

BOOK REVIEW

VOICE OF ISLAMIC MODERATION FROM THE MALAY WORLD

Mohd. Kamal Hassan, *Emerging Markets Innovative Research (EMIR)*, Malaysia, 2011, 358pp. ISBN 978-967-10700-1-7.

The book revolves around the state of religion namely Islam in the global context. The advent of the book after ten years of the 11 September 2001 tragedy is intended to explain the Islamic concept of moderation as one way of propagating Islamic teachings (*da'wah*) towards lessening the Islamifobia. The tragedy had intensified global tension between the western world and the world of Islam where Muslims have been labeled with act of violence and religious extremism. Written by independent Muslim intelligentsia in contemporary Malaysia, the book reflects Islamic thought that has been nurtured in a multi ethnic society in Malaysia. As a majority, Muslims have lived and co-existed with non-muslims of various ethnic and religious groups of Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Christianity in peace and harmony.

As a medium of *da'wah*, the writing of this book is meant for non-muslim elites outside of Malaysia as well as in Malaysia stimulating peaceful coexistence of the muslim world and the west. The author shares his thoughts and experiences as a person being recognized nationally and internationally. He received the title Distinguished Professor in 2010 which is the highest distinction given to serving academics in Malaysia by Ministry of Higher Education. Internationally, he has earned recognition notably from the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FIUW), the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the International Islamic University Islamabad and Amir Naif Foundation for Research in Islamic Studies, Saudi Arabia. This is evident when four out of eleven chapters in his book have been read before non-Muslim audiences in Malaysia as well as in USA, Japan and China.

The book is divided into three parts where Part One promotes the common ground among religions and cultures. It consists four chapters discussing the role of religion in the new millennium and mutual understanding between Asia and Europe via education. Having established that religious and culture common grounds, Part Two of the book explains the needs and challenges of changing Muslim's mindset as reaction to world globalization in three chapters. Part Three concentrates on the meaning and implications of Islamic moderation based on the contemporary Muslim scholar, Dr Yusuf al-Qaradawi who is widely regarded among Muslim scholars as one of the most authoritative contemporary experts on the subject. In four chapters, the explanation is not limited to Malaysia scenario merely but to include Singapore and Indonesia through Singapore Islamic Scholars and Religious Teachers Association (PERGAS) and Liberal Islam Network respectively as a comparison. Overall, the book provides clear insights of the state of Islam and its concept of moderation in the era of globalization.

Reviewed by:

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