

Islamic Movements in Indonesia: A Critical Study of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and Jaringan Islam Liberal

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Abstract

For all religions, including Islam, pluralism in society is a challenge. Many thought reconstructions and debates regarding the Islamic paradigm are results of conflicts between right and left Islamic ideologies about the religious paradigm. This research aimed to determine how Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) groups embrace tolerance and social networks. The data were analyzed using van Dijk's critical discourse analysis and a multi-level approach to offer a more critical understanding of the paradigms. This research discovered that JIL has promoted religious tolerance within its theological domain, while HTI has reacted adversely. HTI has not renounced tolerance, but its ideology does not include religious tolerance. HTI derives its legitimacy from Islam; its activists see Islam as a religion and an ideology. JIL also views religion as more than just text and pursues a contextual view of theology. Meanwhile, HTI was restricted to its textual interpretation. Its dissemination in several media outlets further demonstrated its paradigm and the unity of HTI members.

Keywords: Islamic Movement, Religious Democracy, Tolerance, HTI, JIL

Introduction

The reformation period in Indonesia gave Moslems greater freedom and influence. New Islamic groups emerged as the democratic spirit developed.¹ The new period of free speech allowed conservative Muslims to expand opportunities to promote their ideas and govern social and moral connections.² This circumstance was not unusual in the history of Indonesia. Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's most influential religious groups, originated as part of the reform movement that swept orthodox Islam in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.³ Such religious groups were peripheral to nationalist politics in the 20th century, particularly after the Indonesian independence. They served as a source of identity and a vehicle for political transformation under authoritarian Indonesia's New Order.⁴

Islam's compatibility with democracy has been the subject of significant discussion over the last decade. Some experts have suggested that Islamic culture and society are irrelevant to democracy; one fundamental barrier to the democratization of the Muslim world is that the process requires less "Islam" than "modernization."⁵ Meanwhile, others have suggested that while democracy and Islam may coexist, they are distinct and contrastive.

This research examines the Liberal Islam Network (Jaringan Islam Liberal, JIL) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), which represent liberal and revivalist Islam in Indonesia. JIL, whose members are outspoken advocates for democracy, human rights, freedom, and pluralism, is often misinterpreted as a kind of neocolonialism, primarily since it is supported financially by the Ford Foundation and the Asia

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¹ Abu Rokhmad (2012), "Radikalisme Islam Dan Upaya Deradikalisasi Paham Radikal," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 79-114.

² Suzanne Brenner (2011), "Private Moralities in the Public Sphere: Democratization, Islam, and Gender in Indonesia," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 113, No. 3 pp. 478-490; Ataur Rehman (2020), "Moralities: A Contemporary Discourse between New Atheism and Islam," *Islamiyyat*, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 113-124.

³ Howard M. Federspiel (1970), "The Muhammadiyah: A Study of an Orthodox Islamic Movement in Indonesia," *Indonesia*, Vol. 10, pp. 57-79; Kikue Hamayotsu (2017), *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism*, By Jeremy Menchik, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press," *Politics and Religion* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 247-250.

⁴ Merlyna Lim (2002), "Cyber-Civic Space in Indonesia: From Panopticon to Pandemonium?," *International Development Planning Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 383-401.

⁵ Md Nazrul Islam and Md Saidul Islam (2020), *Islam and Democracy in South Asia: The Case of Bangladesh*, Cham: Springer, pp. 67-101; John O. Voll (2007), "Islam and Democracy: Is Modernization a Barrier?," *Religion Compass*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 170-178.

Foundation.⁶ It has attempted to tackle radicalism and fundamentalism using various methods, primarily through mobilizing religious organizations and activists via social media to address socio-cultural and political challenges.⁷ It seeks to safeguard Muslims from the evils of liberalism, conservatism, formality, and religious extremism.⁸ In contrast, HTI has taken advantage of the volatility of Indonesia's democracy by operating covertly inside the political sphere.⁹ It sought to safeguard Muslims from the evils of liberalism, pluralism, and secularism.

HTI opposes JIL vehemently because JIL strongly opposes its ambitions to establish a caliphate. JIL activists criticize HTI as excessively ideological, utopian, and irrational. Tibi identifies the conflict between JIL and HTI as a “war of *weltanschauungen*” (battle of ideas).¹⁰ Both groups have disseminated their views via books, essays, websites, and journals, all of which are widely accessible in bookshops and on the internet. It is assumed that JIL and HTI were inspired by Islamic movements in the Middle East, notably pro- and anti-American organizations.¹¹ Liberal organizations have also been influenced by feminism, particularly the assumption that women would be better off if they got more attention.¹²

This research differs from past studies in several ways, including using the critical discourse analysis approach. This research examines the discourse of liberal Islam and radical Islam on issues of relevance to both JIL and HTI. It focuses on the theological perspective to characterize Muslim intellectual discourse on democratic ideals based on Islamic theology (al-Quran and al-Sunnah). In addition, this study examines the discourse that develops between pro-democracy and anti-democracy groups and considers the philosophical and theological foundations of the relationship between Islam and democracy, as well as the significance of this relationship for the model of democracy in Indonesia. Consequently, this research aims to elucidate the ideological constructs, social networks, and movements of JIL and HTI.

Literature Review

Rohimah examined the intellectual argument between HTI and JIL, focusing on Islam and democracy, and concluded that HTI tends to be fundamentalist utopian.¹³ It is because Islamic concepts and systems are founded on the Qur'anic and hadith texts, and the development and decision of social issues are based on the views of Salaf scholars. JIL, on the other hand, tends to be liberal-rational-controversial due to its practice of free thought and interpretation of religious authority. In JIL, the function of ratio takes primacy. Nonetheless, it is problematic since the discourse it imparts is often labeled heretical by readers.¹⁴ Hilmy categorized three Islamic groups based on how they view democracy: (1) supporters of a liberal approach; this group fully supports democracy; (2) advocates of a meliorist approach; this group is ambivalent between rejecting and accepting democracy; and (3) advocates of a utopian approach; a group that rejects democracy because it was created by non-Muslims (infidel).¹⁵ Therefore it should not be adopted by Muslims (haram).¹⁶ Arifin stated that HTI is an example of a religiopolitical-universalist fundamentalist organization.¹⁷ This notion demonstrates that as a fundamentalist organization, HTI's movement is motivated by religion and generally oriented political goals. HTI's political objective is to restore the Islamic caliphate. According to HTI, this organization serves as a political umbrella for all Muslims.¹⁸ In addition, Ubaidillah wrote that JIL recognizes the interconnected

⁶ Robert W. Hefner (2020), “Islam and Covenantal Pluralism in Indonesia: A Critical Juncture Analysis,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 1-17; Piers Gillespie (2007), “Current Issues in Indonesian Islam: Analysing the 2005 Council of Indonesian Ulama Fatwa No. 7 Opposing Pluralism, Liberalism and Secularism,” *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 202-240.

⁷ Kikue Hamayotsu (2013), “The Limits of Civil Society in Democratic Indonesia: Media Freedom and Religious Intolerance,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 658-677.

⁸ Eric Kaufmann (2000), “Liberal Ethnicity: Beyond Liberal Nationalism and Minority Rights,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 6, pp. 1086-1119.

⁹ Nafi Muthohirin (2015), “Radikalisme Islam Dan Pergerakannya Di Media Sosial,” *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 240-259.

¹⁰ Bassam Tibi (1998), *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and The New World Disorder*, London: University of California Press.

¹¹ M. Khan (2003), “Liberal Islam, Radical Islam and American Foreign Policy,” *Current History*, Vol. 102, No. 668, pp. 417-421.

¹² Gamze Çavdar and Yavuz Yaşar (2014), “Moving beyond Culturalism and Formalism: Islam, Women, and Political Unrest in the Middle East,” *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 33-57.

¹³ Iim Rohimah (2017), “Kontestasi Wacana Antara Islam Liberal Dan Islam Radikal Di Media Online Indonesia,” Disertasi, IAIN Purwokerto.

¹⁴ Iim Rohimah (2017), “Kontestasi Wacana Antara Islam Liberal Dan Islam Radikal Di Media Online Indonesia.”

¹⁵ Masdar Hilmy (2010), *Islamism and Democracy in Indonesia: Piety and Pragmatism*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

¹⁶ Masdar (2010), *Islamism and Democracy in Indonesia.*

¹⁷ Syamsul Arifin (2004), “Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamental Islam (Studi Kasus Hizb al-Tahrir Indonesia di Kota Malang),” Dissertation, IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

¹⁸ Syamsul (2004), “Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamental Islam.”

Islamic Movements in Indonesia: A Critical Study of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and Jaringan Islam Liberal relationship between Islam and democracy. Islam and democracy coexist well.¹⁹ None of the democratic ideals, such as equality, brotherhood, freedom, and justice, conflict with Islam's fundamental principles; in fact, Islam greatly supports the presence of these principles in the actual social life of Muslims.²⁰

The discourse about Islam and democracy has emerged in Albania, a Mediterranean country that has interpreted Islam as liberal and tolerant. The European Union's efforts to introduce its model of liberal democracy worldwide since the 1990s have been hindered in Albania due to its authoritarian government and under-developed economy, as well as Islam's purported incompatibility with democracy.²¹ Malaysia experienced similar experiences under Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, who stated that the country's democratic issue was due to a loss of cultural values; he maintained that Malaysians—and all Asians—needed to protect their cultural uniqueness.²²

Islamic revivalism and liberalism emerged in modern Indonesia due to similar discourse. Various Islamic movements and the creation of political parties with an Islamist foundation flourished since the 1999 general election, notably the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), which has tried to dominate the political scene by censoring progressive Islamic voices in Indonesia,²³ as well as advocating Islamic methods of administration and the formation of a caliphate.²⁴ In this circumstance, according to Hilmy, moderate Islamic society has suffered a "floating" status without a distinct theological and philosophical identity.²⁵ Nonetheless, it has remained to occupy the middle ground of the Islamic intellectual spectrum.

The Islamic revival movements consistently proclaimed establishing the Islamic caliphate and battled violently against the critics. For example, Hizbut-Tahrir opposed the established nation-state and proposed restoring Tajik Muslim self-esteem in Tajikistan, despite many people strongly cherishing the country's former glories as part of the Soviet superpower.²⁶ The revivalist movements employ various strategies to attain their objectives, for instance, eliminating the governing class, eradicating anti-Islamic forces, expanding Islamic law (sharia), creating Sunni dominance and glory, and implementing a pure and rigid form of Islam.²⁷

Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), Muhajeedin Council of Indonesia (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI), and the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI) are examples of similar groups in Indonesia.²⁸ HTI and FPI share a goal for the official institution of sharia, while HTI tends to be more extremist. It has endeavored to change the system without resorting to violence.²⁹

Concurrently, liberal Islamic movements—often in collaboration with non-Islamic religious communities—promoted an interpretation of Islam that suits the needs of modernity. They have advocated replacing conventional viewpoints with ones more accurately representing the spirit of that era.³⁰ Such groups have expressed concern about using religion to promote regressive utopianism.³¹ These movements have endorsed theological renewal, reinterpreted the role of revelation and the position of reason, and addressed such social concerns as democracy, secularization, liberalism,

¹⁹ Ubaidillah (2010), "Discourse Islam dan Demokrasi dalam Perspektif Pemikiran Ulil Abshar Abdalla," Dissertation, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya.

²⁰ Syamsul (2004), "Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamental Islam."

²¹ Michelle Pace (2009), "Paradoxes and Contradictions in EU Democracy Promotion in the Mediterranean: The Limits of EU Normative Power," *Democratization*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 39-58.

²² Vidhu Verma (2002), "Debating Rights in Malaysia: Contradictions and Challenges," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 108-130.

²³ Malcolm Cone (2002), "Neo-Modern Islam in Suharto's Indonesia," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, pp. 52-67.

²⁴ Peter G. Riddell (2002), "The Diverse Voices of Political Islam in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 65-84.

²⁵ Masdar Hilmy (2013), "The Politics of Retaliation: The Backlash of Radical Islamists to the Deradicalization Project in Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 129-158.

²⁶ Emmanuel Karagiannis (2006), "The Challenge of Radical Islam in Tajikistan: Hizb Ut-Tahrir al-Islami," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 1-20.

²⁷ Johannes Siebert, Detlof von Winterfeldt and Richard S. John (2016), "Identifying and Structuring the Objectives of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Its Followers," *Decision Analysis*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 26-50.

²⁸ Salwa Ismail (2004), "Being Muslim: Islam, Islamism and Identity Politics," *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 614-631; Syamsul (2004), "Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamental Islam."

²⁹ Mohd Hafidz Osman et al. (2017), "Module Spiritual Coping Strategies (MSDTK): An Approach to Deal with Stress among Teachers Trainee," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 356-365.

³⁰ Abdou Filali-Ansary (2003), "What Is Liberal Islam? The Sources of Enlightened Muslim Thought," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 19-33.

³¹ Asef Bayat (2005), "Islamism and Social Movement Theory," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 6, pp. 891-908.

pluralism, tolerance, Islamic law, and human rights.³² They have deviated from the concept that democracy and the commercialization of religion are inextricably linked.³³

JIL and HTI have received support from Islamic parties. Since the New Order, they embraced the political contestations between orthodox, progressive, and modernist Islam.³⁴ This circumstance is comparable to the Malaysian instance, in which Anwar Ibrahim brought about considerable change by articulating new paradigms, thus fulfilling intellectuals' traditional function during moments of great historical transition.³⁵ Western countries have promoted democracy—especially liberal democracy—as the best form of governance system, especially after the Cold War's end. In Western definition, democracy is defined by periodic, free, competitive, fair elections and the presence of various political parties.³⁶ Effective democracy was initially characterized during the Renaissance as a government committing to the common good.³⁷

Moving to Indonesia, the country has had multiple political shifts since its independence. The Indonesian government has employed various systems, including parliamentary democracy, guided democracy, Pancasila democracy, and liberal democracy during the reformation era. Nonetheless, there remain several obstacles to the development of democracy in Indonesia, including (1) difficulties in comprehending Islamic theological-doctrinal teachings, which some Muslims consider democracy contrary to religious teachings,³⁸ (2) a community culture that remains accustomed to autocracy and absolute obedience,³⁹ (3) a lack of strong democratic tradition in Islam.⁴⁰ Government factors have also exacerbated these obstacles. Indonesia has failed to fulfill the World Bank's requirements for effective decentralization since it lacks financial resources, accountability, and transparency.⁴¹

Indonesia has not entirely achieved democracy.⁴² Nonetheless, the freedom of expression made possible by political reform has reinforced the voices of Islamic organizations in Indonesia, from moderate to radical, apolitical to political.⁴³ Islamic organizations also have encouraged social development, which has allowed Islam to become visible in various spaces. On the other hand, Islamic groups have continued to commit violence, demonstrating that certain Muslim communities cannot accept democratic ideas. Certain organizations claiming themselves as God's messengers have engaged in senseless violence, burning churches, besieging nightclubs and prostitution areas, and even assaulting political opponents.⁴⁴ In the guise of jihad, minorities, notably Christians, Chinese ethnics, and foreigners, have been attacked.⁴⁵ These violent crimes have weakened the pillars of democracy.⁴⁶

Similarly, while democracy has been a feature of the Indonesian country since 1945, it has never been adequately defined.⁴⁷ Woodward added that the nation's two main Islamic groups, Nahdlatul Ulama

³² Samsudin Samsudin and Mumuh Muhsin Zakaria (2017), "Controversy of the Liberal-Islamic Thought about Pluralism of Religions in Indonesia," *TAWARIKH*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 71-80; Muhammad Firdaus (2019), "Islam Indonesia: Diskursus Islam Kultural Dan Islam Politik," *JURNAL INDO-ISLAMIKA*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 190-203.

³³ Robert W. Hefner (2012), "Islamic Radicalism in a Democratizing Indonesia," in *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 121-134.

³⁴ Michael Buehler (2009), "Islam and Democracy in Indonesia," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 51-63.

³⁵ John L. Esposito and John O. Voll (2003), "Islam and the West," in Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito (eds.), *Religion in International Relations*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 237-269.

³⁶ Leonardo Morlino (2019), "What Is a 'Good' Democracy?," *Democratization*, Vol. 11, No. 5, pp. 10-32; Andrea Cassani and Luca Tomini (2019), "Introduction: From Democratization to Autocratization," in *Autocratization in Post-Cold War Political Regimes*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-13.

³⁷ Tom W. Rice and Jan L. Feldman (1997), "Civic Culture and Democracy from Europe to America," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 59, No. 4, pp. 1143-1172.

³⁸ Fitri Amalia Shintasiwi Wasino et al. (2020), "State and Religion in Indonesia: A Historical Analysis from the Dutch Colonial Era to the Present," Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 13-32; Rémy Madinier (2015), *Islam and Politics in Indonesia: The Masyumi Party between Democracy and Integralism*, Singapore: NUS Press.

³⁹ Hagi Hutomo Mukti and Rodiyah Rodiyah (2020), "Dynasty Politics in Indonesia: Tradition or Democracy?," *Journal of Law and Legal Reform*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 531-538.

⁴⁰ Dirk Tomsa (2019), "Islamism and Party Politics in Indonesia," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*.

⁴¹ Thomas Power and Eve Warburton (2020), "Democracy in Indonesia: From Stagnation to Regression?," Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

⁴² Herdi Sahrasad (2020), "On Democracy of Last Two Decades in Indonesia," *Agathos*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 455-460.

⁴³ M. Nurdin Zuhdi (2011), "Kritik Terhadap Pemikiran Gerakan Keagamaan Kaum Revivalisme Islam Di Indonesia," *AKADEMIKA: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 171-192.

⁴⁴ Daniel L. Chen (2007), "Islamic Resurgence and Social Violence during the Indonesian Financial Crisis," in M. Gradstein and K. Konrad (eds.), *Institutions and Norms in Economic Development*, Massachusetts: MIT Press, pp. 179-200.

⁴⁵ Edward Aspinall (2008), "Ethnic and Religious Violence in Indonesia: A Review Essay," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 558-572.

⁴⁶ Dimpos Manalu (2017), "Book Review: Islamic Political Discourse in the Reform Era," *PCD Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 335-345.

⁴⁷ Mark Woodward (2011), "Yogyakarta: Religion, Culture and Nationality," in *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, Springer, pp. 1-67.

Islamic Movements in Indonesia: A Critical Study of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and Jaringan Islam Liberal and Muhammadiyah, advocate shura and adl doctrines compatible with democracy, including individual liberty, plurality, tolerance, equality, and justice.⁴⁸ Muhammadiyah is affiliated with several Islamic parties, including the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), the Crescent Star Party (Partai Bulan Bintang, PBB), the Reformation Star Party (Partai Bintang Reformasi, PBR), and the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN). Meanwhile, Nahdlatul Ulama is linked with the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB).⁴⁹

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, as moderate Islamic groups, support democracy but oppose secularism, seeing it as part of a Westernized moderation.⁵⁰ Interviewing Nurcholis Madjid and Amin Rais, both prominent Islamic leaders, Al Alwani (2005) concluded that both groups see democracy as the most suitable method for regulating modern human civilization. Historically, during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslim civil society considered diversity as a blessing.⁵¹

Hilmy argued that Islamic organizations typically take one of three positions regarding democracy: (1) supporting liberal approaches and democracy; (2) supporting ambiguous and melodic strategies rather than explicitly accepting or rejecting democracy; and (3) supporting a utopian system while rejecting democracy as haram.⁵² Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) oppose the use of human rights and democracy and discredit both as a means to legitimize disobedience and denigrate Islam.⁵³ Dallmayr wrote that liberal democracy necessitates secularism, and the Turkish case demonstrates that Islamic political parties and intellectuals may establish a liberal and democratic society.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, HTI has adopted a fundamentalist theological viewpoint and seeks to build an Islamic caliphate.⁵⁵

Method

This research utilized critical discourse analysis to comprehend the ideas and beliefs of JIL, a liberal Islamic organization, and HTI, an Islamic revivalist organization. It is a fundamental paradigm that aims to assess the role of interests and power networks on discourse's discursive production and reproduction in more depth. It used a participatory approach, with researchers actively participating in activities in which JIL and HTI discursively formed their ideas. Following van Dijk's model, this research used a multi-level approach to give a more critical understanding of their respective paradigms.

The researchers focused on text producers within JIL and HTI as their research subjects. In addition, the researchers used the writings created by these text producers as their research objects, emphasizing texts written by group elites that dealt with Islamic discourse and democracy. The researchers interviewed JIL leaders, activists, and sympathizers, including Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Lutfi Assyaukanie, Abdul Moqsith Ghazali, Budhy Munawar Rachman, and Syamsul Arifin, as well as HTI spokesperson, Ismail Yusanto.

Results and Discussion

Understanding of Islam and Democracy in HTI and JIL

The notion of democracy has not yet been established in Indonesia. In the 1920s, conflicts between orthodox and liberal Islam emerged in the 1920s. The birth of liberal philosophy in Indonesia may be linked to the works of Tjokroaminoto and other modernist intellectuals in the Islamic Association (Sarekat Islam, SI) and the Islamic Association Party (Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia, PSII). These liberal Muslims clashed with orthodox Muslims, represented by Nahdlatul Ulama, and modernist

⁴⁸ Gustav Brown (2019), "Civic Islam: Muhammadiyah, NU and the Organisational Logic of Consensus-Making in Indonesia," *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 43, No. 3, pp. 397-414.

⁴⁹ Sunny Tanuwidjaja (2010), "Political Islam and Islamic Parties in Indonesia: Critically Assessing the Evidence of Islam's Political Decline," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, pp. 29-49.

⁵⁰ Masdar Hilmy (2012), "Quo-Vadis Islam Moderat Indonesia? Menimbang Kembali Modernisme Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Muhammadiyah," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, Vol. 36, No. 2.

⁵¹ Hans Antlöv, Rustam Ibrahim and Peter van Tuijl (2006), "NGO Governance and Accountability in Indonesia: Challenges in a Newly Democratizing Country," in Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl (eds.), *NGO Accountability: Politics, Principles and Innovations*, London and Sterling: Earthscan, pp. 147-163.

⁵² Masdar Hilmy (2009), *Teologi Perlawanan: Islamisme dan Diskursus Demokrasi di Indonesia Pasca Orde Baru*, Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

⁵³ Syamsul (2004), "Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamentalis Islam."

⁵⁴ Fred Dallmayr (2012), "Radical Changes in the Muslim World: Turkey, Iran, Egypt," *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, Vol. 38, No. 4-5, pp. 497-506.

⁵⁵ Syamsul (2004), "Obyektifikasi Agama sebagai Ideologi Gerakan Sosial Kelompok Fundamentalis Islam."

Muslims, exemplified by Muhammadiyah.⁵⁶ A number of Indonesian intellectuals have contributed to Islamic discourses,⁵⁷ notably Haji Agus Salim through Jong Islamieten Bond (established in 1925). Around this time, the Islamic philosopher Muhammad Natsir proposed Islamic democracy, which he characterized as a democracy infused with Islamic ideals.

Nurcholis Madjid contended that Islam contains fundamentally democratic values, as shown by the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah by citing the Surah Al-Fatihah and the phrase *ijtihad* as a social method for thinking and disputing.⁵⁸ Madjid also noted that the Medina Charter upholds universal ideals, which indicates that an Islamic state is unnecessary. Nonetheless, a state that implements its rules respects others and safeguards individual liberties.⁵⁹ Madjid considered the attitude of ethnicity, color, and religious tolerance to be well-suited to Indonesian culture.⁶⁰ However, his views on "Islam yes, Islamic party no," quantity vs. quality, freedom of opinion, and openness were condemned as vulgar.⁶¹

Abdurrahman Wahid, an exponent of liberal philosophy, also advocated equal rights for Muslims and non-Muslims. Wahid disagreed with those who cited verse 8 of Surah Ali' Imran to explain resistance to non-Muslim state leaders, stating that Allah had used the term *awliya*, which means "friend," instead of *umara*, which means "person in authority."⁶² In other words, Wahid suggested that to further humanism, ancient Islamic study must be combined with contemporary critical thought.⁶³ New generations of liberal Muslims, including those in JIL, have embraced the democratic system in its entirety. They believe democratic concepts like deliberation, freedom, justice, political parties, elections, and representative institutions are compatible with Islam. Wahid's argument underscores Madjid's belief that community involvement entails liberty and independence.⁶⁴ JIL and other liberal Muslim groups have fiercely fought different groups, such as the Indonesian Ulema Forum, which asked that Ulil Abshar Abdalla be executed for his liberal views.⁶⁵

Historically, HTI activists have never participated actively in Indonesia's general elections because they believe these elections do not represent Islamic ideals. Nonetheless, HTI emphasizes that participation in elections is permitted, provided they adhere to Islamic rules. HTI also does not recognize the Indonesian government's representative institutions. Since the collapse of the New Order, HTI has not endorsed any political parties. Instead, it has only made normative, non-binding appeals to its members. It has primarily depended on grassroots activities and extra-parliamentary tactics to alter the public's perception of Islamic life. The Darul Islam (government under Islamic sharia) and Darul Kufur (government not following Islamic sharia) systems. Citing verse 104 of Surah Ali' Imran, HTI describes itself as fixing the multifaceted problems of Muslims by rescuing them from *kufr* laws and values, which include the norms and systems advocated by the major Western nations, as well as the nationalism, socialism, capitalism, and democracy principles. Consequently, HTI restricts Muslims' participation in democracy.

Westernization has had a significant impact on JIL's liberal Islam. JIL activists argued that Indonesia has to progress in catching up with Western countries, and Islam's cultural norms impede this development.⁶⁶ JIL theorists also believe religious teaching should be withdrawn from state-run schools

⁵⁶ Khoiril Huda (2009), "Fenomena Pergeseran Konflik Pemikiran Islam Dari Tradisionalis Vs Modernis Ke Fundamentalists Vs Liberalis," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 20-42.

⁵⁷ G. Ahmad and J. Das-Munshi (2019), "OP28 Ethnicity, Sociodemographic Factors, and Mental Health Outcomes in Young People from the Millennium Cohort Study," *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, Vol. 73, pp. A13-A14.

⁵⁸ Abd A'la (2003), *Dari Neomodernisme Ke Islam Liberal*, Vol. 15, Paramadina.

⁵⁹ Nurcholish & Mohamad Roem Madjid (1997), *Tidak Ada Negara Islam: Surat-surat Politik Nurcholish Madjid-Mohamad Roem*, Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan.

⁶⁰ Afina Izzati (2016), "Nilai-Nilai Konstruksi Harmoni: Prespektif Tokoh Wayang Semar," *Fikrah: Jurnal Ilmu Aqidah Dan Studi Keagamaan*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 261-275.

⁶¹ Fathan Fihri (2014), "Konsep Islam Liberal Nurcholish Madjid Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim.

⁶² Masykuri Abdullah (1999), *Demokrasi di Persimpangan Makna: Respons Intelektual Muslim Indonesia terhadap Demokrasi (1966-1993)*, Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana.

⁶³ Greg Barton (2006), *Turkey's Gülen Hizmet and Indonesia's Neo-Modernist NGOs: Remarkable Examples of Progressive Islamic Thought and Civil Society Activism in the Muslim World, Political Islam and Human Security*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.

⁶⁴ Ali Maksum (2017), "Discourses on Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: A Study on the Intellectual Debate between Liberal Islam Network (JIL) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 405-422.

⁶⁵ Robert E. Elson (2010), "Nationalism, Islam, 'Secularism' and the State in Contemporary Indonesia," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 3, pp. 328-343.

⁶⁶ Jonah D. Levy and Jonah Levy (2006), *The State after Statism: New State Activities in the Age of Liberalization*, Harvard University Press.

and substituted with a more secular morality subject. It maintains that secularism is essential to guarantee that the state stays neutral and trustworthy in all areas and that it can be relied upon. Religion may still play a part in a secular society, but it needs a more substantial understanding, being presented more as a set of underlying principles that define certain norms as opposed to the ultimate problem-solving technique.

HTI, on the other hand, has claimed that secularism has no advantages. HTI campaigned against secularism, liberalism, and pluralism with other revivalist groups such as the FPI and MMI. According to HTI, Islam does not accept the separation of religion and state since they are organically intertwined. Although HTI's ultimate objective is not to create an Islamic empire, it works to secure the practice of authentic Islam. HTI, whose slogan is "Save Indonesia with Sharia," thinks Indonesia's problems stem from its inability to follow sharia.⁶⁷ Thus, HTI proposes sharia as an alternative to the state's secularism foundation.⁶⁸ HTI has used economic vulnerabilities, diminishing state authority, and the political freedoms it has had since the New Order to achieve this objective.⁶⁹

Another topic that these organizations dispute is liberalism. JIL defines liberty as inherent and incontestable freedom. Ahmad Sahal, a JIL thinker, stated that liberalism attempts to promote common reason, which implies that authority may be regulated and corrected to prevent religious conflicts from absolute monarchy. Liberalism promotes the state's act impartially, granting equal liberties to all persons and abolishing detrimental things in the community.⁷⁰ Liberalism and liberalization in emerging nations may have flaws, but these ideas still facilitate integration into the global economy. JIL theorists hold that secularism reflects the freedom of speech enshrined in Islamic and Sufi thought. In addition, they contend that liberalism is fundamental to democracy because it promotes individual liberty, political participation, equality, and pluralism. JIL contends that the acknowledgment of civil liberties is the essence of liberalism.

Ideological Construction of HTI and JIL

At the global level, the origins of liberal Islam may be traced back to the classical period, namely the Caliphate of Umar bin Khattab, who engaged in war (jihad) and shared the spoils of war with all Muslim ummah. Bilal ibn Rabah, his companion, rejected Umar's ijtihad. Umar provided a contextual or rational model of Islam, providing the groundwork for rationality inside the faith, while Bilal used a literal or textual approach. Islamic reformers tried more excellent rationalization and demanded a science- and time-appropriate, rational interpretation of the Quran and Islamic doctrines.

Nurcholis Madjid, a teacher figure for many JIL activists, has urged Muslims to abandon the temptation to classify matters as exclusively worldly or ukhrawy (heavenly). Madjid advocated secularization,⁷¹ arguing that religion is based more on emotion than reason and has dogmatic tendencies. Madjid also believed that sharia does not originate straight from God but is always the product of human interpretation.⁷² His followers and JIL activists positively accepted such subjective teachings. In propagating its philosophy, JIL promotes a specific political and Islamic agenda, including pluralism, women's emancipation, and freedom of expression.⁷³ JIL also recognizes religious dogmatism as Islam's most deadly foe; hence it is not surprising that fundamentalist and extremist Islamic organizations exist.

HTI, unlike JIL, is inspired by global thinkers such as Abul A'la al-Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb, Hasan Turabi, and Taqiyuddin an-Nabhani in its pursuit of the creation of Islamic sharia and an Islamic caliphate. The organization takes religion at its value and rejects any interpretations. According to HTI,

⁶⁷ Ismail Yusanto (2003), *Selamatkan Indonesia Dengan Syariat Islam, Syariat Islam Pandangan Islam Liberal*, Jakarta: Sembrani Aksara Nusantara, pp. 139-171.

⁶⁸ Budhy Munawar Rachman (2010), *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam: Sekularisme, Liberalisme dan Pluralisme Paradigma Baru Islam Indonesia*, Jakarta: Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat (LSAF) dan Paramadina.

⁶⁹ Masdar (2013), "The Politics of Retaliation."

⁷⁰ Ridha Ahida (2005), "Liberalisme Dan Komunitarianisme: Konsep Tentang Individu Dan Komunitas," *Jurnal Demokrasi*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 95-105.

⁷¹ Greg Barton (1995), "Neo-Modernism: A Vital Synthesis of Traditionalist and Modernist Islamic Thought in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika*, Vol. 2, No. 3.

⁷² Budhy (2010), *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam*.

⁷³ Luthfi Assyaukanie (2009), *Islam and the Secular State in Indonesia*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

religious law must completely rule and control the application of human life. Therefore, sharia practice cannot be isolated from politics.⁷⁴ HTI sees Islam as both a religion and an ideology.

Hizb Tahrir's founder, Taqiyyuddin an-Nabhani, expressed a similar belief. According to an-Nabhani, several factors have prevented Islam from being accepted globally. First, Islamic revival advocates lack a comprehensive understanding of *fikra* (Islamic thought). In addition, campaigners are incapable of developing superior strategies. In addition, they fail to link *fikra* with *tariqa*. According to an-Nabhani, Islam must not adapt to the times; instead, society must reform to comply with the requirements of Islamic sharia.

Networking and Social Movement

JIL favors networking over a formal organization, seeing networks more capable of accommodating individuals with liberal Islam ambitions and interests. A JIL follower is somebody who adopts a liberal Islamic worldview. Many young members of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah strongly support JIL's efforts to rethink Islamic teachings and contextualize them in light of current conditions. JIL was initially comprised of intellectuals and political observers and was developed via group debates on socio-religious issues. These scholars and their successors form JIL due to their concerns about conservative Islamic organizations' practices of monopolizing the truth and promoting values that they deem non-Islamic.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's political reformation provides HTI with fresh opportunities. HTI and other Islamic revivalist groups have endeavored to replace Pancasila as the state's guiding doctrine with their ideology. Since the collapse of the New Order, HTI has aggressively recruited new members under the slogan "Save Indonesia with Sharia," saying that sharia can handle Indonesia's complex challenges. Interestingly, its rise has been based on democracy, namely freedom of speech. HTI has disseminated its philosophy through discussions. Several media products, including the journal *Al Wa'ie*, the bulletin *Al-Islam*, the magazine *Sabili*, and the tabloid *Umma Media*, attest to its organizational cohesion. HTI has also used a cell system to grow its network; each member must recruit new members, and new members recruit more members. It vehemently opposes Western political systems, demanding instead an Islamic design based on Abul A'la al-Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb.⁷⁵

Conclusion

JIL regards religious dogmatism as Islam's most deadly foe. Hence it is not surprising that fundamentalist and extremist Islamic organizations oppose JIL vehemently. HTI views Islam as a source of legitimacy, both as a faith and an ideology. It also promotes its textual interpretation of Islam through conversations and media outlets. On the other hand, JIL attempts a contextual understanding of religion instead of focusing only on textual insights.

This study demonstrates that JIL is based on liberal ideology and considers freedom as protection against authoritarianism and dictatorship. JIL believes that people need the freedom to think freely and rationally and to prevent dominance and tyranny; hence, it promotes plurality, freedom of opinion, and religious liberty. HTI, on the other hand, adheres to an Islamist philosophy, claiming that all problems must be resolved through religious means. HTI is a fundamentalist movement that promotes a textual interpretation of the Quran and hadiths above individual interpretations. It also resists modernization, which it views as exacerbating current issues. As a result, HTI has campaigned against *kufr* concepts and norms while separating itself from the government and other authorities. HTI has disseminated its beliefs and *da'wah* via its publications and charity endeavors. Although HTI has not participated actively in formal politics and elections, it has remained inextricably engaged with the growth of the Indonesian country.

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⁷⁴ Abdurrahman Wahid (2009), *The Illusion of Islamic State: Expansion of the Transnational Islamic Movement in Indonesia*, Jakarta: Gerakan Bhineka Tunggal Ika, the Wahid Institute, and Maarif Insitute.

⁷⁵ M. Imdadun Rahmat (2005), *Arus Baru Islam Radikal: Transmisi Revivalisme Islam Timur Tengah Ke Indonesia*, Jakarta: Erlangga.

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