

Religious Ideological Rigidity: Political Attitude of Muslim Group's Leaders who are Compatible with or Oppos Democracy in Indonesia

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Abstract:- Criticizing motivated social cognition perspective (Jost et. al, 2003) and ideological rigidity (Greenberg and Jonas, 2003) that caused differences in political attitude; this study suggests that high religious ideological rigidity in individuals and groups contests democracy while low religious ideological rigidity supports it. Concerning political context in Indonesia, there are some groups of Muslims who are compatible with democracy (as a secular system), while the others oppose it and wants to establish *Daula Islamiya* (with *khilafa-sharia*). The case study in this research is Abu Bakar Baasyir, the leader of *Jamaa Anshoru Tauhid* (JAT), and *Jamaa Islamiya* (which is affiliated with Al-Qaidah) who wants to establish *Daula Islamiya*. Also Hasyim Mujadi, leader of / *Nahdhlatul Ulama/NU* (Renaissance of Islamic scholars) who supports democracy and deradicalization for militant Muslims in Indonesia, South-Thailand and Mindanao. Thematic analysis was used for analyzing data. The result shows that Baasyir's religious ideology is more rigid, authoritarian, dogmatic and closed-minded compared to Mujadi's. Baasyir's ideology is also absolute, reluctant to adapt and interpret Islamic law according to current situation and condition. Meanwhile, Mujadi explained that we can wisely express religion as a claim of truth by having dialogue with others. High religious ideological rigidity of Baasyir caused him to contest democracy while low religious ideological rigidity of Mujadi caused him to support it. Religious ideological rigidity of the political attitude was discussed.

Keyword: *Religious ideological rigidity, authoritarian, dogmatic, closed-minded and political attitude*

I. INTRODUCTION

The issue of political system is increasingly becoming an interesting discourse in Indonesia due to long lasting competition between groups that want Indonesia to be governed based on Islamic system and groups that support democracy as a system that best suits Indonesia's plurality. While some have participated in politics, groups that endorse Islamic system are known for their violent actions, be it in the form of terrorism or armed struggle. Democracy-supporter groups, on the other hand, are more inclined to preach peace and tolerance. In political psychology, individuals are assumed to have their own preferences and attitudes about how a country or organization should be governed. It is related to what political system is preferred (Jost, 2009). The motivated social-cognitive perspective explains that individuals and groups who hold political conservatism (right-wing) have a high need for uncertainty avoidance and threat management, and this needs spark a motive to maintain status quo and confirm to the available system (Jost, et. al., 2004; Jost, et. al., 2003b; Jost & Hunyady, 2005). Greenberg and Jonas (2003) criticize that political attitude differences are caused by ideological rigidity, which is rigid, authoritarian, closed-minded, extreme, dogmatic, and intolerant. Individuals and groups of the right-wing (extreme right) with high ideological rigidity support and confirm to the available system, whereas individual and group of the left-wing (extreme left) with high ideological rigidity tend to change the status quo and oppos the available system. Contrary to the theory, in this study we suggest that high religious ideological rigidity in right-wing individuals/groups causes them to oppos democracy and want to change it with *khilafa-sharia*; and low religious ideological rigidity in right-wing individuals/groups causes them to support democracy and be compatible with it. Baasyir's religious ideology is more rigid than Muzadi's, and that difference in religious ideological rigidity causes different political attitudes. The aim of this study is to explore how different religious ideological rigidity of Baasyir and Muzadi cause them to oppose or be compatible with democratic systems.

1.1 Muslim and Democracy in Indonesia: Compatible or Opposing attitude

Since the preparation of Indonesia's independence in 1945, there has been two Muslim groups with different ideology concerning the relation between Islam and the state (Efendi, 1998). The first group does not present

the standard pattern of state theory (political system). So long as the state holds the principles of justice, equity, participation and deliberation, the mechanism used is considered to be in accordance with Islamic tenet. This group's ideology is the vision of mainstream Muslim in Indonesia and it does not contrast Islam to modern political system, so that Islam is compatible with democracy (see Mujani, 2003). NU (*Nahdhlatul Ulama*) the biggest moderate Muslim group in Indonesia, with more than 40 million members, is supporting and compatible with democracy. They stand out for their moderation and openness to interfaith dialogue and cooperation, and have strong sense of tolerance to other faith (Ramakrishna, 2009). In this regard, Hasyim Mujadi is a former NU leader with strong commitment to a religiously tolerant, multifaith, democratic Indonesia, rather than a theocratic state dominated by Islam.

The second Muslim group emphasizes the aspect of legal and formal Islamic political idealism by struggling to establish *khilafa* (Islamdom) and *sharia* (Islamic law) directly as the state constitution, and holds the view that a democratic system is against the belief of Islam (Effendi, 1998). One of the groups that have negative point of view and stimulates intolerable deeds, which raid transgressors at prostitution sites, gambling houses, bars, and are involved in act of terrorism is JAT (*Jamaah Anshoru Tauhid*) a group founded by Abu Bakar Baasyir. Baasyir had been involved in terrorism training in Aceh so he was arrested on 8th August, 2010 and until now is still in prison. Baasyir has been spreading his religious ideology through religious proselytizing in many places in Indonesia and it has made him able to upgrade his supporter quality/quantity and then finally becomes a basic people movement. Having a people base enable Baasyir to easily mobilize the support so that he has political strength and can reach the goal of the movement (AnNaim, 2009). Even though the numbers of JAT members were relatively small (not more than 1700 members), the government of Indonesia called him as a very dangerous figure, because his religious ideology inspired some groups to adopt violent ways as their responses to protect their religious belief, such as sacred violence and some terrorist actions in Indonesia. Concerning the relation between Islam and state in Muslim Indonesia context, there is a different attitude between groups that is compatible with or opposing democracy. Mujadi from NU is supporting and compatible with democracy, on the contrary Baasyir from JAT is opposing democracy.

1.2 Religious Ideological Rigidity

Ideological definition in a spatial term as liberal-conservative (left-right, especially in the United States) is the most parsimonious way to classify political ideology in the Western world (Adorno et.al., 1950; Altemeyer, 1998; 1996; Jost, et.al, 2008; Jost, 2006; Jost et.al., 2003a; Jost et.al., 2003b; Knight, 2006; Orfali, 2006; Rokeach, 1960; Tetlock, 1983). On the contrary in the political context in Indonesia, the view of political ideology within the spatial term (conservative/liberal) does not significantly influence the political attitude compared to religious ideology, as can be seen in three Islamic fundamentalist groups (Muluk & Chusniyah, 2005). In Indonesian society, religious ideology affect political attitude more than political ideology; because religion is an important psychological variable in influencing their attitudes (Kashima et. al., 2011). For examples, religious identity motivated the *lasykar jihad* to get involved in Ambon conflict (Hasan, 2008), and influenced multicultural attitudes (Chusniyah & Pitaloka, 2009); the jihad ideology influenced sacred violence of both fundamental group sample (Muluk & Chusniyah, 2005), and the people of mainstream Muslim. This fact is in line with Unger (2007), who stated that religious ideology has a significant role in influencing political attitude.

According to Greenberg and Jonas (2003), the ideology that influence political attitude pertains to ideological rigidity, ranging from low to high. Low power in ideology orientation is called low rigidity of ideology, which has open minded and tolerant characteristics. Their ideological preferences are a personal choice which is always opens to be questioned and considers alternative point of view. On the contrary, high ideology orientation is called high rigidity of ideology, showing dogmatism, rigidity and authoritarianism. The ideology can't be questioned and viewed as an absolute correctness, while alternative ones are viewed as absolute incorrectness. On the contrary, low rigidity of their religious ideology, which has open minded and tolerant characteristics. In this theory, dogmatism becomes an indicator whether individual belief system are open or closed. It shows the level of whether someone can accept and evaluate information from outside based on self intrinsic consideration. The more open the belief system, the more independent the person is in evaluating information based on internal situation needs (Rokeach, 1960). Meanwhile, authoritarianism has two illustrations (Altemeyer, 1998). First, people with high authoritarianism tend to organize their world view in term of in-group and out-group then perceive that out-group as a threat to the values they hold. Second, people with self-righteousness in their character view them to have better moral values and look down to other people whom they call as having less moral.

II. METHOD

This is a qualitative study that examined political views of two popular religious leaders in Indonesia. The first was Abu Bakar Baasyir, the founder of *Al-Mukmin* Ngruki Islamic Institution in Solo 1972. He was chosen as the subject of the study due to his unique ideological attitude since the social political new order (in 1967-1998) in Indonesia. He had been in jail for many times since new order, due to his criticism to the

government, rejecting *Pancasila* as the only principle of the nation, not joining in general election, and proposing Islamic law for Indonesia. In 2000 he led MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia/ Indonesian Council of Muslim Fighters) organization and JAT (in 2008), which proposed to formalize Islamic law and change Indonesia's state system. Second was Hasyim Muzadi, a former NU leader (in 1999 with more than 40 billion members and also known as a moderate Muslim group in Indonesia), Secretary General of International Conference of Islamic Scholars (in 2004), and in 2006 was president of World Conference of Religion for Peace, who supported democracy and deradicalization in Indonesia, South-Thailand and Mindanao.

Thematic analysis was used in analyzing data gathered through in-depth interviews and written texts of Baasyir and Muzadi as research subjects. After individual interviews were transcribed, the first step of data simplification and reduction (Froggatt, 2001), involved reading and re-reading transcripts to gain familiarity with the data and investigate patterns. Braun and Clarke (2006) call this process familiarizing phase to the data. In the second step in the process, data was analyzed following the steps suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990), namely: (a) open coding to identify ideas, themes, categories and their dimension based both on data-driven and theory-driven methods, i.e. connecting data and theory. From this process themes were found, such as: *Islam-kafir* (infidel) categorical, purity, *salafi* (identification with Prophet Muhammad) and *kaffa* (a total belief to Islam), power, *daula* (sovereignty), *khilafa*, *rohmatan lil alamin*, *jihad* (holy war), (b) Axial coding done by developing connections among categories derived from data of Baasyir and Mujadi (intra-subject analysis) and comparing their data from interview, their preaching and speech (inter-subject analysis) through constant comparison, and (c) Selective coding is a process to select the most principal categories, connecting them to other categories systematically and validating the connection. In the process of this analysis, the researcher read the data many times to comprehend overall data, find the themes, and the relationship among themes.

The result validity of this study was checked through: (1) credibility obtained through the use of triangulation technique using some data sources, such as results of interviews, records of Baasyir's preaching, books written by Baasyir when he was in jail, and articles published in JAT publication, (2) dependability, by involving two other researchers who have the expertise, MI and MRH, in the process of analysis, and (3) conformability, rechecking the data through confirming the results of analysis with A (now the leader of JAT while Baasyir is in detention), and IGS (preacher and NU Scholar).

III. FINDINGS

3.1 Islam-Kafir Categorical

Baasyir views that Islam is the best ideology to manage human life and the whole world, Islam distinguishes humans in two: Muslim and infidels, we and they, pure Islam versus others. Except for Islam others are wrong, Satan, *shirk* (apostacy) and is the enemy (other is a threat). His religious ideology shows high ideological rigidity that is intolerant to ambiguity, showing categorical point of views, (i.e. Islam-infidel, God-humanlaw), dogmatic and closed to other views (see Frenkel-Bruswick, 1948; Jost, 2004). Quotes from Baasyir:

".....Allah hands down Islam as an ideology for managing life in the world. None but Islam is the best ideology to manage worldly life."

"Islam splits human in the world into two part; infidel and Muslim." (DI.ABB.SBY.20 June 2010)

In contrast to Ba'asyir who divides the world into two categories only, Muzadi religious belief system is tolerant to ambiguity, showing multipoint of views, and open to other views. He makes a classification for all human based on the Abrahamic religion, local religion, tribe, and nation. His religious ideology shows low ideological rigidity that is open-minded and tolerant to others (Greenberg & Jonas, 2003). Quotes from Muzadi:

"Two years before he passed away, Prophet Muhammad made an agreement between Muslim and people from other religions such as Jews, Christians and other local religions like one called kejawen in Java."

"Kobila has no rules because the rules come from the leader. Whereas the syia country refers to the rules and constitution which is called system." (DI.HM.MLG.1st June 2011)

3.2 Salafi Ideology and Kaffa

Baasyir's categorical view about Islam versus Infidel (or other system and ideology), poses a perceived threat that other system or ideology may threaten Islamic purity, and the infidel will cause moral damage. This motivates Baasyir to make identification with Prophet Muhammad and *salaf* to apply this perfect Islam in a pure/clean way, without any other intervention. The rituals and worship not allowed be added/reduced (its call *bida*), and must be strict as *Rosul's* teaching. The leadership must be clean too; it means no infidels are allowed to lead, because if they lead it will cause moral damage. Besides, all Islamic creed must be completely applied, none left. God's laws are absolute, do not change over time and place. It does not allow any intervention which are based on current situation and condition. If the condition weaken God's law, we must be changed that condition, not change the god law. In this identification, Baasyir needs to complete *sharia* by purifying life from non Islamic system. His belief shows high ideological rigidity (Greenberg and Jonas, 2003),

seeing it as an absolute correctness and see alternative one as an absolute incorrectness (Altemeyer, 1981; 1998), strong dogmatism (Rokeach, 1960), and becoming indicator of closed-minded views (Kruglansky, 2004).

Quotes from Baasyir:

"Islam must be applied in complete, kaffa...None may be left on purpose"

"Clean...the ritual worship must be clean from bida (doctrinal inovation)...The ritual worship in Islam is 100% restraint ...Therefore, can't be added or reduced"

"Islam is applied in pure way, the "tauhid" clean from any kinds of polytheism do not blend with other ideology"

"Islamic leadership must be clear from infidel. Hence, Islam can't be led by infidels; they are not allowed to be a leader in Islam" (DI.ABB.SBY.20 June 2010)

When they face another system that is not Islamic, it is considered as system threat, since it's an obstacle to be *kaffa* (complete Islam application). It must be *kaffa* which may only be on *daula* (state) in form of *khalifa* (that mean all over the world). Clean and complete Islam application will only be a dream if it is not applied in the state and without authority. According to Baasyir, Islam means system of power and religion means politics and authority. So Islam must have authority, it will be *rohmatan lil alamin* (blessing for the universe) and the world will be secure. Meanwhile power/authority is important in Islam, because it has been ruled by God that Muslim must have an authority. Islam without authority is wrong. Quotes from Baasyir:

"Consequently, clean and "kaffa" are impracticable without having power...."

"Islam can't be applied in pure and "kaffa" if there is no authority. Thus, Islam is a system of authority"

"Subsequently, clean and "kaffa" is only a dream if the application has no "daula" (DI.ABB.SBY.20 June 2010)

In contrast to Ba'asyir who argued that Islam can be carried out *kaffa* only in the form Islamic state, Muzadi said that Islam must be applied *kaffa* in everyday life, not in the state system. Carry out the obligations of Islam *kaffa* doesn't have to mean establish an Islamic State, while the struggle to bring Islam can be done with good examples in daily life. A Quote from Mujadi:

"Kaffa mean that Muslims worship the religion of Islam can apply in everyday life (Islamic society)" (DI.HM.MLG.1st June 2011)

3.3 Islam and System State: The *Daula* Islam Ideology

Democracy in Indonesia is the most threatening system for Baasyir. All state who use democracy are *musyrik* (infidels) states and *toghut* (all laws in government and leaders whith secular belief). People who use secular law are considered out from Islam. So the goal of Baasyir's *Jihad* is to defeat Indonesian democratic regime, only by living in Islamic system totally, God will bless their life. This also leads them to keep striving for the rest of their life since God will help them and the outcomes will be reaped one day. Quotes from Baasyir:

"This system of state is a source of damage, thus the system is shirk (infidelity to God). Infidel system will incite God rrage"

"Jihad is a war or revolution, since the main point of the struggle in Indonesia is to bring down shirk regime"

"As a result, Islam keeps being the winner, and then if Islam gets defeated, the world will be destroyed and ended without Islam" (DI.ABB.SBY.20 June 2010)

Muzadi is a figure who accepts different forms of Indonesia today as the most appropriate form of state for Islam. According to him, the form of Islamic state is never required by the Prophet in the Madina's Charter, while the *khalifa* was the successor after the Prophet's death, not a system. State form is a choice which is more adaptable with the context of time and places. In the case of Indonesia, Muzadi explained that since Indonesian people are diverse; it is not possible to make Indonesia to be an Islamic state, unless if all the people are Muslim. Quote from Muzadi:

In Madinah Charter, there is no command to make a state. There are some forms of state such as republic, imperial, religion, united but unity is not explained by Rasulullah.

"..In Madinah Cahrter, all human right as a citizen are equaly with Muslim who get rights such as citizenship, kindship, security, opportunity to defend himself, protection, and well being in which all those rights are guaranteed by Rasulullah. It means that in Islam sharia social and society must be together."

Yes please if all the people here are Muslim, but if it comes to divisions among the citizen because not all people are Muslim, then who is responsible? The basic state of this country is Pancasila which must be understood fundamentally (DI.HM.MLG.1st June 2011)

He even stated that Indonesia is a country that strongly supports the development of Islam, which has an Islamic state without any frills Islam said. Acceptance of this emerging form of democracy is because Islamic law is applied in the form of legislation in force in Indonesia. Struggle for enforcement of Islamic law is implemented in the corridor of a democracy and could apply to all citizens who come from various religious and ethnic groups. Struggle for the determination of the state has been carried out by the founders of the state in the early independence period. Quote from Muzadi:

then how? Yes, we have to be back to madina charter as long as all Islamic doctrine are protected and allowed to move freely. Besides, the state will also protect and foster this religion which has been used as the name of this country (DI.HM.MLG.1st June 2011)

According to Muzadi, in 1945 Sukarno together with Islamic leaders tried to find a country format whether like Pakistan or countries in the Middle East. All those formats were not applied because Indonesia has various religions. In the western part, from Banyuwangi to Aceh people are mostly Muslim but from Bali to Papua various religions exists. Those who come into the state is only the meaning of Islam while the stamp doesn't have to because if they come with the stamp, other stamp will no come in. In NU's view, the state form of Indonesia today has been the best form for all component in this country especially for moslem in Indonesia.

IV. DISCUSSION

Contrary to and as a critic to Greenberg and Jonas's ideological rigidity theory (2003); this study shows that extreme right religious ideology pertaining to a high rigidity of ideology motivated Baasyir to want to change the democratic system while low religious ideological rigidity motivated Muzadi to support the democratic system. Psychologically, it explains why Baasyir want to maintain religiosity and increase his groups unity (see Adorno et.al., 1950; Rokeach, 1960). He tries to protect his ideological rigidity by forcing movement in order to change the formal law in Indonesia with *sharia*. The formal law is seen a threat to religion's creed and this triggers a need to manage the threat by contesting the status quo and to apply *sharia*. Therefore, Baasyir and his group forced a movement to change the state law to directly apply *sharia* as a state constitution, emphasizing on legal and formal aspects.

Baasyir's movement is actually response toward socio-political life, with religious consequences (impossible to do totally Islam). This response wants to maintain and protect their religious belief as a reaction toward changing the society (see AnNaim, 2004; Frey, 2007). Changing condition is viewed as a threat to religious values (Akbar, 2002), and in Baasyir's context, the biggest threat is the state system, democracy. Baasyir views that democracy is not an Islamic way, it is a *shirk* system which is prohibited by Islam and threatens the purity of Islamic creed. Democracy is based on people, and Baasyir confirmed that the state must be based on *sharia*. According to Baasyir, Muslims' problem is only about *khilafa* (Islam power), so that *sharia* should be applied with authority, and purely covering all aspects. Actually, applying *sharia* is Baasyir's commitment to purify the religion and re-manage individual's and society's behaviour (Muslim community/*ummah*) which should be based on Islam (see Esposito et.al, 2002; Frey, 2007). Baasyir used rigid and authoritarian religious ideology in having face-to-face relationship with his followers and managing group action (Almond et.al., 2003; Sageman, 2004). Every Muslim has an obligation to participate in developing society and *khilafa*. Therefore, they can reach it all by gaining political power (see An Naim, 2004). Baasyir's religious ideology (ie salafi and daula Islam ideology) is related to high rigidity, that is authoritarian, closed to other views, dogmatic dan intolerant.

On the contrary, Muzadi's low religious ideological rigidity is open and tolerant (Greenberg & Jonas, 2003). He is a pluralist and has wisely expressed religion as a truth claim by having dialogue with others and accepting the difference between multicultural Indonesian people. He stands out for moderation and openness to interfaith dialogue and cooperation, has strong sense of tolerance to other faith (Ramakrishna, 2009). For him, the relationship between state and religion is more of a symbolic correlation and it can be reached by democracy. Different from Baasyir, for Muzadi the implementation of Islam as a *rahmatan lil alamin* is not by daulah Islam, but it is defined as moderate (*tawassuth*), stable (*Itidal*), tolerant (*tasamuh*) and balanced (*tawazun*) between state and people.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A high need to avoid threat from other ideologies to the system has contributed to Baasyir high ideological rigidity. Perceived threat toward his religious belief sparks anxiety and uncertainty, so that it forces Baasyir's movement to try to change the status quo and formal law in Indonesia and replace it with *khilafa* and *sharia*. Baasyir wants to put back the Muslim victory by returning to Islamic creed, which make all framework of life such as social, economic, and politics be based on Islam exclusively by *khilafa* and *sharia* system. In Baasyir's perception, Islamic glory can be achieved by returning to the original prophet's doctrine. The result shows that Baasyir held rigid ideology, which hindered him from adapting and interpreting Islamic law according to current situation. He believed that justice and peace would prevail only if Islam had the authority to rule. Muzadi on the contrary believed that peace could be accieved by building dialogue and mutual understanding. These interpretation has led Baasyir to contest democracy while Mujadi supported it.

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