



Patterns of Relations between Islam and the State in the Thought of a Liberal Islamic Network

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ABSTRACT

The Liberal Islamic Network is an interesting phenomenon in Indonesia, because it is considered to break the establishment and slow thinking. This is understandable because the average JIL activist has a traditional Islamic background, which is oriented towards *ubudiyah* issues and dogmatic traditions, which practically must be followed without discussion, even though these rules are often irrelevant to the liberation of Muslims from poverty, ignorance or oppression. Liberal Islam is a particular form of interpretation of Islam with several foundations including, opening the door to *ijtihad* on all dimensions of Islam, they believe that *ijtihad* is the main principle for interpreting everything. Closing the door of *ijtihad*, either in a limited way or in its entirety, is a threat to Islam itself, because then Islam will experience decay. Liberal Islam believes that *ijtihad* can be carried out in all aspects, both in terms of *muamalat* (social interaction), *ubudiyat* (ritual) and *divineyyat* (theology). The purpose of JIL is to spread liberal Islamic ideas as widely as possible to the public, whether accepted or not accepted by the Indonesian people in particular, and abroad in general. create intellectual discourses on religious issues that are pluralist and democratic and have a gender perspective on campuses, print and electronic mass media with a more specific goal, namely, to provide alternative views for the people on socio-religious issues, so that they are not monopolized by one interpretation. anti-democratic and anti-pluralist and misogynist. Inviting the public to think critically, argumentatively, think contextually and not to be trapped in dogmatic values.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Discourse about religion and the state, as if it will never end. These two institutions are very important for the community, especially for those who are in their respective areas (Mannan, 2014). Religion as a source of moral ethics has a very clear position because it is closely related to a person's behavior in the social interactions of his life and religion is used as a measuring tool or justification in every step of life, both towards others and with the source of the religion (Putera, 2018).

While the state is a building that includes all the rules regarding social order that has the authority to impose every rule it makes on the community. Here, it could be that the rules made by the state are in line with what is the reference source of society (religion), but it could also be

against or not in line with religion, depending on how the system is adopted by the whole country, which then causes clashes between religions. and country(Lismijar, 2017). The debate about Islam, whether it should be related to state problems, of course this debate will continue to be discussed in the intellectual world inside and outside campus, activists and so on are still often discussing the ideal form of whether Islam is related to the state or not. The relationship between Islam and the state is a problem, not only the intellectual world an sich that discusses this issue, but some Indonesian Muslim communities question this issue, this issue is actually part of a very big problem about where religion is in the state. Various arguments have emerged in order to answer these problems and debates(Usman, Qodir, & Hasse, 2014).

The debate on the relationship between Islam and the state has given rise to three major groups of researchers(Fata, 2018). First, they firmly reject the existence of a relationship between religion and the state in this case is Islam, this group assumes that religion and the state are two different and contradictory things. Religion does not talk about state issues clearly, this group is called a secular group. Second, those who assume that religion and the state have a close and inseparable bond. This group is often called the formalist group. Third, those who take the middle ground are trying to find common ground between the two groups.

Regardless of whether these groups in Islam as well as in the holy book of the Qur'an are ordered and required to establish a state or not, in fact many political Muslims (who want a union between religion and the state) need an Islamic state system, because after all, to secure a policy requires a power (political institution)(Rofii, 2019). To uphold justice and maintain peace, a power is needed, whether it be a political organization or a state. There are many factors that make people who reject Islam as a state or do not like Islam to be united with the state for many reasons, these factors are more that Islam has not been accepted by the community as a whole, there is still a fear of Islam if it has links with the state with Shari'a jargon. Islam which many people say is not ideal to be applied in the context of the Indonesian state and so on(Bawazir, 2015).

The interpretation of the two terms will continue to be a matter of debate and debate between those who agree and those who do not expressly agree that Islam is independent of the state. In the interpretation between Islam and the State(Dewi, 2018), as the author said earlier, are those who agree that Islam is not separated from the context of the state. Another interpretation says Islam and the state are two separate entities and must be separated. While there is also the most moderate view, the moderate view asserts, although Islam and the state are different issues, both have a substantial relationship that will always exist. Differences here will always exist in interpreting everything and coloring the Islamic world (Boulu, 2016).

Islamic political thinkers agree that the relationship between Islam and politics in the sense of the state, is essentially inseparable. From any aspect, the definition of politics is always postulated related to Islam. There are two dimensions in the relationship between Islam and the state, namely the dimension of the art of government (the art of governing) and the dimension of the struggle for power (the struggle for power) (Mardyanto, 2016). If politics is defined in the context of the art of government, according to Abdul Rasyid Moten, it can already be seen that there is a relationship between Islam and the state, even the state cannot be separated from Islam in the formulation of the Qur'an, this is included in the scope of amar ma'ruf nahyi munkar (commanding the good and forbidding the evil). In the sociological formulation, it means that every Muslim, guided by Islamic values, participates in correcting the course of government. Likewise, if politics is defined as a struggle for power, then there is no contradiction between Islam and the state. As is well known, the end point of the struggle for power is the formation of political power (Hiariej, 2018).

Contemporary Islamic thinkers, especially Muhammad Rasyid Rida, Sayyid Qutb and al-Maududi, have expressed their view that Islam is a religion that does not deal with religious issues alone, Islam is also concerned with state issues. In another sense, that the state is a religious discourse that has implications for a relationship between the two (Bato, 2014).

Regarding the discussion of Islam and the state, JIL explained that if Muslims want to reflect more deeply, it is clear that a correct, evaluative, critical and rational understanding will show that Islam is not a mere political religion in the context of the state (Syamsuddin & Ag, 2016). In fact, the portion of politics in Islamic teachings is very small, and even then it is related to the interests of many people which means the interests of the lower class in the society, not in the order of political

models. Therefore the state (politics) and religion (Islam) are separate. And, in fact the formation of government and state is on the basis of amaliah benefits, not on the basis of something else. The formation of the modern state is based on practical interests, not on the basis of the state (Rosidi, 2015).

Some people believe that politics in the sense of the state is from religion. Therefore, it must be regulated according to religious teachings. While some believe that politics is a worldly affair and has nothing to do with religion. This is a society that has been indoctrinated with the term "Islam is both a religion and a state". Thus, it often creates dilemmas, including the emergence of various thoughts and understandings about Islam which are not only different, but even contradictory (Kasmuri, 2014).

The Liberal Islam Network (JIL) also spoke and enlivened the debate between Islam and the state. Many articles, books and journals have been published as part of their concern and contribution in finding solutions to long-standing debates. Thus, the various explanations that agree and disagree above lead me to know and present significant issues, how far the views of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL) have colored the issue between Islam and the State (Nurdin & Ropi, nd).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used is library research, namely by examining books, magazines, articles and also exploring the virtual world (internet) which the author considers relevant to the subject matter. As supporting data and as a complement to the thesis, the author will also conduct direct or indirect interviews with JIL activists. From this interview, it is expected to be able to find JIL's critical thinking related to the relationship between Islam and the state.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Islam and Secularism (Secular State)

Islam and secularism are very different terms, secularism for most people is always associated with state problems. The terminology of Islam and secularism is often a long debate in the Islamic world. In the context of religion and the state, many thinkers refer to secularism to define problems in religion, the state and society, many Islamic thinkers expressly reject secularism, arguing that ideology removes Islam from state problems.

In its national meeting on 26-29 July 2005, the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) issued a fatwa including the statement that secularism, pluralism and liberalism in religious thought are not in accordance with Islamic teachings and therefore it is forbidden to follow them. After the fatwa was haram, it was heard that some Muslim intellectuals felt stifled by the haram fatwa, many of these intellectuals answered the fatwa through discourse and dialogue.

Secularism has been widely used by several Islamic and non-Islamic countries, secularism is defined as a policy that separates religion from the state, this understanding is mostly adopted by most European and Western Christian countries. A good democracy can only work if it is able to apply the correct principles of secularism. On the other hand, democracies that fail and are bad are democracies that do not apply the true principles of secularism, or apply Islam in the context of countries, such as Turkey, Egypt and Iraq, are examples of countries that try to adopt secularism, but apply it incorrectly. Mistakes in perceiving and applying this concept have fatal consequences, because they not only fail to realize a democratic political system, but also pollute the noble concept of secularism.

So far, some Muslim communities are suspicious and very afraid of the term secularism which is understood as the separation of religion (Islam) and politics, or more broadly, between religion (Islam) and public life. Some Muslims view this separation as a separation that places Islam away from state interference. The attitude of some Muslims is afraid of the prohibitions of secularism such as violating the hijab, marrying different religions, and others.

On its website, JIL says that religious and political power must be separated. They oppose a religious state (theocracy) or an Islamic government system, they believe that a healthy form of state for religious and political life is a state that separates the two powers. Religion is a source of inspiration that can influence public policy, but religion does not have a sacred right to determine all

forms of public policy. Religion is in the private sphere and the public element must be held through a consensus process.

JIL is known as a network and understanding that carries secularism, FUUI (Forum Ulama Muslim Ummah) under the leadership of KH. Atian Ali Da'i has issued a kind of fatwa on the death penalty against Ulil Abshar Abdalla et al, and the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) as the author stated at the beginning has issued a fatwa about the heresy of the JIL, about its ideas, as well as the heresy of the Ahmadiyya.

Ulil considered that the MUI and FUUI definitions of secularism were too simple, interpreting secularism as separating world affairs from religion (Islam). According to him, secularism is separating the power of the religion (Islam) and the power of the state. A secular state means a country that is not controlled by scholars such as Iran, which recognizes the concept of *wilayatul faqih* (the power of the clergy), secularism does not hinder and is hostile to the role of religion in the public sphere. Burhanuddin, former student president of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, he is also a former JIL activist, said that Islam and secularism are different things, according to him it is too early to adopt Islam in the context of the state, it is impossible for Islam to be integrated into state problems, it does not mean Islam is not fully placed in the context of the state. public area,

Liberal intellectuals such as Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Lufhi Assyaukanie, Saiful Mujani and Hamid Basyaib, display the antithesis of the Harakah Islamist group (who wants to implement Islamic law), secularism is seen as the only savior. They oppose any form of political Islam that wants to implement a system of Islamic values and symbols in politics, they also reject the idea of an Islamic state and the formalization of the Shari'a. They consider that secularization (defined as the separation of religion and state) is the best choice for Muslims to face the challenges of modernity. Furthermore, they recommend that religion be withdrawn from the public sphere to the private sphere.

Because it is considered outside the mainstream of Islamic teachings, some parties suggest that JIL create a new religion and not in the name of Islam, because some Muslims say that JIL has left the real Islam, secularism is unacceptable in the context of Islam.

3.2 Islam, Pluralism and Human Rights (Plural State)

Like Islam and secularism, Islam and pluralism are also different issues. Islam and pluralism have become one of the contemporary discourses that are often discussed at the end of the 20th century, especially in Indonesia. The essence of this discourse is actually trying to bridge the relationship between various religions, which often have a disharmonious impact in the name of religion, which then leads to conflicts that lead to violence in the name of religion.

Pluralism is a new thought trend in the global world, which is an ideology in which every believer has no right to claim that religion is the true religion. Dawam Raharjo said pluralism can be implemented in three ways, namely, mutual understanding and gain, mutual understanding and appreciation, competing in virtue and cooperation in goodness.

JIL under the leadership of Ulil Abshar Abdalla said that all religions are right on such a path, the long road to the most righteous. All religions, therefore, are true (the religion is true) with different variations, levels and degrees of depth in living the way of religiosity, all religions are in the same big family, namely the family of creators, the path to the truth that never there is an end.¹⁰ Budhy Munawar Rahman, one of the JIL activists, gave legitimacy to the "truth of all religions" that adherents of all religions deserve to be called "believers", therefore what is needed now is to appreciate the problem of pluralism between religions, namely the view that anyone those who believe regardless of their religion are equal before Allah,

Ulil said that "the truth of God is greater than Islam itself as a religion that is embraced by a social entity called Muslims. Islam is just a "process" that will never end. Therefore, the verse "inna al-dinna inda Allahi al-islam" (Qs: 3.19), is more accurately interpreted as "indeed the true path of religiosity is a never-ending process leading to submission" (to the Almighty).

Pluralism as stated on its website is one of JIL's important agendas in addition to many other agendas. Lutfhi Assyaukanie also spoke in this matter, Lutfhi said that the importance of pluralism and non-negotiable. He further said that historical (historical) experiences can be seen in the early days of the Medina community, which was led by the Prophet Muhammad. Often used as a model for tolerance of inter-religious life in Islam. With this model, Islam is considered a religion that

respects the existence of other religions, is inclusive and tolerant. By looking at the concept of pluralism, he further said that there is no obstacle to marriage between followers of different religions, both male and female, because essentially all religions are the same towards God,

Relations between religion, ethnicity, culture and even fellow Muslims themselves continue to experience destruction in this decade. The destruction was caused by differences in perspectives, views and ideologies, confrontations and competing interests. The main key (the first key) to survive depends on how to learn to manage diversity and conflict (universalist and conflict). In fact, the priority to face the increasingly sophisticated pluralism of the nation and its acceleration through globalization, will surely find a solution when the Islamic and non-Islamic worldviews can meet each other. In this context Islam should emerge as a universal religion (universalism religion). It is also this opportunity that should not be ignored by Islam to become a major player in the flow of world change towards true peace. Some liberals hope, The 21st century will witness a global religious-spiritual revival in both the political and private spheres, although the marginal role of traditional religious institutions can still be seen in this life. This is where the importance of every religion to develop and re-examine their respective traditions in order to respond to this challenge, including Islam as the majority religion.

If Islamic Sharia were applied in Indonesia in particular, the problems were minorities and women. For the minorities, it would be difficult for them to move in the public sphere because Sharia is specifically for Muslims and they would find it difficult to actualize their rights. Meanwhile, women will be stuck directly in public activities, as women are now moving a lot in the territory of the country and doing a lot of activities everywhere. Islam and human rights are very important for Muslims who are the largest people in Indonesia. Islam also really upholds human rights, as Burhanuddin Muhtadi said that Muslims who are the largest people in Indonesia should not or should realize that the rights of other people outside of Islam also have the same rights as the rights of Muslims, the state must be able to understand this.

3.3 Application of Islamic Sharia in Indonesia

Discourse on Islamic law is often a debate and controversy in understanding and interpreting the discourse in the context of the state. There are many discussions, seminars on this issue, there are also many people who are pro and contra about the discourse and there are also many people who do not want to know and are silent on this issue. Islamic law is the author's last discussion, therefore Islamic law is an important discussion, as the author reviews the previous important discussions. Shari'a has a bad reputation and is unclear in the Indonesian context, Islamic law has been a debate in Indonesia, since the independence era and now, this issue will not produce significant results for human beings in Indonesia.

Shari'a is nothing but a place that upholds human dignity and value. Islamic law requires the law and the right decision if the law is placed before humans, as a method and a path to progress and glory. Shari'a is not a set of rules and rules, nor is it a fiqh that has been believed by Muslims. Shari'a laws follow the development of social reality, and always step in that development. Therefore, he explains about the basics of Shari'a and limits its object to social reality in discussing the basic principles of Shari'a should be the main goal when trying to implement Islamic Shari'a. If not, then it will only become a theoretical discussion and logical investigation that is contrary to religious law and the essence of Islam itself.

Therefore, according to him, in Islam it is not uncommon to find people who misunderstand the meaning of Shari'a, it could be that what they have considered Shari'a is not Shari'a itself. On the other hand, what so far cannot be considered sharia, is actually the essence of sharia. Therefore, capturing the true meaning of Shari'a in the context of religion is a necessity. As we know that nowadays there is a new tendency in many Muslim countries to implement Islamic Shari'a by taking advantage of freedom and democracy, whether we like it or not, also provides opportunities for the emergence of religious expression. in the most extreme pole. The aspiration to implement Islamic law is directly proportional to the ups and downs of democracy in Muslim countries. Among those who want Islamic law to be implemented,

The demand for the application of Islamic law in the end always tends to group Muslims into dualism as best they can, the believers and the apostates or infidels. This demand always polarizes citizens to become Muslims and non-Muslims. The idea of implementing Islamic law,

according to JIL, often emits a scent of hostility towards the West, especially the United States, and most other countries in the world, without themselves being prepared to face the consequences that may arise as a result of the winds of hostility. JIL openly criticizes groups that are ambitious about the implementation of Islamic law through newspapers, internet mailing lists, books and discussions. JIL said that the group was calling for demands for the legalization of sharia or being bolder to change the existing legal system. The application of Islamic law has a sectarian tendency by treating religion as a cover, and Islamic law as a mask. What they expect by acting apologetically. The public will not be able to read their intentions and tendencies. All of this is always done by them by exploiting the sentiments of the masses, public discontent and the aura of Islam itself.

JIL said that Islamic law would not be able to play a role in enforcing a good government system and would not succeed in serving the interests of the people.²⁴ The government's failure to enforce laws in Indonesia, such as stopping night entertainment, discotheques, immoral houses and others, made Muslims feel angry. and demanding that Islamic Sharia law be enforced. The formal application of Islamic law can lead to the establishment of an Islamic state, but the Indonesian government will never allow the application of Islamic law to lead to the establishment of an Islamic state.

We can all know that JIL is very critical in this matter. JIL activist, Ulil Abshar Abdalla revealed in an interview in the Tempo newspaper, he said, "So we are among those who oppose the implementation and application of Islamic law in Indonesia, because the law is the problem. He said that there is no Islamic law (nothing Law of Islam), Islamic law will cause division of the people. If Islamic law were implemented in a secular, plural and pluralistic country like Indonesia, and if all Muslim societies were to be in place, there would be no problem. Before talking about legal sanctions, including the possibility of applying hand cuts, what is more important according to Azumardi Azra is to create a fair order first. If not, he is worried that the application of Islamic law will not work or even be counterproductive.

The democratic system that is realized when a country is separated from an authoritarian regime opens up opportunities for all ideologies, including religious radicalism, to enter the state administration system. This paradox occurs because the weakness of the democratic system is the absence of a self-defense mechanism to dispel forces that oppose democracy itself. This can be seen from the development of groups that are pro-Islamic and anti-democratic, such as HTI (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia).

JIL asserts on its website that the application of Islamic law in Indonesia will never succeed, because eventually people will realize that Islamic law is only a political tool for a handful of politicians. Islamic Shari'a will deal directly with Shari'a itself, which Islamic Shari'a, and according to whose understanding it will be applied later. This is the challenge of implementing Islamic law itself. Islamic law will not be a problem, but the imposition on that understanding is wrong, Islamic law must be made so strong and dynamic that people will follow the law because of self-awareness, not coercion by the state.

4. CONCLUSION

The debate about the pattern of relations between religion and the state in the Islamic world, is still ongoing between those who are pro and contra, until now there has been no final agreement on this topic. In some Muslim countries this is still a debate between Muslim intellectuals, about how the pattern of the relationship between the two is, because some Muslim intellectuals want the integrity of religion and the state, some others want the separation of religion and state by combining Islamic values, some even want a separation between the two on the grounds that Islam has no concept of the state (Islam has no concept). As explained in chapter II, there are three paradigms that explain the pattern of relations between Islam and the state. JIL is a religious organization, but this group did not name the organization but called itself as a network that intensely examines the pattern of relations between Islam and the state. JIL which on its website has four political agendas, they try to offer the concept of secularism which essentially is the separation between the concepts of religion and the state.

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