

DEVELOPMENT OF KALAM SCIENCE IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The article discussing the development of kalam science in Indonesia serves as a fundamental framework in understanding the Islamic intellectual history in this region. Through a comprehensive historical overview, the article delineates the evolution of kalam science over time, elucidating the pivotal roles played by key figures in religious thought. This mapping also encompasses philosophical discussions, divergent viewpoints, and the social and religious implications for Indonesian society. This exploration provides profound insights into how kalam science influences perceptions, beliefs, and religious practices within Indonesian communities. In a broader context, the article depicts how kalam science contributes to the diversity and harmony of religious life in Indonesia, highlighting its significant role in intellectual diversity and religious life in the country.

Keywords: Development, Kalam Science, Indonesia.

Introduction

Many Islamic organizations in Indonesia have significantly contributed to the development of Islam. The broader community is engaged in shaping Islamic culture, a role that persists to this day. The mission of understanding Islam in Indonesia is designed to prioritize faith or religion for a better future. There exist various Islamic ideas in Indonesia, including NU, Muhammadiyah, Al-Irsyad, Persis, and Jamaah Tabligh. Each of them possesses distinct visions, missions, perspectives, and goals. Nonetheless, they do not contradict the fundamental principles or Islamic Shariah.

Islamic thought can be observed through two aspects: the manifest (apparent) aspect and the esoteric aspect. The esoteric aspect remains hidden and can only be understood by certain individuals, often interpreted narrowly, while the manifest aspect implies freedom without constraints. It can be said that it is associated with dogma and purity. Within the intellectual dynamics of Islam, differences in viewpoints employing these two aspects often lead to variations in the interpretation of thoughts. Consequently, there is a multitude of variations in thinking. History notes that the emergence of various schools of thought, sects, factions, organizations, and groups within Islam has colored the dynamics of Islamic thought from classical to modern times. This seminar aims to elucidate the history, figures, and ideologies of the Kalam schools in Indonesia, focusing on various mass organizations such as Nahdatu'l-Ulama, Muhammadiyah, among others.

Research Method

This research employs the descriptive-analytical method, utilized to describe and analyze data. The nature of this study is qualitative, employing content analysis techniques. The data to be analyzed consist of primary data sources, such as Indonesian theological studies, and other relevant secondary data sources pertinent to this research.

The data collection technique utilized in this research involves collecting and inventorying various data sources, including both primary and secondary sources. Subsequently, an in-depth examination and classification of these data are conducted to derive conclusions, followed by the analytical process

Result and Discussion

Theology Studies and Theological Movements in Indonesia

There are several Islamic organizations in Indonesia that have significantly contributed to the development of Islam. They have been involved in shaping Islamic culture within the broader society, a role that continues to this day. The Islamic ideologies in Indonesia are associations aimed at enhancing understanding and creating a better future. There are various Islamic ideologies in Indonesia, among them are Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Although they have differing visions, missions, perspectives, and goals, both do not conflict with the fundamental principles or Shariah of Islam.

In Indonesia, there are several modern theological movements, one of which is Nahdatul Ulama, and another significant movement is Muhammadiyah. Both have become Islamic organizations with a considerable number of followers compared to other theological movements. Additionally, several organizations have contributed to shaping the development of modern theology in Indonesia. From the diversity of these organizations emerged a convergence point in the development of modern Islamic theology in Indonesia.

Nahdatul Ulama And Its History

Nahdatul Ulama was established on the 16th of Rajab 1344 H / January 31, 1926 AD. Acknowledging that every individual can fulfill their needs only if they are willing to live in a community, they endeavored to bring happiness to others and refrained from causing harm. They believed that unity, internal cohesion, cooperation, and solidarity were crucial for fostering a sense of brotherhood and love, which formed the basis of a good and harmonious social order.

Nahdatul Ulama translates to "Revival of Religious Scholars." It was founded in Surabaya as a reaction to the formation of the reform movement in Islam in Indonesia and advocated for one of the four schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). Concerning beliefs (akidah), this organization advocates adherence to the Ahlul Sunnah

wal Jama'ah school of thought. The founders of Nahdatul Ulama were KH Wahab Hasbullah, KH Bisri Syamsuri, KH Ma'shum Lasem, and KH Hasyim Asy'ari served as its first chairman (Abdul Muchith Muzadi, 2007).

The establishment background of Nahdatul Ulama is closely tied to the religious and political developments within the Islamic world at that time. In 1924, Sharif Hussein, the King of Hejaz (Mecca), a Sunni, circulated news that the new ruler would ban all Sunni religious practices in Arabia, which had been in place for decades, replacing them with a Wahhabi model. Practices based on sects, tawassul, pilgrimage to graves, celebrating the Prophet's birthday (mawlid), and others would soon be prohibited. Not only that, King Ibn Saud aimed to expand his influence in the Islamic world. He planned to continue the interrupted mistakes of Islam in Turkey after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, claiming it as the triumph of the Muslim community. Therefore, he planned to convene a Caliphate Congress in the Holy City of Mecca as a successor to the interrupted Caliphate.

All Islamic nations worldwide, including Indonesia, were invited to this congress. Initially proposed delegates were HOS Cokroaminoto, KH Mas Mansur (Muhammadiyah), and KH Abdul Wahab Hasbullah (Pesantren). However, there seemed to be cunning maneuvering among the groups endorsing the Indonesian representatives. With the pretext that Kiai Wahab did not represent an official organization, the pesantren scholars were told that reforms were essential. KH Hasyim Asy'ari did not oppose the idea and accepted the notion from modernist factions urging Muslims to return to pure Islamic teachings. However, Sheikh Hasyim could not accept ideas from those who wanted Muslims to abandon the sectarian system. Furthermore, the pesantren scholars rejected reformist ideas as they felt it was done through insult, humiliation, and ignorance. In their view, reforms were necessary, but they opposed reforms that discarded existing and valid scholarly treasures. It was under this pressing background that Jam'iyah, Nahdatul, was founded. Its official founder was Hadratus Syekh KH Hasyim Asy'ari, the caretaker of Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School in Jombang, East Java. Acting as its architect and driving force was KH Abdul Wahab Hasbullah, the caretaker of Bahrul 'Ulum Tambakberas Islamic Boarding School in Jombang. Sheikh Wahab was one of the principal disciples of Sheikh Hasyim.

Nahdatul Ulama Figures

The prominent figures involved in the formation of Nahdatul Ulama (NU) as the largest mass organization in Indonesia, along with their contributions and respective periods, are as follows: (Fadeli, Soeleiman dan Mohammad Subhan, 2010)

1. KH Hasyim Asy'ari (1871-1947)
2. KH Bisri Syamsuri (1886-1980)
3. KH Abdullah Wahab Chasbullah (1888-1971)
4. KH Abdul Chamid Faqih, Sedayu, Gresik

5. KH Ridwan Abdullah (1884-1962), Surabaya
6. KH Abdullah Halim Leuwemunding, Cirebon
7. KH Abdul Aziz, Surabaya
8. KH Ma'shum (1870-1972)
9. KH A. Dachlan Achjad, Malang
10. KH Nachrowi Thahir (1901-1980), Malang
11. KH R. Asnawi (1861-1959), Kudus
12. KH Abdullah Ubaid (1899-1938), Surabaya

Additionally, several other notable figures were influential behind the scenes. Among them were KH Kholil Bangkalan, who was the mentor of KH Hasyim Asy'ari, and KH As'ad, who was KH Kholil's classmate during their studies (<http://www.nu.or.id> 02-05-2022 *tarihinde erişildi*).

Nahdatul Ulama's Thoughts

Since its inception, Nahdatul Ulama (NU) has been founded upon the principles of Islam following the Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah tradition. Therefore, all its attitudes, behaviors, and struggles have always been measured based on the norms and principles of Islamic teachings. The principles of its doctrine (ideology) have served as guidelines not only in religious practices but also in social life and community engagement within the NU community. Consequently, these principles have shaped a distinct characteristic throughout NU's existence, setting it apart from other religious organizations.

History of Muhammadiyah

Muhammadiyah was established on the 8th of Dzulhijjah 1330 H, starting on November 18, 1912, in Yogyakarta by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan along with his companions and students. The organization's name, Muhammadiyah, signifies all individuals who practice Islam and understand that Prophet Muhammad was a servant who upheld the Islamic faith. Therefore, the Islamic community becomes the parent community. This organization was founded based on proposals from students and several members of Budi Utomo to establish a permanent educational institution (Deliar Noer, 1996).

Muhammadiyah emerged as it was inspired, motivated, and driven by the teachings of the Qur'an. Hence, its entire movement had no other purpose than to realize the principles of Islamic teachings. Every endeavor undertaken by Muhammadiyah in education, training, social welfare, household affairs, economics, and others was intricately tied to Islamic teachings. Specifically, Muhammadiyah's movement aimed to present Islam in a tangible and concrete form, as a "blessing for all worlds" that could be understood, felt, and enjoyed by society (Musthafa Kamal Pasha dan Ahmad Adaby Darban, 2000).

There are two factors that led to the formation of this movement:

1. Subjective Factor The subjective factor pertains to the individuals themselves and is the primary factor. Other factors merely play supporting roles. Essentially, it implies that in order to establish Muhammadiyah, the initiative must start from within oneself. Otherwise, Muhammadiyah could be led in any direction.
2. Objective Factor The objective factor refers to the prevailing circumstances and realities of that time. This factor served as a warmer support from the outset, something that was organized and soon to be realized (M. Solikhin).

The constitutive factor involves the internal adoption of Islamic teachings by the Muslim community. It implies that the Islamic teachings that entered Indonesia, subsequently becoming the religion of the Indonesian Muslim community due to the general development of Islam, were no longer complete and pure. Coincidentally, the Dutch government represented the first external objective condition that underlay the establishment of Muhammadiyah.

Muhammadiyah Thought

Ponderings and philosophies of Muhammadiyah's struggle can be broadly categorized into five principles: First is monotheism (tauhid), second is worship (ibadah), third is community (jama'ah), fourth is adherence (ittiba'), fifth is renewal (tajdid), and sixth is organization. Tajdid here refers to the placement of reason or intellect or observation as a tool in understanding and realizing Islamic teachings.

As social life continually evolves, the application of these principles is developed through rational thought by leveraging knowledge and technology. This evolution has coincided with the advancement of Muhammadiyah's philanthropic endeavors, encompassing various aspects of societal life.

Muhammadiyah's primary task is the renewal of religious understanding (tajdid). The renewal sought by Muhammadiyah implies restoring its original purity and modernizing it. Presently, the renewal efforts undertaken by Muhammadiyah can be succinctly divided into three fields: religious, educational, and societal aspects.

Natural Science Thinkers In Indonesia

1. Haji Muhammed Rasjidi

In the context of the academic development of Islam in Indonesia, one would find it challenging to disregard the presence of H.M. Rasyidi. He was a graduate of Islamic higher education institutions in Egypt who continued his studies in Paris and later gained teaching experience in Canada. Apart from his anti-Western rhetoric, one cannot detach from the fact that his academic framework was largely based on borrowed Western elements. Hence, it is no wonder that he critiqued the works of Harun Nasution in "Islam dalam Berbagai Aspeknya" (Islam in Its Various Aspects), Bulan Bintang, 1977, "Strategi Pembaharuan Kebudayaan dan Pendidikan Nasional"

(Strategies for the Renewal of National Culture and Education), Media Da'wah, 1979, "Kebebasan Beragama" (Religious Freedom), Media Da'wah, 1979, "Janji-janji Islam" (The Promises of Islam), translated by Roger Garandy, Bulan Bintang, 1982 (H.M. Rasjidi, 1977).

His thinking significantly diverged from several of his contemporaries, evident in his critiques of Harun Nasution and Nurcholis Majid. In general, his ideology can be summarized as follows:

a. About the difference between theology and addin

Rasjidi rejects Harun Nasution's viewpoint that equates the understanding of theology with the understanding of addin (religion). Hence, Rasyidi implies that addin is Islamic theology and theology is Christian theology. Rasyidi also traces the history of the emergence of theology. According to him, Westerners used the term theology to refer to tawhid or theology because they lacked another term. Theology consists of two words, theo (theos) which means God and logos which means knowledge. In other words, theology signifies the science of divinity. The reason for the emergence of theology in Christianity is the trinity or the divinity of Jesus Christ as one of the trinity. However, the word theology encompasses many aspects of Christianity that lie beyond faith (the true one). Therefore, theology in Christianity is not synonymous with monotheism or theology (H.M. Rasjidi, 1977).

b. Themes of Theology

One of the theological themes of Harun Nasution criticized by Rasyidi is the depiction of theological streams that are no longer relevant to the current condition of Muslims, especially in Indonesia. Al-Rasyidi argues that the clear differences between Asy'ariyyah and Mu'tazilah, as presented by Harun Nasution, might weaken the faith of the students. Indeed, no religion venerates intellect like Islam does, yet to demonstrate that intellect can distinguish between good and evil, and that revelation merely makes values derived from human intellect absolute and universal, implies underestimating the verses of the Quran:

تَعْلَمُونَ لَا وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ وَاللَّهُ

Meaning: "Allah knows, while you do not know." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 232)

Rashid then emphasizes that in the West, there is a perceived incapability of reason to discern good from evil. The emergence of existentialism stands as evidence against rationalism (H.M. Rasjidi, 1977).

Rasyidi acknowledges that certain issues addressed over the past twelve centuries remain relevant today, but there are some that are no longer pertinent. Presently, as elucidated by Rasyidi, what is still being felt by the Muslim community, in general, is the presence of Shiism (H.M. Rasjidi, 1977).

c. The Essence of Faith

This section represents Rasyidi's critique of the definition of faith given by Nurcholis Madjid, which is "Believing and entrusting oneself to Allah. Appreciation and a reverential attitude towards God form the center of an individual's religious experience. This attitude is termed taqwa. Taqwa is fortified by continuous contact with God. Appreciation of the divine fosters a comprehensive consciousness of divinity. Consequently, this nurtures a state of unity between the servant and God." In response to the statement above, Rasyidi argues that faith is not solely about the unification of humans with God but can also be seen in the relationship between humans themselves, namely in the dimension of communal living. It is not easy to unify one person with their Lord; they may be just one among millions. Therefore, the most important aspect of the dimension of monotheism is faith, worship, and community engagement (H.M. Rasjidi, 1977).

2. Harun Nasution

Harun Nasution was born on Tuesday, September 23, 1919, in Sumatra. His father, Ja'far Ahmad, was a scholar well-versed in Jawi scriptures. His formal education commenced at an HIS (Hollandsche Inlandsche School) in the Netherlands. He studied at the HIS for seven years, during which time he learned Dutch and general sciences in an environment characterized by discipline. Within the family setting, Harun began his religious education by learning to recite the Quran, perform prayers, and engage in other religious practices.

In 1934, he attended MIK (Modern Islamietische Kweekschool) in Bukittinggi. Subsequently, he continued his studies at Al-Azhar University in Egypt. During his time at Al-Azhar, he also studied at the American University in Egypt. His educational pursuits further extended to McGill University in Canada in 1962 (Abdul Rozak, 2003).

Upon returning to his hometown in 1969, he promptly engaged in academia, becoming a lecturer at IAIN Jakarta, IKIP Jakarta, and later at Universitas Nasional. Harun Nasution was a central figure in an intellectual network that formed within the environment of IAIN Ciputat in the latter half of the 1970s and beyond. His central position in this network was undoubtedly supported by his intellectual capacity and subsequently his official position as rector and lecturer at IAIN (Abdul Rozak, 2003).

a. Kalam Harun Nasution's thoughts

1) The Role of Reason

It's no coincidence that Harun Nasution chose the issue of reason in the theological system of Muhammad 'Abduh as the subject of his thesis at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. The extent to which reason plays a role in the theological system of a school of thought will determine whether one's understanding of Islamic teachings is dynamic or not. In this regard, Harun Nasution wrote: "Reason symbolizes human power." (Harun Nasution, 1983)

Because the human mind has the ability to overcome the forces of other creatures around it. The higher the human mind, the greater its ability to overcome other creatures. The weaker the power of human reason, the weaker its ability to confront these other forces. In Islamic history, reason has held a high position and has been widely used not only in the development of knowledge and culture but also in the development of Islamic religious teachings. Intellectual thought within Islam is commanded by the Quran itself. It is not without reason that there are writers both within Islam and among non-Muslims who state that Islam is a rational religion (Harun Nasution, 1983).

2) Theological Reform

Harun Nasution was characterized by his theological reformations. These reforms were fundamentally built upon the assumption that the backwardness and regression of Indonesian Muslims (and elsewhere) were due to something amiss in their theology. This viewpoint bears resemblance to the perspective of other modernist predecessors (Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida Al-Afghani, Sayed Amer Ali, among others) who saw the necessity to return to genuine Islamic theology. This rhetoric implies that Muslims who surrender to fatalistic and irrational theology, to predestined fate, are destined to endure suffering and backwardness. Thus, in order to change the fate of Muslims, according to Harun Nasution, they must change their theology to one that is free-willed, rational, and autonomous. It's no surprise then that this modernization theory eventually rediscovered the theology within the classical Islamic heritage, namely the Mu'tazilite theology (Mansoer Faqih).

3) The relationship between reason and revelation

One of the focal points of Harun Nasution's thinking is the relationship between reason (intellect) and revelation (divine guidance). He explains that the relationship between reason and revelation raises questions, but they are not contradictory. Reason holds a high position in the Quran. Believers do not need to accept that revelation encompasses everything. Indeed, revelation does not explain all religious matters (Anwar, 2003).

In Islamic thought, whether in philosophy, theology, or especially in jurisprudence (fiqh), reason never negates revelation. Reason remains submissive to the text revealed. The text of revelation is still accepted as something true. Reason is not used to oppose revelation, but to comprehend the revealed text. Reason interprets the revealed text only according to the tendency and capability of the interpreter. What contradicts in the history of Islamic thought is not reason and revelation, but the interpretation of the revealed text in a particular way with texts other than the revealed text. Therefore, what fundamentally contradicts in Islam is the intellectual opinions of some scholars and the opinions of other scholars (Nurcholis Madjid, 2005).

Conclusion

The figures mentioned above are individuals whose ideas have influenced the development of theology in Indonesia, thereby providing new insights for the Indonesian populace, a country with the world's largest Muslim population totaling 236 million people. These figures have their own perspectives regarding the evolution of theology in Indonesia.

From the aforementioned explanations, H.M. Rasyid Ridha holds the view that 'ilm al-kalam (theology) is entirely different from 'ilm al-tawhid (monotheism). In contrast to Harun Nasution, who greatly esteems reason, which can discern good and evil in line with the progression of time, Rasyidi argues that in terms of faith, it can be seen in the outcome dimension or in human-to-human relationships, not solely in the unity of humans with God. In other words, communal living. Therefore, what is more important in terms of monotheism is faith, worship, and community.

Coincidentally, Harun Nasution, a theological thinker, has various thoughts on this matter: He once wrote that reason symbolizes human power, meaning that through reason, humans can engage in various activities related to their needs. With reason, humans can surpass other creatures, and the higher the human's reasoning capability, the greater their ability to overcome other entities. As the strength of human reason diminishes, so does their capacity to confront other forces.

There are numerous schools of thought within Islam aiming to establish an Islamic state and revive the pure and comprehensive values or norms within Islam. Consequently, they aim to return to the true essence of Islam based on the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, Muslims will rise again from total decline due to the influence of thoughts and the entrapment of Western cultural influences or the dominance of non-Muslim nations. In Indonesia itself, many theological streams are still adhered to by its populace, such as Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah.

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