbahagi atas tiga taifah. Pertama Zamzamiyyah namanya. Adalah kelakuan mereka itu menutupi mukanya tatkala menyembah api supaya jangan sampai

They began to worship fire and claimed that Prophet Ibrāhīm did the same during the burning and as a result he was saved by God. In addition to such narration, some people also claimed that the same action was done by Qabīl where the animal he slaughtered for sacrifice was not burnt by fire unlike his brother's, Habīl. This was because Qabīl was worshipping fire, whereas his brother was not.

At this juncture, Satan came to the Prophet in a human form and a conversation took place between them. Satan said that all righteousness is from the Light of God. He elaborates further by saying that the evils, on the other hand, originated from Satan. Therefore, both God and the Satan were brothers. The former was known as *Yardan*, while the latter was *Ahriman*.

“Later comes the cursed Iblis in a form of a man in disguise and said, “All the good and beneficial things come from the light of Allah and every evil things originated from Iblis. Thereupon Allah and Iblis are related, one is called Yazdan (text reads Yardan) and the other is Ahriman. And both of them are enemies.”⁹

With regards to the above, the accuracy of the facts is questionable. Furthermore, there is a lack of proper arrangement of the facts. Al-Rānīrī did not separate between his own views and the views of others. The sources of some of his presentations can be traced while most of the time they cannot. In fact, some of the narrations are too far-fetched, to be logical.

For example, Shahrastānī had narrated the same version as Al-Rānīrī's, with regard to the name of the elements of righteousness and evil. The former was known as *Yardan* or *Yazdan* and the latter as *Ahriman*.¹⁰ Al-Rānīrī probably quotes this from Shahrastānī. However, there are differences in terms of the origin of such names. According to Shah-

nafas mereka itu kepadanya. Maka asal kejadian agama mereka itu tatkala ditumukan api akan Nabi Allah Ibrahim” (Tibyān, 16).

⁹*“Maka datang Iblis alaihi al-laknat merupakan dirinya seperti manusia serta katanya, ‘Bahwa segala keelokan itu member manfaat lagi ia cahaya dari cahaya Allah, dan tiap-tiap kejahatan itu dalalah lagi zulmah, maka iaitu daripada Iblis. Maka Iblis dan Allah keduanya bersaudara, seorang bernama Yazdan, kedua bernama Ahriman. Dan adalah antara keduanya beradawah” (Tibyān, 16-17).*

¹⁰ Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal*, p. 278, and *Tibyān*, p. 16. Shahrastānī had used *Yazdan* for the element of righteousness, while Al-Rānīrī narrated it as *Yardan*.

rastānī, this belief belonged to the *Kayūmathiyya* sect. *Ahriman* came into existence when *Yazdan*, the Creator, unconsciously thought of a negative thing on what would happen if he had a rival. Such negative thinking was not suitable for him as an element of light and righteousness. Consequently, the darkness, represented by *Ahriman* came into existence to represent the evil element in this world.

Al-Rānīrī also states that both *Yardan* and *Ahriman* were brothers, but they were in a state of rivalry against each other. He mixes all the incidents in one long story, which was a narration of the history of Magism. But, all the facts were presented in a very brief manner, and could lead into confusion. No further explanation was given on this matter, and the story is left without any concrete evidence or justification.

As mentioned before, al-Rānīrī starts the history of Magism by saying that it began during the time of Prophet Ibrāhīm. The conversation between the Prophet and the devil made al-Rānīrī conclude the existence of the devil. Unfortunately, from here, he jumps to another topic on the brotherhood of God and the devil as a result of the existence of the elements of righteousness and evil on earth. Both narrations do not have any relation at all and probably Al-Rānīrī had missed some points in between these two different stories.

Al-Rānīrī probably only wanted to narrate the historical background of Magism in accordance to the general understanding of them among the Muslims. However, the improper arrangement of facts presented by him led to the opposite conclusion. Thus, without the proper references by Al-Rānīrī, one may conclude that the historical perspectives of Magism as presented by him may be his own personal view.

The difficulties to verify al-Rānīrī's versions of the above narration are also the result of too brief an explanation given by him. It may be true that such conversation did take place and because of it some people then worshipped fire. But with the absence of reliable references, al-Rānīrī's historical background of Magism is considered as a mere conjecture and not established facts.

The *Hikayat Seribu Masalah*

The *Hikayat Seribu Masalah* discusses in a great length on the eschatological issues related to religions other than Islam namely Judaism, Christianity as well as Magism. This text is about questions and answers between a Jewish rabbi 'Abdullah bin Salām and Prophet Muḥammad (p.b.u.h). No information about its author is included in the text.

The first response to the question from ‘Abdullah bin Salām indicates that the reward for paradise in the Hereafter is granted for those who utter the *Shahādah*. It is not due to their good deeds. The Jews, Christians or even the idol worshippers who utter the *Shahādah* afterwards are guaranteed Paradise in the Hereafter. If they still continue their practices of worshipping fire, idols or tree without uttering the *Shahādah* they are considered as disbelievers. Paradise is not meant for the disbelievers.

“So, say to him, O Muhammad, are those who entered paradise because of their good deeds?” Rasulallah then answered, “O Abdullah, they did not enter the paradise because of their good deeds. Only those who say the There is no God but Allah and Prophet Muhammad is His Messenger will get the Paradise and not because of their good deeds. Even if the Jews and Christians say these two phrases, or the idol worshippers, if they enter Islam, the Paradise is for them.” Abdullah responded by saying, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah.”

“Say O Muhammad, all Jews and Christians and fire, tree and idol worshippers – they are all unbelievers. Abdullah then said, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah.”¹¹

The second response on the question about the Hereafter came after the answer given by the Prophet on the place on earth similar to Paradise. One of the answers given is a place known as Bukit Qāf.

¹¹ *‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad segala Islam yang masuk syurga itu dengan kebaktiannyakah?’ // Maka sabda Rasulallah, ‘Hai Abdullah segala orang yang masuk syurga tiada dengan kebak(ti)an. Barang siapa menyebut la ilaha illa ‘l-Lah Muhammad Rasulallah itulah yang beroleh syurga tiada dengan kebak(ti)an. Jikalau Yahudi dan Nasrani sekali pun jika ia menyebut dua kalimat itu atau orang yang menyembah berhala sekali pun jika ia masuk Islam, syurga baginya.’ Maka kata Abdullah, ‘Sidiq ya Rasulallah’. (Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 24)*

‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad, segala Yahudi dan Nasrani dan segala orang menyembah api dan orang menyembah berhala dan orang yang menyembah pohon kayu sekalianya itu kafir. Maka kata Abdullah, Sidiq, ya Rasulallah’. (Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 24)

*“Say O Muhammad, is there anything in this world that is similar to the Paradise?” Rasulallah answered, “If there is any, firstly, it would be the Andikini Hill in the Arabian land of Morocco, secondly, the Qaf Hill, thirdly, Anan Hill in the land of Ajam and fourthly, the place named Kabirhurasan.” Abdullah then said, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah”.*¹²

‘Abdullah continues asking the Prophet about the length of Bukit Qāf. To this question, the Prophet made several illustrations on its length which include fifty years walking by all people. ‘Abdullah continues by asking whether those who walk for fifty years are Muslims or disbelievers. Prophet responded by saying that if they walk for fifty years at Bukit Qāf and continues their disobedience to God such as in the case of the Jews, Christians, the sun worshippers of the Magians and the cow worshippers they are all destined for the Hellfire. Upon hearing the answer ‘Abdullah indicates his agreement with the Prophet’s views.

“Say O Muhammad, how long is the Qaf Hill?” Rasulallah answered, “The Qaf Hill could be measured up to to two hundreds years of journey. It starts with two hundreds years of journey by sea and fifty years of journey by the sea, fifty years journey by the hill and fifty years journey through the woods and fifty years of journey by the walk of all mankind.” Abdullah then said, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah”.

‘Say O Muhammad, the fifty years journey of mankind is referring to the Muslims’ or unbelievers’? Rasulallah then answered, “O Abdullah, it is the fifty years journey of all the Jews and Christians and Zoroastrians who worship the sun and worship cows, for they are all

¹²‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad, bumi mana yang serupa dengan bumi surga?’ Maka sabda Rasulallah, ‘Adapun bumi yang serupa dengan bumi sorga itu, pertama Bukit Andikini pada tanah Arab magrib, kedua Bukit Qaf, ketiga Bukit Anan pada tanah Ajam, keempat bumi Kabirhurasan nama tempat itu.’ Maka kata Abdullah, ‘Sidiq, ya Rasulallah’. (Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 58)

the dwellers of hell” Abdullah then said, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah”¹³

The third response on the issue of Hereafter is about the dwellers of the seventh Hellfire. The Prophet gives a long list of dwellers of the Hellfire which includes once again the Jews and Christians. Abdullah then indicates his agreement to the answer given by the Prophet.

“Say, O Muhammad, to whom does the seventh hell belongs?” Muhammad then answered, “O Abdullah, the hell is the place for those who – disobey Allah’s commands – who did not pray, did not fast, commit adultery, drink alcohol, practice usury,, spiteful of other Muslims, like to beat musical drums and all those disbelievers who worship idols and sun worshippers, those who worship stones and wood, and other people who associate Allah with other beings and the Jews and Christians. They are those people who will be thrown into the hell by Allah.” Abdullah then said, “Indeed your words are true, O Rasulallah”¹⁴

¹³ ‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad, berapa panjangnya Bukit Qaf itu?’ Maka sabda Rasulallah, ‘Adapun panjangnya Bukit Qaf itu di dalamnya dua ratus tahun perjalanan. Bermula di dalam dua ratus perjalanan laut dan lima puluh tahun perjalanan laut dan lima puluh tahun perjalanan bukit dan lima puluh tahun perjalanan hutan dan lima puluh tahun perjalanan sekalian manusia.’ Maka kata Abdullah, ‘Sidiq, ya Rasulallah.’ ‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad, lima puluh tahun perjalanan manusia itu kafirkah atau islamkah?’ Maka sabda Rasulallah, ‘Hai Abdullah lima puluh tahun perjalanan kafir sekalian Yahudi dan Nasrani dan //Majusi yang menyembah matahari dan menyembah lembu sekalian mereka itu isi neraka’. Maka kata Abdullah, ‘Sidiq, ya Rasulallah.’ (Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 57)

¹⁴ ‘Katakanlah, ya Muhammad, neraka yang ketujuh itu tempat siapa?’ Maka sabda Muhammad, ‘Hai Abdullah, adapun neraka itu tempat segala orang yang durhaka kepada Allah Taala tiada mau sembahyang dan puasa dan orang berbuat zina dan // orang yang minum arak dan tuak dan orang yang makan ganda berganda dan orang yang dengki akan (se) samannya Islam dan orang yang gemar memalu bunyi-bunyian dan segala kafir yang menyembah berhala dan orang yang menyembah matahari dan orang yang menyembah batu dan menyembah kayu dan segala musyrik dan Yahudi dan Nasrani sekalian mereka itulah yang dimasukkan Allah Subhanahu wa Taala ke dalam neraka. ‘Maka (kata Abdullah), ‘Sidiq, ya Rasulallah.’ (Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 64-65)

The forth is on the issue of *Dajjāl* (Anti-Christ). According to the author those who believe *Dajjāl* as God and worshipping him are among others the Jews and Christians as well as the fire worshipper of Magism. The *Dajjāl* followers and worshippers are among the groups of dweller of the seventh Hellfire discussed above.

*“And say those who worship idols and all other unbelievers who are not worshipping idols, the Jews and Christians, also those who worship the fire, and worship trees, and worship stones, and those who prostrate worshipping Dajjal – so they say, truly they are our God, and to them we worship”*¹⁵

Finally, the author of the text once again re-emphasizes his earlier view on the dwellers of Hellfire. The Jews, Christians and Magism as well as the disbelievers, those associating God with His creations, the unjust individuals and practitioners of usury transactions are all destined in the Hellfire. On the other hand, all prophets and saints, learned teachers, obedient Muslims and martyrs are the dwellers of the Paradise.

“All the righteous in their proper places, all the evildoers in their proper places and being punished. The unbelievers and those who associate Allah with other being and the Jews and Christians and Zoroastrians and the tyrants and those who practice usury, all of them are in hell. Whereas all prophets, saints, religious scholars, righteous souls, martyrs, all other believers from my followers, they will be placed in paradise”.¹⁶

There is no Prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) recorded on the above question and answer session between the Prophet (p.b.u.h) and ‘Abdullah

¹⁵ *“Maka kata segala orang yang menyembah berhala dan segala kafir yang tiada menyembah berhala, Yahudi dan Nasrani dan segala orang menyembah api dan orang menyembah pohon kayu dan orang menyembah batu dan segala orang sekalian sujud menyembah Dajjal, kata segala mereka itu, ‘Sesungguhnya ia ini Tuhan kita/dan/sekalian alam sebenarnya kita sembah’ ”*(Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 74)

¹⁶ *“Segala orang yang saleh pada tempatnya, orang yang durhaka pada tempatnya disiksa. Adapun segala kafir dan musyrik dan dan Yahudi dan Nasrani dan kafir Majusi dan musyrik dan segala zalim dan orang makan berganda-ganda sekaliannya ke dalam neraka. Bermula segala nabi dan wali dan masya’ikh dan segala yang saleh dan segala abid dan //zahid dan orang yang mati syahid dan arif segala umatku yang mukmin dan sekaliannya masuk surga. ”*(Hikayat Seribu Masalah: 83-84)

bin Salām. However, there is a *ḥadīth* narrated by Al-Bukhārī on three questions asked by ‘Abdullah to the Prophet in Madīnah. The three questions were firstly on the first sign of the end of the world, secondly on the first food eaten by the dwellers of Heaven and thirdly on factors which shape the physical appearance of a baby.¹⁷ The Prophet had given his answers to those questions. Upon hearing those answers, ‘Abdullah reiterates his approval on the prophethood of Muḥammad (p.b.u.h).¹⁸

There is also a possibility that the roots of the above four questions and other remaining questions in *Hikayat Seribu Masalah* originated from the Jewish sources known in Islamic tradition as the *Isrāīliyyat*. For example, the story of Bukit Qāf is one of the popular stories in such tradition and not in the Islamic tradition. A study by Muḥammad Ḥussain Ḍahabī on *Isrāīliyyat* points out that the story of Bukit Qāf as an example of a weak *Isrāīliyyat* story.¹⁹ This story has no basis whatsoever from any main sources of Islam, the Qur’ān and the Ḥadīth. However, it was given an elaborated description in the *Isrāīliyyat* tradition.²⁰

Conclusion

The above discourse shows one obvious similarity – the portrayal of the religions namely the Magism, Judaism and Christianity as deviant teachings by all three texts. Despite presenting the shortest discourse on Judaism and Christianity by al-Sinkilī in the *Lubb al-Kasyf* the message is clear. The two religions present a threat to Muslims faith not only when they are still alive but until Muslims are on their deathbed. Muslims must always protect their faiths by understanding and practicing the Islamic teachings consistently.

The role of Satan in deviating Muslims is explained in the *Lubb al-Kasyf* and the *Tibyān*. In the *Lubb al-Kasyf*, al-Sinkilī warned Muslims not to be deceived by Satan who will appear in various forms while they are on the deathbed. Al-Rānīrī also explained the role of Satan which led to the emergence of the Magism. The longest discourse is presented in the *Hikayat Seribu Masalah*. Apart from bringing the same message on the danger brought by the three religions other than Islam, this text added

¹⁷ Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami’ Al-Sahih Al-Mukhtasar* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir, 1987), vol. 11, p. 110.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Muhammad Husain Zahabi, *Israiliat dalam Tafsir dan Hadis* (Singapura: Penerbitan Pustaka Nasional Pte Ltd Singapura, 1988), pp. 48-49.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 49.

one more important message to the readers. It added on the consequence to the followers of these teachings. They will be burnt in the hellfire.

In short, the discourse on religions other than Islam in these three selected texts is concentrating on the danger posed to the Muslims. The discourse is short and not done throughout the texts. The contents of the texts are on Islam and its teachings. The priority of the authors at that time is not to explain about religions other than Islam in their writings but to strengthen the faiths of the Malay Muslims.

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