

MALIK BADRI, SPREADER OF LIGHT FROM SUDAN

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ABSTRACT

At the end of the 20th century, a new scientific movement emerged in psychology called Islamic Psychology. Islamic psychology emphasizes the view of fitrah (sacred nature) in science. This science began when a book entitled "The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists" was published, inspired, and awakened Muslim scientists in the world to return to the truth of Islam in psychology. The book was written by Malik Badri, who is known as the Father of Islamic Psychology. Seeing how big the role of Malik Badri in Islamizing psychology is, the researcher wanted to get a clear description of Malik Badri's biography, including the style of thought and the work produced. To get a biographical article, the researcher reviewed the literature/documents about Malik Badri like books, journals, news, and others about Malik Badri's biography, creation, thought, etc with the design of a narratively qualitative approach. The data collected were analyzed by restorying stories. The result showed that there were so many contributions of Malik Badri for his discipline and also in the world society.

Keywords: Malik Badri, Islamic Psychology, The Dilemma of Muslim Psychology

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INTRODUCTION

In 1989, a Muslim scientist who joined The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) made a critical note that Muslims have been trapped in the pattern of westernization. This is marked by the westernized lifestyle of Muslims, including the realm of science. This makes the thoughts of a Muslim become secular. Secular thought is characterized by the separation of religion from public affairs. Religion is just a private matter. This shows the life of westernization culture in Islamic countries and communities where the majority of the people are Muslim. Muslims are also said to have lost their foundation in life based on the sacredness of religious moral values ((IIIT), 1989; Sholeh, 2017).

This is also the concern of another Muslim scientist, namely Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas. Al-Attas views that Muslims have been trapped in a paradigm or perspective based on Western values. This

paradigm is said to be very different from the Islamic paradigm. Furthermore Al-Attas stated the west bases everything on the tendency of dichotomy while Islam bases itself on the concept of unification or monotheism (Al-Attas, 1993; Ancok & Suroso, 2018; Sholeh, 2017).

From here, al-Attas and al-Faruqi tried to initiate a concept of Islamization which is expected to bring Muslims to the extent of Islamic civilization as it has been achieved before or even more advanced (Al-Attas, 1993; Ancok & Suroso, 2018; Sholeh, 2017). The wave of Islamization of science pioneered by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, brought the spirit of Muslim scientists to explore the Qur'an and Sunnah as a source of scientific development (Al-Attas, 1993; Zaharuddin, 2017). This spirit also flared up among Muslim psychologists.

As in other scientific disciplines, the westernization of psychology is also seen in

psychology, including the statement that psychology is value-free so that it cannot include religious elements in it or the absence of recognition of spiritual experience as an empirical experience that deserves to be studied in psychology as a normal condition (James, 2002). This view is so deeply rooted that it gave rise to a scientific movement of psychology that includes spirituality in it, such as transpersonal psychology or Islamic psychology.

The wave of Islamization thought in psychology can be seen from the holding of the International Symposium on Psychology and Islam in Riyadh in 1978. In 1979, a book entitled *The Dilemma of Moslem Psychologists* disturbed the thoughts of Muslim psychology scientists to re-criticize the thoughts and psychological theories studied so far. Malik Badri is an important name in the notion of Islamic psychology. Along with that, in 1981 The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) was born and became a forum and a driving force for various thoughts on the Islamization of the science (IIIT, 1989; Ancok & Suroso, 2018; M. Badri, 1991)

In Indonesia, there have been various responses to the Islamization of psychology, one of which was the translation of the book *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* in 1990 (M. Badri, 1991). After that, various journals of Islamic psychological thought emerged. One of them is the *Kalam Journal: Media of Islamic Psychological Thought* (1991-1994). For the first time, a monograph related to Islamic thought has been published, namely the book *Psikologi Islami: Solusi Islam atas Problem-problem Psikologi* (Islamic Psychology, Islamic Solutions to Psychological Problems) (Ancok & Suroso, 2018), and the book *Integrasi Psikologi dengan Islam* (Integration of Psychology in Islam) (Bastaman, 2005). The journals and books mentioned above clearly show a response to

the idea of Islamizing psychology as Badri thought.

In addition, the presence of Islamic psychology was triggered by holding various seminars, symposia, and conferences in Islamic Psychology (Fuad Nashori, 1997). Indonesia as one of the countries that are most passionate about the idea of Islamic psychology has also gathered Islamic psychology enthusiasts in a community called the Himpsi Islamic Psychology Association since 2002. The reason Badri handed over the management of the International Association of Muslim Psychologists (IAMP) to Indonesian scientists is that Indonesia is a fertile land for the development of psychology from an Islamic perspective.

In this wave of enthusiasm, the world's Muslim psychologists work together to formulate psychology that is more beneficial for mankind and restores human nature to God (Mi'raj Islamic News Agency/MINA), 2016). One of the conferences which gathered psychologist participants from Sudan, Germany, Australia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Indonesia, was held in 2016. A total of 200 world Muslim psychologists gathered in Yogyakarta to formulate psychology that is more beneficial to mankind. In this conference, Malik Badri said, "This fitrah is missing from Western psychology so that humans are only seen as creatures who do not have a noble spiritual drive".

The view of fitrah as a sacred nature in science is something new in the world of psychology, which is currently widely known as Islamic Psychology, or Psychology in the endeavor of Islam. Islamic psychology did start when a book entitled *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* inspired and awakened many psychological scientists and psychologists in the world about psychology based on what Muslims believe to be the truth, namely Islam. That is what finally made Professor Malik Badri known as the Father of

Islamic Psychology. Badri's life journey is briefly written in this biography.

Badri uses the term Psychology from Islamic Perspective (M. B. Badri, 1987) or Modern Psychology from Islamic Perspective to call Islamic Psychology (Malik Badri, 2016c). Later, Islamic psychology blossomed in Indonesia in some forms. One of them, was a journal titled *KALAM: Media Pemikiran dan Penelitian Psikologi Islam* published by *Keluarga Muslim Psikologi (Muslim Psychology Family) UGM (1992-1994)*. In a book form, the first book publication to use the term Islamic psychology was Ancok and Suroso in the book *Psikologi Islami: Solusi Islam atas Problem-problem Psikologi (Islamic Psychology: Islamic Solutions to Psychological Problems)* (Ancok & Suroso, 2018).

Seeing how big the role of Malik Badri in Islamizing psychology is, the researcher wanted to get a clear description of Malik Badri's biography, including the style of thought and the work produced.

RESEARCH METHODS

This article was a narrative research with qualitative approach. The focus of narrative research was exploring the life of an individual. The data were collected by reviewing the literature/documents about Malik Badri like books, journals, news, and others about Malik Badri's biography, creation, thought, etc (Creswell, 2007). This process was called narrative literature review. In the literature review, the researcher examines, compares and draws conclusions from various expert opinions on a problem (Haryanto et al., 1993). The data analysis strategy used was analyzing data for stories, and restoring stories (Creswell, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

BIOGRAPHY

His full name is Malik Babikir Badri. Badri is a Sudanese Arab national, born in Rufa'a, a small town on the Nile River in Sudan on February 16, 1932, (Malik Badri, 2016a; Ismail, 2008; Rothman et al., 2022). Since several decades before and also when Badri was born, Sudan was in the throes of a civil war between various interests. Geographically, Sudan is the largest country in the heart of Africa and is a region that has an important role. Sudan connects Asia and Africa. The history of Sudan records the struggles and transfers of power dating back thousands of years (Guarak, 2011). Islam, as one of the most dominant religions embraced by the Sudanese population, began to rise with Hasan Al-Turabi's thoughts on sharia as a way of life that had a profound impact on Sudanese politics and society as a whole. Al-Turabi raised the issue of Islamization in the Sudanese Islamic revolution (Abdelwahid, 2008; Ancok & Suroso, 2018; Blurr & Collins, 2003). It is this spirit that may be the background for Badri's Islamic thought, including science.

Badri's childhood and youth with his family and father were described by Badri as happy times. Father and people his age are said to be happy people. Badri argues that it is Islam that gives people in Islamic culture happiness and a feeling of contentment in life (Ismail, 2008). Reflecting on the role of Islam in life, Badri has a strong commitment to Islam. His commitment to Islam can also be seen in Badri's participation in the Muslim Brotherhood movement, an Islamic organization in Sudan. In 1960 even Malik Badri was elected as part of the collective leadership along with three other figures (Abdelwahid, 2008). At that time, the Islamic organization MB became one of the movers and contributed intellectually to the Islamic Movement in Sudan (Abdelwahid, 2008).

Badri's B.A. degree was obtained in 1956 from the American University of Beirut (AUB). Badri went on to study for his M.A. until 1958 also at AUB. His Ph.D. was obtained from the University of Leicester, England in 1961. Badri received a Postgraduate Certificate of Clinical Psychology from the Academic Department of Psychiatry of The Middlesex Hospital Medical School from London University in 1966. Badri's academic activities continued in the British Psychological Society (since 1977) so Badri got a valid certificate to practice psychotherapy in the UK. Badri is also a member of the Clinical Fellow Behavior therapy and Research Society at Temple University, USA (1985) (Abdelwahid, 2008).

HISTORY AND THOUGHT

Malik Badri became interested in the Islamization of psychology during his undergraduate studies at AUB in the early 1950s. Badri felt that his life before studying at AUB in 1952 was "like the life of young people in general". It was at this time at AUB that Badri was challenged to present an Islamic point of view on science.

This was motivated by the condition of AUB which was under the influence of Christian missionaries. Even the university is known as the Syrian Protestant College. This ideology directly but secretly brings about a culture of secularization that is supported by the development of Western social science. The university develops a culture in all students including students who come from Arab and Muslim to adopt a Western point of view (Malik Badri, 2016c; Ismail, 2008; Khan, 2015). This condition makes Badri, who is proud of Islamic civilization and wealth, feel that he is not compatible with the veiled rhetoric and ideology. Badri is increasingly wary and wary of what psychology and other social sciences have to offer, thus seeking to

seek answers from Islam to challenges from the West.

At that time the behaviorism approach was showing its supremacy. In the teaching process, it is emphasized that the environment is the main determining factor. Even animals are described as having no innate and instinctive behavior. Badri said that humans are like dry leaves that when the wind blows they will follow where the wind takes them, while Badri sees it as contrary to religion. For him, God created animals and humans and gave humans nature and instincts in animals to guide them to God's grand plan (Ismail, 2008).

Badri is also disappointed with the psychoanalytic approach regarding the psychoanalytic attribution of both normal and abnormal behavior to subconscious sexual urges. At that time Badri had not been able to think of other alternatives, because at that time Freud was considered by psychological scientists an unmatched hero of psychology. Rogers' client-centered counseling is also felt by Badri to cause a loss of value due to a no-assessment approach and no therapist intervention (M. Badri, 1991).

Islamization of knowledge for Badri was inspired by Mohammad Qutb, especially in the book *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion* and Mawdudi's writings. These writings are general in nature, not mentioning guidelines for the Islamization of psychology. Even so, the reading helped Badri in writing assignment papers, such as his writings "Islam: An Iconoclastic Movement" which he wrote for assignments in general education, "Child development in Islam" for the subject of Child Psychology, and "The social structure of Muslim Brotherhood Movement" for social movement courses (Khan, 2015). Badri said it was an initial attempt at Islamization (Malik Badri, 2016c; Ismail, 2008; Khan, 2015).

At the age of 31, Badri began teaching psychology from an Islamic perspective at the University of Jordan. The audience responded

positively to this, but his colleagues in the Psychology Study Program responded negatively. They consider psychology to be neutral and cannot be entered by religious 'dogma'. Even Badri is challenged to show a better way than Freudians to treat emotional disorders (Khan, 2015).

Badri's answer to the challenge was obtained when reading Eysenck's book which revealed comparative and epidemiological studies on psychoanalytic patients and psychoanalytic therapists which reinforces the idea that psychoanalytic therapy has no therapeutic effect or little effect. Eysenck and later developed by Wolpe, provide a revolution in general interventions that are scientifically verifiable, which Badri thinks are far more plausible. So Badri then traveled to London to study behavioral therapy (Khan, 2015).

In London, Badri had a chance to meet with Eysenck, who then directed him to meet with Dr. Victor Meyer, a behavioral therapist trainer at Middlesex Hospital Medical School. After a few weeks of studying behavioral therapy, Badri found a client recommended by Meyer. At that time Badri saw progress and even completed recovery in his patients. In his discussion with Meyer and his students, Badri had time to convey how it is better to make behaviorism more 'humanist', as he had practiced before going to London in 1965 with Moroccan clients. When dealing with these clients, Badri used self-modified systematic desensitization with cognitive dialogue and incorporated spiritual elements in it. Based on the suggestions of Meyer and his students, the modification was published in the *Journal of Psychology* in 1966 (Khan, 2015).

After that, Badri had a chance to meet with Wolpe who reiterated the principles of rigid behavioral psychology, and should not include subjective aspects such as the mind, or consciousness, let alone the human soul. Furthermore, along with its development, behaviorism turned more flexible into

cognitive-behavioral therapy. Here the role of belief and thought can be a door for the entry of Islam into the psychology (Khan, 2015).

Badri then went on a long journey to integrate Islam into clinical practice and academic activities while becoming a senior clinical psychologist in several hospitals and clinics in the Middle East and Africa. After receiving a behavioral therapy certificate in 1966, Badri tried to Islamize and practice it on Muslim patients. As a senior clinical psychologist in Khartoum, Badri has the opportunity to apply it to a wide variety of disorders. Professor Taha Ba'shar, his head of psychiatry who became his supervisor challenged Badri to intervene in the 5% of patients he failed to treat and was happy to learn that Badri had succeeded.

In 1971, Badri became a professor and founded a psychology clinic at the University of Riyadh as well as in the psychiatry department at the Riyadh Central Hospital. Badri felt that life during his time in Riyadh was the most productive period in his efforts to Islamize (Khan, 2015). During his practice, Badri provided therapy adapted to Islamic culture for many clients who suffered from depression, anxiety, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, trauma, and drug abuse (Ismail, 2008). Badri was also invited to attend the annual conference of the Association of Islamic Social Scientists in Indianapolis, USA. Badri delivered his famous paper "Muslim psychologists in the lizard's hole". The title and term lizard's hole later became famous and were widely used by other writers. This article was later expanded into the book *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* (Khan, 2015).

While in Riyadh, Badri later learned that earlier Muslim scientists and healers had mastered cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and used it to treat emotional disorders. Badri then revealed that when modern psychologists read the works of al-Ghazali, al-Balkhi, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Ibn Sina, Ar-Razi, and

other scientists, it will be seen that psychological techniques have existed since the heyday of Europe. Furthermore, according to Badri, Muslim scientists are the true pioneers of the science (Khan, 2015).

One of the figures, Abu Zayd al-Balkhi, wrote about psychological treatment and therapy in a book entitled *Sustenance of Bodies and Souls*. This book was later translated by Badri as a psychotherapy session manuscript into a book. Badri also wrote that Al-Balkhi was the first to distinguish between neurotic psychosis, and mental and psychological disorders, classifying emotional disorders in a modern way into 4: fear and panic, anger and aggression, sadness and depression, and obsession. Al-Balkhi clearly states that thinking about mistakes can lead to emotional disturbances in the form of anxiety, anger, and sadness. In his book, Badri also explains how Al-Balkhi has provided cognitive techniques to help overcome the disorder (Khan, 2015).

Although departing from behavioral and cognitive approaches, Badri feels that CBT is not the only way to Islamize psychology. Many psychological approaches have been developed in Psychology that can be used for Islamization.

In addition to practicing Psychology, Badri also conducts psychological and mental health tests adapted from tests in the West such as the cognitive test for Sudanese culture and supervises the adaptation of draw-a-man test, The Eysenck Personality Inventory as well as WAIS and WISC (Ismail, 2008).

His career in clinical psychology took him to Asian, African, and European countries. Badri also later became a professor and dean of several Muslim countries, such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Malaysia, England, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco. Badri is also a clinical assistant at Middlesex Hospital, London University's Medical School Psychology Study Program where Badri

presented an innovative modification of Wolpe's systematic desensitization therapy. (Malik Badri, 2016c).

Because of his contribution, WHO selected Badri as a member of the Committee on Traditional Medical Practices from 1980-1984. Badri also plays an important role in financing psychology faculties/departments such as the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Khartoum, the Faculty of Education and Islamic Studies at African International University, the Psychology Department at Imam Mohammad bin Saud University in Riyadh, and others. (Ismail, 2008).

Badri has taught at several universities in various Muslim countries (Maroko, Sudan, Arab, Libanon, Jordan, Malaysia, dan Pakistan). Badri was a Professor at Ahfad University, Sudan as well as a professor and served as Chair of Ibn Khaldun in the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge at the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) (Malik Badri, 2016c; Khan, 2015). Badri died on February 8, 2021, in Malaysia. His departure left thousands of successors of Islamic Psychology who had been born to continue his struggle to illuminate the science of psychology. The knowledge that Badri developed is like a bright light for modern psychology.

CREATION

Badri has produced many works. Badri's works consist of scientific articles, books, and book chapters, to the organizations he founded. From the number and variety of writings produced, it can be seen that Badri's thoughts are very rich and consistent in his interest in the Islamization of science in the field of psychology. In his writings, Rothman et al., (2022) stated that in general, Badri's writings reflect his efforts for the indigenization of psychology (making psychology relevant to Arab society and its

surroundings culturally); as well as to Islamize Psychology. In his efforts, Badri always bases himself on scientific foundations, even when Badri integrates them with religion and spirituality.

His earliest scientific works were journals and books to criticize the use of test kits for children and to make various adjustments so that the test kits could be more suitable for Sudanese society in particular and society in Arab countries in general. (M. Badri, 1965a, 1965b; Malik Badri & Dennis, 1964; Rothman et al., 2022). Efforts to develop psychology in this context further focus on efforts to Islamize psychology, both in terms of theory and psychotherapy (M. Badri, 1996; Rothman et al., 2022). This is seen as an example in his writings on Emotional Blasting Therapy which is based on the wisdom of earlier Muslim thinkers (Malik Badri, 2016b); Cognitive behavioral therapy presented by Al Balkhi (M. Badri, 2013); cognitive desensitization therapy tailored to Muslim patients (M. B. Badri, 2014), etc.

A study conducted by Zaharuddin, (2017) shows that the approach used by Badri includes a scriptural approach, a philosophical approach, and a Sufism approach. When explaining about meditation in the book *Al-Tafakkur minal Musyahadah ilaal-Syuhud: Dirasah al-Nafsiyah al-Islamiyah*, Badri used the three approaches above at once. The scriptural approach was carried out using the text of the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet. Badri quoted a lot from the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet. The philosophical approach was carried out with the use of common sense. Badri used various contemporary psychological findings and thoughts by Islamic scholars. Intuitive approach was done by using the imagination as a therapy.

With his uniqueness in thinking, Badri has been invited to teach in several places and compiled several syllabi in Islamic Psychology

(Rothman et al., 2022). Not only in the academic world, but Badri also contributed to promoting Islamic Psychology in the world's community life by explaining views and ways of handling an Islamic perspective in AIDS cases (Malik Badri, 2000); and also alcohol (M. B. Badri, 1976).

International Association of Muslim Psychologists (IAMP) was formed, with Professor Badri as the first president. Through IAMP, several Islamic Psychology conferences can be held in various countries throughout the Muslim world (Rothman et al., 2022).

As mentioned earlier, Badri's most monumental book is *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*. This book is phenomenal and is a book that is read by almost everyone interested in Islamic psychology. The book criticizes western secular psychology in general and how many Muslim psychologists accept blindly the theories and practices of western psychology. The book was written by reflecting on his experience teaching Psychology in Sudan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as the many case studies he handled during his psychology practice (M. Badri, 1991).

In his works for the last 10 years, Badri continues to work, producing various books and writings to enrich the reflections of Muslim scientists on the movement and struggle of Islam in the world. In his writings, Badri's alignment with Islam is very strong, paying attention to specific issues related to Islamic and social movements in general as well as psychological issues in particular. (Badri, 2014; Badri, 2016). His writings are directed at strengthening the application of Islamic scholarship in psychology by contributing ideas about psychological intervention (Badri, 2016).

In the present day, the intervention has evolved in such a way as described by (Fuad Nashori et al., 2019), there is an intervention

with an original Islamic psychology intervention approach and an integrative Islamic psychology intervention approach. Some examples of developing integrative psychological interventions are the remembrance (zikr) relaxation (Martin et al., 2018), smart empowerment technique (F. Nashori et al., 2022), and the Islamic religious coping (Saputro, I., Nashori. H.F., & Sulistyarini, 2021). Furthermore, some examples of original psychological interventions are the prayer (salat) of repentance (Rusdi, 2016), listening for murottal Al-Qur'an (Aziza et al., 2019), and istighfar remembrance therapy (Ruidahasi et al., 2022).

APPRECIATION

As an award in his field, Badri received an honorary degree of D. Sc (Doctor of Science) from Ahfad University. Badri was also honored by the President of Sudan in April 2003 with the Shahid Zubair medal, which is the highest award for academic excellence (Khan, 2015).

Badri has also written many publications such as the book: *Contemplation: An Islamic psycho-spiritual study and The AIDS Crisis: A natural product of Modernity's sexual revolution* which won the award as the best contributor to Islamic medicine from the Islamic Medical Association of South America. Badri is also a member of the Advisory Team of the *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* and other national and international journals. One of the journals pioneered by Badri is the *International Journal of Islamic Psychology* (Khan, 2015; Rothman et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

Malik Badri is a Muslim thinker in the field of psychology who has made many contributions in his field of science, specifically psychology, as well as in general

fields such as social issues and world public health. His knowledge has become the basis for many Muslim scientists to develop and apply Islam in Psychology.

For further research, researchers can further explore Badri's thoughts, what are the dynamics among Muslim thinkers, or whether there are any striking differences in his thinking compared to other thinkers. Researchers can also explore discourse analysis of their thoughts on various approaches in psychology in more details.

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