

Genealogy of Radicalism In Islamic Boarding Schools; Tracking the Potential for the Growth of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia)

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Abstract

This article examines the genealogy of radicalism in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) by tracing the historical, theological, and sociological factors that have the potential to give rise to the seeds of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. As traditional Islamic educational institutions, pesantren play a strategic role in shaping the character and thinking of their students (santri). However, global dynamics, the infiltration of transnational ideologies, and rigid interpretations of religious texts can open up space for the influx of radical ideologies. This research uses a qualitative approach with critical discourse analysis, mapping the development of radicalism discourse from the colonial era, the New Order, and the reform era. The findings indicate that although the majority of pesantren espouse moderate Islam based on Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah, a small number are vulnerable to becoming fertile ground for radical ideology due to factors such as curriculum, alumni networks, and global political and economic relations. This article emphasizes the importance of strengthening religious moderation, monitoring transnational ideological flows, and revitalizing the role of pesantren as bastions of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for all the worlds).

Keywords: Radicalism, Pesantren, Genealogy, Transnational Ideology, Religious Moderation



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INTRODUCTION

The Islamic educational institution in Indonesia that is considered original is the Islamic boarding school (Umi Musaropah, 2018: 141–155). So far, it has been known to be a place for the moral development of piety of students and the learning of Islamic religious sciences as well as a center for the spread of Islam in rural areas. In the colonial era, it became the base of the seedbed of opposition and resistance to colonizers who were not of the same religion for the nation's independence. This is proven by a number of rebellions against the Dutch colonizers which were driven by the leadership of the Islamic boarding school.

The familiarity of Islamic boarding schools with national ideas has apparently experienced a steep road today. The radicalization of religious thought has been symptomatic (Depag RI, 2003). Although it is not large in number and is often positioned as economically and politically marginalized, it has extraordinary militancy.

The discourse of the Islamic radicalism movement since the Reform era has actualized along with the development of various politically oriented religious organizations, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), the Islamic Enforcement Preparatory Committee (KPPSI), Lasykar Jihad, Jamaah Islam Ahlussunah Waljamaah, the Indonesian Islamic Ulema Forum and the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (IMC) (Jamhari, 2004).

Some observers say that the religious movement was influenced by literature related to the Salafi thought movement of Ibn Taymiyah which in its development gave birth to a radical movement in thought and action. Although the methods used are different from each other, the mission carried out is relatively the same, namely to uphold Islamic law in Indonesia, based on the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Saw. Some of them can be seen

as radical in their thoughts and peaceful in their actions, while others are considered radical in their thoughts and also radical in their actions.

METHOD

This paper is prepared with a qualitative approach, namely an in-depth study of texts, data, and narratives related to Islamic radicalism in Islamic boarding schools. The main data were taken from classical books taught in Islamic boarding schools, documents and discourses of radical Islamic groups, as well as various previous studies on Islamic boarding schools and radicalism.

The author takes the method of literature review, by collecting, comparing, and analyzing various literature sources. This approach was chosen because radicalism is a complex phenomenon that requires cross-disciplinary understanding: religious, social, political, and cultural.

The analysis was carried out using critical discourse analysis to see how texts and ideas are produced, disseminated, and received in Islamic boarding schools and the wider community. In addition, a genealogical approach is also used to trace the historical roots and the flow of ideological development that has the potential to give birth to radical attitudes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Definition of Radicalism

Etymologically, radicalism comes from the root word radical, the Latin is radix, which means 'root'. Radicalism is a response to an ongoing condition that arises in the form of evaluation, rejection, or even resistance to ideas, assumptions, institutions, or values (Dede Rodin, 2016:32). The terminology of religious radicalism, when associated with the term Arabic, has not yet been

found definitively in Arabic dictionaries. So this term is often associated with the term 'Islamic fundamentalism' which comes from Western theory (Junaidi Abdillah, 283).

In simple terms, radicalism is a thought or attitude that is characterized by four things, which are also its characteristics, namely: first, an attitude of intolerance and not wanting to respect the opinions or beliefs of others. Second, a fanatical attitude, which is always feeling right and thinking that others are wrong. Third, an exclusive attitude, which is to distinguish oneself from the habits of ordinary people. Fourth, the revolutionary attitude, which is the tendency to use violence to achieve goals (Agil Ashofi, 2011:10).

The most obvious impact of the occurrence of radicalism is the formation of politicization in religion, because religion is indeed very sensitive in nature, the easiest to burn fanaticism, become the loudest fan to carry out various very harsh actions, both in social life between individuals and groups, so that what is called radical Islamic groups is formed.

B. The Rise of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia

The term Islamic radicalism refers to the emergence of various Islamic movements that used various forms of violence in the context of the struggle to establish an Islamic State (J.U. Thalib, 2003: 107). The birth of the Islamic radicalism movement in Indonesia is suspected to have a close relationship with the development of Salafi thought movements in the Middle East at that time. Furthermore, in the 12th century Hijri, this Salafi thought was developed and confirmed by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1787), which came to be known as the Wahhabi movement. The purpose of this Wahhabi movement is to purify the teachings of Islam and invite them to return to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him) as practiced by the first generation of Muslims. In subsequent developments, the Salafi-Wahhabi movement not only touched the dimension of purification of credos and rituals, but also began to touch the intellectual and political dimensions.

Since the Dutch colonial era, the Salafi thought movement has entered and developed. One of the early Salafi thought movements in Indonesia was in Minangkabau (Azyumardi Azra, 2004:368-372). This movement developed in tandem with the emergence of other reformist movements in Islam in the Middle East; such as Jamaluddin al-Afgani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rasyid Ridha (Ahmad Taufiq, 2005:90-102), whose ideas and ideas were absorbed by young Indonesian students who performed Hajj and then settled to study Islam. After returning home, they carried out the Islamic renewal movement both individually and organizationally, in accordance with the Salafi character, namely the purification of the faith (Deliar Noer, 1982:).

Because this Salafi movement tends to be radical and frontal in conveying its da'wah mission, as time goes by, this understanding often receives a lot of rejection and challenges. In many countries, including Indonesia, the Salafi movement often clashes with traditional Islamists who make up the majority of Muslims in Indonesia.

Even at the beginning of independence, the seeds of religious radicalism that developed through educational and da'wah institutions, as well as some others developed through social and political organizations, also caused conflicts with the government (C. Van Dijk, 1989). The same was true during the New Order period, but the government's very strict handling and control of the religious radicalism movement went well, with various approaches, both co-optative and militaristic, mental terror and cooperative

approaches such as the dialogical approach, the welfare approach, and the democratic approach (Abdul Azis Thaba, 1995).

Although it has been tried in various ways and methods, the radicalism that exists in Indonesia seems very unlikely to disappear altogether. Because, basically, the birth and growth of radicalism is not solely a factor of understanding of rigid and rigid religion, although this is the most basic and fundamental factor. But there are other factors that can trigger the growth of radicalism, including; socio-political factors, government policies, and economic disparities.

Furthermore, the religious radicalism movement in Indonesia is divided into two meanings, namely as a discourse and an action. Radical in discourse is defined as the idea of establishing an Islamic state, an Islamic caliphate, without the use of open violence. Meanwhile, at the level of action, radicals are defined as making changes with violent acts in the name of religion (Ismail Hasani, 2012:11).

Referring to the latter meaning, the radical Islamic movement chose the path of violence as a way to realize its goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate in Indonesia, and to oppose the Indonesian law and government. Then there is an understanding of the Indonesian government's position as a form of thaghut. For radical Islam, the thaghut government is a target that can be fought through terror or irhab by terrorizing anyone who is considered an enemy (Zainal Abidin bin Syamsuddin, 2014:32).

In the political constellation of Indonesia, the problem of radical Islamic movements can be seen in the birth of various organizations that are divided into three forms (Endang Turmudi, 2005:5): first, there are those who simply fight for the implementation of Islamic shari'a without the need to establish an Islamic state. This first group was represented by FPI and Laskar

Jihad. The orientation of Islamic radicalism is more on the application of sharia at the community level, not at the state level, it's just that they tend to use violent methods or approaches. Second, fighting for the establishment of the Islamic State of Indonesia, the second group is represented by NII which was previously initiated by Kartosoewiryo who also plays the role of NII imam (Nur Khalik Ridwan, 2008:9-12) . Third, the group that wants to realize an Islamic caliphate, this group is represented by the Indonesian Hizut-Tahrir (HTI) movement, the Indonesian Mujahideen Council (MMI) which fights for the establishment of a universal caliphate and Islamic sharia as its basis.

C. The Potential for Radicalism in Islamic Boarding Schools

That Islamic boarding schools have the potential to give birth to radical religious mindsets, which in subsequent developments also give birth to an act of terrorism, is something that must be recognized and watched out for (A. Dwi Hendro Sunarko, 2006:92-101). However, it is important to note that the level of potential for the emergence of Islamic radicalism movements from the pesantren environment cannot be arbitrarily beaten, especially because the world of Islamic boarding schools is very heterogeneous. In simple terms, the 'potential' can be categorized as high and low. There are several factors that cause the level of 'potential' to not be hit evenly.

First, the background of religious knowledge and religious understanding of the leaders of the pesantren is not the same. In reality, the competence, expertise, religious understanding and orientation of kyai practices are different from each other. Some kyai tend to the development of educational movements, development, religious life such as Sufism, Sufism, morals or tarekat that are far from the hustle and bustle of material life. Some of the other kyai tend to the educational movement, and the development of

religious life that is social and cultural in nature, which is close to material life. In addition, there are also some kyai who tend to the movement of education and the development of spiritual life, with an orientation to purification and protection in the field of faith. The latter tendency is close to the Salafi thought movement which has the potential to give birth to the Islamic radicalism movement (A. Dwi Hendro Sunarko, 2006:92-101).

Second, the education system, including the quality of teaching staff, teaching materials, curriculum, and pesantren literature varies from one to another. In this regard, teaching staff (ustadz) have a very strong influence on students. This is because in the tradition of Islamic boarding schools, respect for teachers is a very important part. On the other hand, teachers in Islamic boarding schools can also be seen as living literature, a source of reading and a place to ask questions that must be followed. Learning at a pesantren is learning with the teacher gradually, not from the book independently. In this context, the teacher has the authority to provide sharh, interpretation or meaning to the teaching materials in the pesantren. Studying without a teacher in the world of pesantren is not recommended. In fact, there are times when certain teaching materials are not allowed to be read before mastering certain teaching materials. Therefore, the function of literature is very basic and important (Martin van Bruinessen, 1995).

Third, the social environment of the pesantren is different, including the social and political network of pesantren elements (leaders, ustadz and students). Some Islamic boarding schools may have a very wide network, national and even international (Azyumardi Azra, 1994). And some other Islamic boarding schools have limited networks at the local level. Some Islamic boarding schools may have social networks with bureaucratic leaders or national political movement organizations, while others may have

international networks of religious movements (M. Ridlwan Nasir, . Islamic boarding schools that have a network with the struggle movements and radicalism of international Islamic groups certainly have a higher possibility of giving birth to fundamentalism.

Fourth, the experience of the struggle of social and political life of pesantren leaders. Each pesantren leader has different social, cultural and political life experiences. Some of them have experiences that may be enjoyable and others have bitter, challenging experiences (Endang Turmudi, 2004). These past experiences will affect the orientation and vision of Islamic boarding school leaders to become supporters and supporters of radical Islamic movements.

However, it is also important to underline that the possibility of the emergence of Islamic radicalism in Islamic boarding schools is not solely due to some of the above factors, but there are many other external factors that also influence. These factors include; First, ideological and political developments. The change in the system and political pendulum from the New Order to a more open era of Reform provides opportunities for Islamic groups that have long wanted the establishment of a socio-political movement that aims to uphold Islamic law (Robert W. Hefner, 2000). In their view, only Islamic sharia is believed to be able to solve today's multi-dimensional crisis. Among the efforts made is to fight through various channels, including direct or indirect political actions to uphold Islamic Sharia through the formalization of Islamic Sharia in state institutions.

Second, socio-cultural factors. Along with the development of modernization and globalization of world civilization, in Indonesia there have been centers of activity in urban areas that are considered by religious radicalism groups as immoral and heretical, such as places of prostitution,

gambling, drug transactions, drinking liquor (Mun'im A. Sirry, 2003:3). Some of these radical groups are impatient to see the development of immoral places, and then are forced to use violent means. to eliminate the place of vice, even though they have to deal with law enforcement.

Third, the solidarity and defense factor. Some of these movements emerged as a reaction or defense against Islamic groups that were seen as being treated inhumanely by certain groups, and did not immediately obtain adequate protection from the government. The forms of defense carried out are not only limited to moral support through statements, and the provision of financial assistance to victims of violence, but also in the form of sending manpower and weapons to join the physical war with those considered enemies of the Islamic group. Groups such as Laskar Jihad are close to the characteristics of this factor (Martin van Bruinessen, 2013).

Fourth, the factor of theological doctrine. Part of this religious radicalism movement emerged like previous Salafi thought movements, namely wanting to continue to purify Islamic teachings from various cultural influences, both local and Western cultures, which are seen as having damaged the beliefs and lives of Muslims (Olivier Roy, 2004) . The personification of Western culture that is currently seen as the enemy of Islam is the hegemony of the United States government.

D. Jihad; Theological Doctrines That Trigger Radicalism

Jihad is one of the most important teachings of Islam. Jihad is an inseparable part of faith. The strength or weakness of a person's faith is measured by his courage and patience in jihad in the way of Allah (Abu A'la al-Maududi, 1991). Strong faith will always stimulate the spirit of a believer to wage jihad. On the other hand, weak faith makes a believer afraid of jihad

because of very difficult difficulties and challenges. For believers who believe and wage jihad, Allah promises the reward of paradise, a glorious life and an honorable position by His side.

Unfortunately, jihad as a sacred Islamic teaching has undergone a shift in its meaning and practice. Some Muslim groups misuse jihad as a pretext for acts of violence, terrorism and treason. In recent decades, jihad has been effectively used by extreme Muslim groups to legalize born suicide. A misunderstanding of jihad has been proven to tarnish the sanctity of jihad and tarnish the face of peaceful Islam (Imam Samudra, 2004:108). In connection with these actions in the name of misguided jihad, Islamic educational institutions, especially madrassas and Islamic boarding schools, were sharply highlighted, even accused of being a nest of terrorists, spreaders of radicalism. Something that is very detrimental to the image of Islam.

Jihad as a form of practicing Islamic teachings can be carried out in various forms according to the situation and conditions experienced by Muslims. In situations where Muslims experience oppression, jihad can be carried out in the form of war to defend themselves. However, in a peaceful situation, jihad can be done in the form of righteous deeds such as performing Hajj, helping the poor, being devoted to the elderly, diligent study and da'wah of Islam amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (David Cook, 2005) .

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that radicalism in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather is closely linked to a long history of political resistance, the influence of transnational ideologies, and social change in Indonesia. While pesantren are fundamentally rooted in moderate traditions, in certain contexts they can become vulnerable to the infiltration of radical ideologies if not balanced with an inclusive and critical

understanding of religion. Efforts to prevent radicalism must be carried out through three main steps: (1) strengthening the pesantren curriculum to emphasize the values of tolerance, nationalism, and humanity; (2) revitalizing the role of kiai (Islamic scholars) and teachers as religious authorities capable of countering extremist narratives; and (3) collaboration between the government, society, and pesantren in building a moderate Islamic education ecosystem. Thus, pesantren will not only avoid the potential for radicalism but will also remain at the forefront of maintaining social and religious harmony in Indonesia

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