

Islamic Ethics as the Solution of International Political Economy of Desire

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Abstract. This article contends that the investigation of worldwide political economy (IPE) is distracted by seeking after material craving utilizing the instrument of playing images. There is lack of social ethical values to maintain the order of wealth. As the outcomes, there are externalities, for example, the hole between the rich and the poor is more extensive, squander that peril individuals, creatures, and the nature, to be broader an unnatural weather change. Islamic ethic has provided enough rule of the games in how human beings act in their relations as well as with the nature. The Islamic ethics is very much basic to balance the life between human beings and the nature to sustain the life in earth. Therefore, the never ended of human desire in materialistic set of minds is needed to be balanced with the spiritualistic ways in order to create the harmony of life between human beings and the nature.

Keywords: Islamic ethics; solution; political economy; desire

1 Introduction

We live in globalization. Globalization constructs a lot of things such as life, products, culture of human being, knowledge, and sciences. In science, globalization announce the death of modern rationality, proclamations of the end of capital, the state or the nation.”[1] It is indicated by the crisis of the nature in the form of global warming and the financial crisis. In cultural aspect, globalization create new spirit and tradition: irrationality or post-truth, *ecocentrism and postmodernist thought*”.[1] As the consequences, the world today has been interpreted by many kinds of perspectives.[1] It is what Giddens argued about runaway world.[2]

In this globalization era, the world is decided by human desire in the form of materialism, not by rationality or ethics. There is no foundationalism. Furthermore, the reality of globalization is paradox: in the one side it proposes rationality, in another decided by desire; one side promote strong nations states, in another there is the end of nation-states by believing in the world capitalism system and free market mechanism.

This article will be structured: first, what is international political economy discipline and its foundationalism? Second, what is consumerism? Third, Islamic ethics is important to bring back the moral sentiment in the international political economy discipline.

2 Discussion

2.1 EPI and its Foundationalism

Paul Langley argued that the study of IPE in globalization is rational, inclusive, multi-discipline. There are sociology, economy, history, business and geography. [3]rational choice is important to decide the reality of states and market relations. It is rooted from the modern Western tradition.[4] The pursue of wealth that is trusted by the Western and today by most of people in the world, in fact it is not for all people, but it is for a few elite capitalists. It can be concluded that at the beginning, the idea of IPE is very much rational however it ends to be irrational because it is only please the desire of few elite capitalists; the desire through materialistic media with playing symbols and meanings through advertainment. In this regard, rationality is questioned.[5]

With respect to the possibility of mindlessness of IPE, Baudrillard in his work *For the Critique of the Political Economy of Sign* contends two significant ideas: fetishism and philosophy: First the possibility of fetishism. Baudrillard deciphers Marx's idea. Baudrillard's proposal is that "fetishism" has an unmistakable overflow of energy: rather than depicting a cycle by which an article is allowed with supernatural properties, individuals who utilize the term are uncovered thusly for utilizing non-brilliantly a "mystical reasoning". Ware fetishism is one of the meta-stories that is being prodded separated here, by which the shift from substantial creation and trade is supplanted by preoccupied work relations and ensuing distance. In any case, essentially, the thought "fetishism" is dismissed due to the ethical stuff it has conveyed since the Enlightenment: "... the entire collection of occidental Christian and humanist philosophy, as arranged by settlers, ethnologists and ministers".[6]

The system of fetishism creates its own meaning that magically impoverishes and ultimately prevents meaningful social communication, since "the sign formation of social objects reduces the accessibility of things for mediating social relations.[7] In fact, the system of signs assigns social objects. In short, the life of human social relations is constructed by the system of signs that embedded in commodities. Social real life is determined by the creation of signs and its imaginations that is produced by corporations, factories, and the body of capitalism and of course have a "magical thinking". For example, someone will have different status and image when they drive Honda, Lexus, BWM, and Toyota. These cars have their own "magical thinking" or system of signs for people to have social relations. It is not the other way around. Using Chinese product or European product or Japanese product have a significant role and status in the society. Signs and its meaning known as fetishism commodities are very much matter in today social relations. It is inevitable.

Fetishism commodity is an attractive product is made by the system of advanced capitalism. This product is not only a material thing that purposed to be functioned for someone, but it is full of imagination, fantasy, meaning of live, pleasure, and as such. It signifies a sign to another sign. It is not the exchange of use-values, but the *exchange of sign-values*. People use, wear, or do something because of the values of the commodities have a meaning. This meaning is constructed by the exchange of sign though advertisement in television, internet, social media, and as such.

Second, the idea of ideology. The system of capitalism or advanced capitalism become ideology. People in the world cannot escape from this system. This system become the iron cage of modern people. There is no other alternative as such to change the system. People like

zombie praise this system as much as they cannot live without it. At this point of view, people alienated from social relations and themselves, especially labours. Labour creates products as a tool and further as exchange values of signs. All people who produce and advertise the capitalist's products are labours who are part of system of signs. The system of signs is for its own purposes. The system of signs is like dogma, myth, and supernatural. It is not rational, but it is an attractiveness, appealing, seducing modern people with its fantasy.

The desire of the system of signs in the ideology of the system of advanced capitalism takeover the epistemology of rationality and the ontology of the real reality of social relations. The desire in the system of signs and its fantasy create fetishism commodities to be consumed. They are food and drink fetishism, tourist fetishism, clothes fetishism, phone sell fetishism, automobile fetishism, footwear fetishism, bag fetishism, and so on.

In the study of international political economy such as international trade, international financial, economic growth, and economic development, and so on are limited. This study is not comprehensive because it does not discuss commodity fetishism and its relations with the ideology of advanced capitalism system in which explained the process of dehumanization of modern people. Modern people are part of big body of machine of advanced capitalism that become a tool in the logic of exchange of signs and the logic of values.

2.2 What is Consumerism?

Jean Baudrillard, in his work, *La Société de Consommation* (1970) in English version, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (1998) argues that the idea of Marxism of capitalism is expired. The mode of production has shift into the mode of consumption. The system of capitalism is not focus on production but consumerism.[8] This idea is how people today desirably eager to consume...to consume and to consume. People are trapped in the imperium of signs. This imperium of signs determines the modern culture to maintain the advanced of capitalism system.

Internet is a new reality. People life and culture are decided by this new reality that display things to be consumed. The things are full of sign in order to circulate the exchange of sign as it exists in the imperium of sign. The virtual world though internet such as social media (Instagram, Facebook, Tweeter, tik tok, and so on), news, you tube, and so on are *aesthetic hallucination of reality*. It is the consequences of globalization of technology and information. The virtual world is a system of signs creates hallucination of resemblance of itself. The virtual world of the flat world distorts the real world. The real world is absorbed by the virtual world. The real world today is created by and from the virtual world. The world today is simulation because the boundary between the virtual and the real are disappeared. It erodes the deep meaning of the real life of human existence. It is impossible for us to escape from this simulation. For example, in internet everyone playing with displaying signs/symbols in order to be exchanged with others. A person displays beautiful body with a lot of accessories from up to down. This person displays these accessories in order to be sold, meaning circulate the exchange of signs. These accessories and his/her body signify meanings, hence people are willing to buy the product. The consumers buy fantasy, abstract, image in the system of signs.

Other examples, people buy expensive brands such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Rolex, Dior, Balenciaga, Hermes, Armani, Prada, signify status, pride, and other important meaning. People eat McDonald's, KFC, Burger King, drink Coca Cola, A&W, and so on means something; it creates images of modern man. People use Mac vs. Windows are totally different signification. Baudrillard explains this phenomenon as play of signifiers in the system of signs. The imperium of signs is the reflection of the dead of reality.

In another work, America (1986), Baudrillard give contextual analysis of consumerist society and its reproduction. He contends America is a desert; Los Angeles is depicted as a possessed section of the desert; "California is portrayed as the world focus of the simulacrum and the inauthentic; "Californian culture itself is a desert. There is no legitimacy and fundamental individuals in America on the grounds that the American culture and life are brimming with signs and just the trading of signs, yet dry of humankind, and human nobility.

2.3 Islamic Ethics as The Moral Sentiment of The International Political Economy Discipline

In order to fulfil the essential life and authenticity, human being should manage his desire from consumerism because such this phenomenon -over consumptive- is certainly very far from Islamic values and ethics that teach simplicity, sharing and staying away from *tabdziir* (al-Qur'an, at-Isra': 26: *ولا تبذر تبذيرا*) while in the fact what happens to individuals who are over-consumptive is the opposite of the Islamic ethics, the cause is a mistake in looking at and reacting to wealth, their desire or libido to own or consume something is not based on their need but rather driven by wanting desire, this situation is not something new in life, therefore in the past the Prophet Muhammad PBUH has warned his umma about this phenomenon through his hadith:

لو كان لابن آدم واديان من مال لا يبتغي ثالثا (Attirmidzi:569)

In the teachings of Islam we found a concepts and formulas on how human perspectives towards their wealth, but its not only there, even Islam also teaches what we should do against the property we have, because every one of ourselves in the resurrection day will be asked the responsibility on the property we have, in front of the two questions about the property, from which and for what property we have, its formula called *zuhud*.

Zuhud (ascetism) is a form or maqam in the teachings of *sufi*, where a person has been able to handle his worldly desire to acquire, position, and use the property he owns in accordance with the supposed *postrsition*, in other meanings *Zahid* does not see the property as a *ghoyah* or purpose unless the property as an intermediary *wasiilah* will prepare the best, for a more permanent life,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ (al-Qur'an, at-Taubah: 111)

"Allah has for sure bought from the devotees their lives and abundance in return for Paradise.

In another concept about *zuhud* the prophet refers to it as *I'tidal* which is totality in worship and also totality in seeking wealth.

اعمل لدنياك كأنك تعيش أبداً واعمل لآخرتك كأنك تموت غداً

"Work for this world as if you were to live forever, and work for your hereafter as if you were to die tomorrow"

By practicing and performing *zuhud* in the daily life human should be able to escape from the over consumerism trap. As for the phenomenon that occurs in the world of economic politics that human is no longer seen as *someone* but has changed as *something* or tools, so that any company or industry can easily hire someone without fulfilling his rights as a human being, which basically has been glorified by Allah, for being referred to in the Qur'an as masterpiece

(al-Qur'an, at-tiin : 4) (لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَن تَقْوِيمٍ)

Without a doubt, We made people in the best structure.

and then be resourceful and commanded all angels to bow down to him as a form of respect admiration to the first man named adam and continuously to his sons.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا
(al-Qur'an, at-isra' : 70)

To be sure, We have stately the offspring of Adam, conveyed them ashore and ocean, truly them great and legitimate arrangements, and advantaged them far above large numbers of Our animals.

In Arabic terms 3 words of mention to workers أجير , خول , خادم , concerning the rules of workers such as, the provision of wages, respect and protection of workers there are all described in great detail and clearly in the hadith hadith of the following prophet:

إخوانكم خولكم، جعلهم الله تحت أيديكم، فمن كان أخوه تحت يديه فليطعمه مما يأكل، وليلبسه مما يلبس، ولا تكلفوهم ما يغلبهم، فإن كلفتموهم ما يغلبهم فأعينوهم (رواه البخاري).

Your slaves employe are your siblings and Allah has put them under your order. So whoever has a sibling under his order, should take care of him of that which he eats and dress him of that which he wears. Try not to ask them (captives) to get things done past their ability (power) and in the event that you do as such, help them (Hadith, Narrated in Sahi Bukhari).

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