THE ISLAMIC DISCOURSES OF INDONESIAN ISLAMIST ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract
Several years ago, before HTI was banned in 2017, many terms appeared in the public sphere of Indonesian politics. The terms are; khilafah, Islam kaffah, NKRI with sharia, and great imam (Imam Besar). This article examines the political discourse of Islam in Indonesia used by HTI and FPI. It takes the terms from the media, both their internal and external media. In addition, there are many posters scattered in the news. These terms were mainly taken when the two organizations at that time were still in existence before disbanded. HTI was disbanded in 2018 and FPI in 2020. The purpose of this study is to explore the intent and purpose of these terms. It uses a critical discourse analysis model of Fairclough, Wodak, and van Dick to analyze these terms. The study results indicate that these terms are used to marginalize several popular terms, namely the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) for the price of death, the 1945 Constitution, and the president.

Artikel ini mengkaji bahasa politik Islam di Indonesia yang digunakan oleh HTI dan FPI, yaitu; khilafah, Islam kaffah, NKRI Bersyariah, dan imam besar. Istilah itu diambil dari media-media, baik media internal mereka maupun eksternal. Selain itu juga poster-poster yang banyak bertebaran di dalam pemberitaan-
Introduction

The political language of Islam in Indonesia is present amid national politics with their respective ideologies. It is often used to channel political aspirations from top to bottom, bottom to top, or horizontally (Shah et al., 2021). It often appears in political expressions such as Islamic revivalism, Islamic revivalism, Islamic revolution, and Islamic fundamentalism. Usually the use of Islamic terminology will increase in times of upheaval, both by the authorities and opponents (Dorraj, 1999; Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996).

Socio-political Islam is colored by religious symbols, rhetoric, organizations, and figures which are the primary sources of its legitimacy and mobilization (Mura, 2015; Esposito, 1987). Furthermore, several groups in Islam simultaneously use terms used by the khawarij sect such as sharia, jihad, and ummah. These terms are often claimed to represent Islam (Antúnez & Tellidis, 2013). In addition, thinkers and leaders of the Islamic movement often come up with specific terms. These terms are the basis of the discourse battle according to the background surrounding the character (Hoigilt, 2011).

Studies on the political language of Islam are abundant. Still, the author observes a few writings such as Muhammad Imran Shah, Saeed Ahmad, and Ali Danish explaining that state officials manipulate language in speeches or comments related to events using political language. Also, articles by Asrinda Amalia and Aidil Haris discuss Islamophobia caused by the mass media in the discourse of terrorism in Indonesia (Amalia et al., 2019). They both analyzed the use of the term terrorism in electronic media on the Tribunnews.com and Detik.com portals. Bugi Kenoh Mulyar also discussed the caliphate discourse used in media such as the Al-Islam Bulletin, Kaffah, and the Ummat Media.
Tabloid. Through critical discourse analysis, the article concludes that the Islamic media brought up the caliphate discourse to marginalize the discourse of the nation-state (Mulyar, n.d.).

Another study that was earlier in a comprehensive study was by Bernard Lewis and Muzaffar Alam, who studied Islam’s political language. They collect various terms, trace the root of the terms, and then analyze their development until the writing appears. Therefore, questioning the theoretical review linguistically in their writings will only be in vain. However, their writings are still widely accepted academically. Meanwhile, writings on the study of Islamic political language based on linguistic analysis are found in Jacob Hoigilt (2004).

Another scholar is Andrea Mura, who highlighted the role and productivity of several Islamist figures in producing Islamic discourse. He featured three well-known Islamist figures: Hasan Al Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Osama bin Laden. The first two figures were pioneers in the Islamic movement whose ideas spread worldwide. In comparison, Osama bin Laden is a symbol of resistance to western hegemony, which later inspired radical movements worldwide. He also reproduced Islamic terms to evoke a passion for resistance to Western domination over the Islamic world (Mura, 2015).

The political language of Islam emerged as a response to several situations such as modernity, colonialism, and the hegemony of the West in the Islamic world. Modernity gets a response from Islamic political movements because modernity is considered to erode and negate religion, including Islam. Moreover, technology has eliminated the roles of humanity in the industrial world. Meanwhile, the response to colonialism continues with the Islamic response to the hegemony of the Western world in the case of the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine. It also involved the alignment of the Western world in its role in the civil war in Syria and several Arab countries after the Arab Spring. This response is also in line with the concerns of religious leaders about the development of secularism in the world which is undermining not only Islam, but the religion in general (Srinivasan, 2011).

Thus, the political language of Islam in this section is an idiom and vocabulary that forms terminology, which is raised by political activity, by either people or groups in the form of Islamic political organizations and movements, for political purposes. These political goals are not limited to power politics or practical politics but are broader in religious ideological goals or Islamism. This Islamic political language appears in the political situation
and conditions surrounding it, so that studied from the historicity aspect of the existing discourse.

Method

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) initiated by Michael Foucault, and later developed by the anthropologist Talal Asad. Discourse analysis examines the discourse said by someone in a particular space and time in a power relation that surrounds it (Mujiburrahman, 2008). This analysis departs from the assumption that language does not stand alone, but some relations surround it, such as domination, discrimination, and power and control. Thus, through the discourse analysis, it will be known about the social inequalities expressed in language use (Huckin et al., 2012).

This paper presents a set of theories used to examine the relationship between discourse and sociocultural development. Fairclough made three gradations in the critical discourse analysis stage, namely description (micro), interpretation (meso), and explanation (macro) (Fairclough, 2001). In the micro aspect (description), linguistic science tools needed. Meanwhile, on the macro aspect, social science tools are needed to observe social structures, injustice, racism, prejudice, suffering, and so on (Haryatmoko, 2017; Rahimi & Riasati, 2011). CDA, in this case, is useful in explaining the linguistic-discursive dimensions of social and cultural phenomena concerning the Islamist organizations in Indonesia. It specifically discusses how a discourse reproduces and maintains the abuse of power, domination, and inequality through text and speech in social and political contexts. The areas explained are organizational analysis, racism and mass communication, nationalism and identity, and economics and mass communication. The objects of this study are written, spoken or spoken language, and visual images. The three of them, in many ways, play a critical role in forming social relations with the outside world from the people who use the communication material.

To examine the political language of Islam, this paper limits it to a study of the terms or words used by the two organizations. The first stage of data collection is determining the identification, then contesting it with other meanings from outside the HTI and FPI groups. The choice of the time limit in the post-New Order period is based on a more actual and dynamic study after democracy had its rightful place, even though it was only a procedure. Furthermore, this paper explores the names and issues developed by the Islamic political movement. It begins with a brief description of the political
movements of Hizb ut-Tahrir and FPI and their central issue, namely the caliphate. This article examines the marginalization of Islamism discourse, especially by HTI and FPI. It raises the terms Khilafah, kaffah, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia with Sharia, and the great Imam. HTI and FPI often raised these terms and even became the main issue. It is indicated by the frequent use of the term in their actions, such as in street demonstrations or published books. These terms were studied in terms of their meaning, both etymologically, terminologically, and how the terms were understood and used by the two groups of Islamic movements in Indonesia. In addition, responses to these terms will also be discussed. The questions that will be answered in this paper are; what is the purpose of the political language that raised, how is the response that appears to the term, and through what media the term raised.

The data of the terms were obtained by collecting news in the mass media and information from primary sources such as books written by internal people of the organization and other people about it. In the data analysis process, the chosen words were analyzed and contested with opinions outside of them. Thus, this paper wants to explain how the discourse marginalizes the political discourse developed by groups outside them. A genealogy of contemporary Islamic political discourse in Indonesia will be obtained by tracing the process of emergence and marginalization of this discourse.

Results & Discussion

This section discusses the political languages that emerged after the reformation in Indonesia, namely the period after the New Order. The post-new order period is chosen to track political movements’ actualization, which varied from during the new order (Hasan, 2009). Here, the political movements will be discussed are the Front Pembela Islam (FPI) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). These two movements are movements that emerged after the New Order and featured themselves in the jargon of Islamic politics in Indonesia. Both were suspected of aspiring to establish a caliphate state but with different strategies. On 19 July 2017, based on Law number 2 of 2017, HTI organizations were officially banned in Indonesia (Santoso, 2021).

HTI and “Khilafa” Movement in Indonesia

The government dissolved FPI and HTI in December 2020 and May 2017. However, the issues and terms raised by HTI before its disbandment
are still worth studying as they colored the discourses of political Islam before it disbanded, even now. At least, this is seen from the terms raised in demonstrations by their movement.

Hizb ut-Tahrir is a transnational organization founded by Taqiyyudin an Nabhani (d. 1977) in Palestine. His thinking is based more on the reality of the Arab defeat of Israel (Rodhi, 2012). He was previously an activist with the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwanul Muslimin) and was impressed by Hasan Al Banna’s ideas. He considered that if all Muslims were under the umbrella of an Islamic State as the early Islamic caliphate, Islam was not be easily defeated by Western (Christian) powers. He considers that nationalism, democracy, popular sovereignty, and secular law are products of the western world to divide Muslims into small countries (Khālidī, 2004). Departing from this, the later founded movement did not want to be officially involved in general elections in all democratic countries, even though they were in the form of political parties (Marijan, 2010).

The feeling that Islam is always threatened and the victim of a conspiracy has become the foothold of the resistance movement for every Islamic movement, including HTI (Wilson, 2015). With this resistance jargon, Hizb ut-Tahrir tries to recruit as many members as possible. These members were made aware that Islam is under threat and grip of the West. Islam will be defeated and enslaved if there is no resistance to liberation. This feeling usually becomes the legitimacy of radical movements in Islam and perhaps in other religions.

Hizb ut-Tahrir calls for various discourses so that Muslims unite in a single global leadership called the caliphate under a caliph. This movement is different from establishing an Islamic state as promoted by other Islamic movements, such as the FPI, which also has the idea of a caliphate. For FPI, the Islamic caliphate does not mean abolishing the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) and other established Islamic countries. Instead, the establishment of the caliphate is to unite the vision of all Islamic countries in one form of cooperation.
Meanwhile, FPI was founded on August 17, 1998, or two months after Suharto’s fall as President of Indonesia. This period is often referred to as the beginning of the reform era. It means that FPI was founded in the early days of freedom of expression. As it is known that during Suharto’s presidency, freedom of expression was severely restricted. FPI established ahead of the Special Session of the People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR). This establishment coincided with the establishment of Islamic organizations that emerged during the early reformation period.

At the beginning of its establishment, FPI was a non-governmental movement with the intention of defending the interests of Islam through the discourse of Amar makruf nahi munkar. FPI often destroys places they believe are centers of immorality (violating God’s law) (Woodward et al., 2014). In addition, they also demand the implementation of Islamic law in the life of the state. On the other hand, Islamic interests believed threatened by the presence of forces that would eliminate the existence of Islamic politics through the removal of President Habibie. There is a provisional analysis that FPI was founded by military forces whose existence is also threatened after the demand for the military to return to the barracks rather than taking part in politics (Farissa & Barthos, 2021) (Hasan, 2009).

On the other hand, their movement also seems to take over the discourse of the moderate Islamic movement that has been around for quite a long time in Indonesia. NU and Muhammadiyah, for example, the most prominent Islamic organizations, seem unaffected by the discourse developed by HTI and FPI. These two organizations always raise a counter-discourse, namely “NKRI is fixed” or “Pancasila is Final”. Thus, the presence of these two organizations
has also colored Islamic activism in Indonesia that was previously only colored by mainstream discourses such as NU and Muhammadiyah. Their presence can marginalize the discourse of Islam and the state that was established for years. On the other hand, this new Islamism discourse reinforces the opinion that the discourse on the relationship between Islam and the state, or Islam and Pancasila, will always appear with different performances and formulations. At least in the history of the founding of the Republic of Indonesia, records of the conflict between these two groups have emerged (Al-Rasheed et al., n.d.).

Khilafa (caliphate)

Khilafah is the central discourse of HTI, which is voiced in every demonstration through the posters they claim. The discourse reads, “The caliphate is the solution”. In HTI’s view, the caliph is the legitimate leader based on Islamic law in an Islamic state. Hafidz Abdurrahman, one of the internal groups of HTI explained that the caliphate is a general leadership which is the right of all Muslims around the world to enforce Islamic law and carry out Islamic da’wah throughout the world (Ahnaf, 2009) (Abdurrahman, 2014), (Al-Amin, 2014).

The Khilafah has been the subject of much debate regarding its understanding in the modern world. One party believes in a literal sense of the return of the caliphate; one party interprets it contextually (Tanjung, n.d.) (Hosen, 2018). The implications of this etymological and terminological understanding are vast, as can be seen in the reality of the emerging movement. The currently existing countries should only be provincial or federal from the totality of Islamic State in the world (Al-Faruqi & Al Faruqi, 2000). This thinking is claimed to come from the spirit of the teachings of monotheism, namely the process of uniting God, which must have implications in all lines of life, including the government system (Azra, 2016).

Meanwhile, Ibn Khaldun alludes to the caliphate, which he calls bringing all humans by the teachings of the Shari’a for the benefit of the hereafter and the world. In essence, it is to replace the owner of the Shari’a in maintaining religion and regulating the world (Rahardjo, 1996). Khilafah is a derivative of the word caliph, a leader or actor. The word caliph (خليفة) mentioned twice in the Qur’an, which is claimed to be the main grip of HTI. Both refer to the duty of man as God’s representative on earth to maintain it as best as possible. While the second related to the task of Prophet Dawud as, a leader on this earth to do what is right not to follow his passions so that he goes
astray without a clue of the truth. In conclusion, the caliphate refers to the general task of human beings after being created on earth (Tanjung, n.d.).

Etymologically, the word caliph is rooted in the word kh-l-f which means behind or leaning to one side (Rahardjo & Rachman, 1996). The caliph can also interpret as Imamat, leadership. It is just that the term Imamat is more familiar in Shia discourse, which calls their leaders as Imams. In Shia faith, Imamat is part of faith (Rahmat, 1998). Imam generally refers to a spiritual leader, especially in performing prayers. In another paragraph, it will be explicitly discussed about Imamat, especially regarding the title of “great imam” for the leader of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), Habib Riziq Syihab (HRS).

The caliph is also interpreted as a substitute or representative, namely the person behind the real leader (Mustafa, 2012). From this discourse, it developed that the caliph is a person who becomes a representative who replaces their role in determining decisions for the common good. The term caliphate by HTI marginalizes the understanding of groups outside them such as the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwanul Muslimin/IM) in Egypt. The emphasis on the caliphate discourse will emphasize that the system of government that has been running in Indonesia is not in accordance with Islamic law. Therefore all government activities are considered illegal.

In conclusion, these terms are used to marginalize the discourse of the rulers of Islamic countries. The marginalization of this discourse is also a response to the existence of the nation-state. On a rolling basis, this marginalization effort gets a response from the marginalized as a form of advocacy against the existing reality and situation.

**Islam Kaffah**

In several actions, HTI also shouted the jargon “Islam Kaffah”. This discourse also voiced by several organizations from various circles, especially those that ideologically aligned with HTI. Islam *kaffah* is a jargon for the political struggle of Islam. It presupposes the formal application of Islamic laws in a country (Ratna Sari, 2019).

Grammatically, this term is uncommon because the adjective and the characterized word must be parallel. This word is adopted from the verse of the Qur’an where it is found in four verses in three surahs, 2: 208, 9: 36, 122, 34: 28 (Sari, 2019). They all refer to the nominal totality of the number of people covered by the word *kaffah*. Islamic movements such as HTI take this
term from the Qur’an 2:208 and attach it to the word Islam, while in the verse there is no mention of the word Islam (Ahnaf, 2009).

HTI considers the totality in question attached to the word Islam and is drawn to the meaning that Muslims apply the total Islamic system in government. Departing from this understanding, HTI is fighting for a system they regard as totality in carrying out the religion of Islam, including the formalization of Islam in government based on the principle that Islam is religion and state (ad-din was Ad-daulah).

By bringing up the term Islam Kaffah, HTI wants to emphasize that the Islam embraced by most Muslims in Indonesia is not yet Kaffah. It is indicated by the omission of sources of Islamic law in the legal system in Indonesia. The existing sharia regulations are not sufficiently considered as the implementation of Islamic law as a whole because they are still partial. This partial application is not what Kaffah’s Islamic discourse wants (Ekasetya, 2021).

NU circles reject that the discourse of kaffah means the necessity of establishing an Islamic state. The kaffah way of life does not have to go through the formalization of Islam in the state. Because to run the Shari’a of Allah does not have to be required by the state. People are free to practice the Shari’a without having to establish an Islamic state. Thus, the term kaffah received opposition from the NU group. This opposition advocates for most Indonesians that applying Islamic law does not have to state in the legislation explicitly. Many religious services that do not have formally regulated by law. Thus, Kaffah’s Islamic discourse has marginalized the state discourse of Pancasila, which legally formalized by legislation that does not formalize Islam in law. This effort to marginalize the discourse of the Pancasila state met with resistance from other groups to defend the reality that the Pancasila state not fought with Islam Kaffah.

“NKRI Bersyariah” (Shariated Republic)

The discourse of Islamic law was once a sharp debate among the founders of the Indonesian nation in the early days of its independence. The NU and Muhammadiyah organizations once fought for the implementation of Islamic law in the early days of independence until 1959. This debate ended with an agreement to abolish the term Islamic law in the first precepts of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Upheavals to enforce the application of Islamic law in the form of a State Islam after that were considered a rebellion, such as the Darul Islam rebellion by the Indonesian Islamic Army or known as DI/
TII (Ward, 2009). The word Islamic law is a normative designation for Islamic religious rules. However, the word discourse by the bearers of the Islamic state was used as a commodity for political discourse to achieve their goals.

The word sharia in the Qur’an mentioned once at 45:18. Likewise, the word shari’a also only mentioned once at 5:48. Meanwhile, the word shari’a mentioned four times. In the first word in the Qur’an, sharia is defined by the ministry of religion as sharia, which is a way of life in accordance with Islamic religious guidance. The second word, shir’a, also means rule. Thus, the word sharia means universal rule. From here, it means sharia has become an Islamic political idiom by Islamists, an Islamic movement that wants to formalize Islam in state laws (Tibi, 2014).

In several actions, FPI displayed the idiom of NKRI Bersyariah (Hallaq, 2015). They convey these idioms to demand the formalization and implementation of Shari’a as state law. The Sharia referred to by these Islamic movements includes the application of Islamic law in criminal and civil cases and the imposition of prohibitions on what is called immorality. This understanding is thought to have arisen from the notion of sharia, which revolves around the formal application of Islamic law. Understanding sharia like this will lead to the same understanding as fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). In fact, the understanding of fiqh strongly influenced by socio-political conditions at a time.

In addition to FPI, there are three organizations that raised the issue of the enforcement of Islamic law, namely HTI, the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), and the South Sulawesi Preparatory Committee for the Enforcement of Islamic Law (KPPSI). Each of these organizations has different strategies to fight for it. The first is transnational or anti-nationalism, the second is national, and the third is regional based on regional autonomy. In response to this Mahfud MD argues that the issue of enforcing sharia does not have to be in the form of enforcing an Islamic state because sharia is universal.

The dominance of the term “NKRI with Sharia” wants to emphasize that Indonesia is not currently sharia. The term also refers to the establishment of an Islamic state without explicitly mentioning it. It is inherent in the view that the Indonesian state is not an Islamic state even though the majority of the population is Muslim. Rejection of it is a defense of the reality that the state in Indonesia is not a religious state but also a secular state. This country already has a common platform, namely Pancasila.
“Imam Besar” (Great Imam)

FPI appointed its highest leader, Habib Rizieq Shihab, as the great Imam. In fact, this term has expanded to become the Great Imam of Muslims, especially when the so-called Congress of Indonesian Muslims held in Jakarta on November 30, 2017. The use of this term by FPI underwent a shift after the beginning of its establishment; the position of the great Imam was placed after the supreme commander. The supreme commander is Habib Riziq Syihab (Hasan, 2012).

The term imam is usually attached to places of worship for Muslims such as the great Imam of the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta. The second term is still in the corridor of the Imam in Muslim prayers. The term imam is also popular in Islamic circles to refer to the supremacy of scientists (‘ulama), such as Imam Ghazali, Imam Suyuti, Imam Mahalli, Imam Nawawi, Imam Ramli, and so on. This term is based on Al Razi’s opinion that imams are all people who were the role model in religion. In the political context, the Imam is defined as the leader of Muslims who carries out the government order based on Islamic teachings (Facal, 2020) (Rais, 2001).

Meanwhile, in contrast to FPI, Nahdlatul ‘Ulama (NU) refers to the highest leadership of its organization as rais ‘am, namely spiritual leaders and scholars who are considered to have high qualifications. The highest designation is given to the founder of this organization, namely, KH. Hasyim Asy’ari, as rais Akbar, the highest leader, whose title was not given to the next NU rais ‘am (Dahlan, n.d.).

The term Imam is also familiar among Shiites to refer to the highest leaders such as Imam Ali, Imam Husein, Imam Hasan, Imam Ja’far Sadiq and so on until the Shia version of the Mahdiism movement. The Imam is the highest spiritual leader, unlike the mullah and ayatollah. Imam Mahdi is the belief of Muslims in general about his resurrection, but it is different from the Shia version in particular (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013).

The term “Great Imam” emphasizes that Muslims should have one Imam who must obey. This single leader is to negate other leaders who already exist in several Islamic organizations in Indonesia. Of course, there was significant resistance because each group had its own leader who also adhered more. This refusal advocate for the wider community not being trapped in the narrative of the domination of the “Great Imam”.

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Conclusion

The political language of HTI and FPI marginalizes the discourse of Islamic political language outside of them, such as the discourse of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), Islam and Pancasila, and leadership figures. The aim of the political language of Islam by the Islamic movement is more directed at the monolithic nuances that it wants to build, even though the terms still offered to non-Muslims. It confirms the so-called public Islam in the Muslim world. The languages that appear above are the efforts of Islamic movement activists to make their voices more heard by the outside world. It is because of what is known as the process of re-politicization and de-privatization. This conclusion confirms the opinion of Noorhaidi Hasan and Jose Cassanova.

Furthermore, the narrative of political language discourse above emphasizes that efforts to spiritualize religious language always find space in some Muslims in Indonesia. It is still inherent in the themes of puritanism because of their worldview, which states that the contamination of modernity damages the current situation of Islam. This vigilantism adds “energy” for them to continue reproducing political languages in all lines of politics. Therefore, it is necessary to return to the original source, namely the Qur’an and Hadith, as authentic sources.

On the other hand, groups outside HTI and FPI responded to their political language with various objections. The rejection of this other group is also based on the same religious text, namely the Qur’an and Hadith. Apart from these two sources, some groups who refuse also use historical narratives. Historical narratives are interpretations of Islamic understanding. This rejection stems from the dominance of the political language of the two Islamic movements.

Technically, HTI and FPI convey their discourse through street actions and book publishing. In addition, it also takes the non-parliamentary route. Especially for HTI, by refusing to participate in contestation in the general election, this is a form of their consistency in rejecting democracy and its procedural instruments. The democratic procedural instruments include participating in general elections.

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