



Archipelago Islamic Philosophy; Ontological, Epistemological and Axiological Analysis of Archipelago Islamic Ideas in Indonesia

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Abstrak

Penelitian Artikel ini mengkaji secara mendalam konsep Islam Nusantara dari tiga perspektif filsafat, yaitu ontologi, epistemologi, dan aksiologi. Secara ontologis, Islam Nusantara hadir sebagai realitas historis yang terbentuk dari interaksi antara ajaran Islam dengan budaya lokal Nusantara. Secara epistemologis, Islam Nusantara menawarkan metode unik yang memadukan tradisi (al-Muhafazhah) dengan pembaruan (al-Akhdzu). Secara aksiologis, Islam Nusantara menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai toleransi, moderasi, dan keberagaman. Kajian ini menemukan bahwa Islam Nusantara bukan sekadar gagasan, tetapi praktik keagamaan yang hidup dan relevan dalam konteks Indonesia. Konsep ini menawarkan alternatif yang menyegarkan dalam wacana Islam global, khususnya dalam menghadapi tantangan pluralisme dan modernitas.

Kata Kunci: Islam Nusantara, ontology, epistemology, axiology, moderation, Indonesia

Abstract

Research This article thoroughly examines the concept of Islam Nusantara from three philosophical perspectives, namely ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Ontologically, Islam Nusantara is present as a historical reality formed from the interaction between Islamic teachings and local Nusantara culture. Epistemologically, Islam Nusantara offers a unique method that combines tradition (*al-Muhafazhah*) with renewal (*al-Akhdzu*). Axiologically, Islam Nusantara upholds the values of tolerance, moderation, and diversity. This study finds that Islam Nusantara is not just an idea, but a living and relevant religious practice in the Indonesian context. This concept offers a refreshing alternative in the global Islamic discourse, especially in facing the challenges of pluralism and modernity.

Key Words: Islam Nusantara, ontology, epistemology, axiology, moderation,

A. Introduction

Islam Nusantara is a combination of two values, namely Islamic and Indonesian values. Indonesian Muslim scholar, Said Aqil Siraj, explained that the term archipelago is not just a geographical concept, but rather is what is called an encounter culture (cultural meeting center). Islam Nusantara is a mindset, values, and perspective in seeing and dealing with cultures that have come to Indonesia (Mulyadi, 2018). The role resulting from the presence of Islam Nusantara is to maintain the original culture of the Indonesian nation which emphasizes aspects of peace, moderation, and tolerance (Akbar, 2020).

Human knowledge about religion must certainly be developed and advanced, as proof that religion does not limit humans in their pursuit of knowledge. Such a step must be appreciated as a positive step so that religion can interact more closely with society and its culture itself (Hidayatullah et al., 2019). Changes and improvements in the Islamic perspective on understanding life are of great concern to make Islamic adherents more open to accepting advances in views.

Islam in Indonesia, known as Islam Nusantara, has a variety of styles ranging from scientific to cultural aspects. However, this diversity does not make Islam different in its unified view of the concepts of *aqidah*, worship, and *mu'amalah* which must be believed and practiced by Muslims. (Azyumardi Azra, 2015). It is an integral part of Islamic civilization as a whole. However, in terms of regional aspects, of course, the way of practicing Islam and understanding Islam is very different, all of this is influenced by the various variations in the region.

The meeting between Islam and the Indonesian archipelago gave rise to a unique new order of values that is not shared by other Islamic regions. Nusantara, in the view of Said Aqil Siraj who Mulyadi also quoted in his book, *Islamic Philosophy of the Archipelago*, explains that the Archipelago is not just a regional concept but rather an encounter culture (center of cultural meetings). (Mulyadi, 2018). It is also interesting for us to understand Zulkhairi's view, which says that the archipelago, which is juxtaposed with Islam, is a character that shows a pattern born from heterogeneity. For him, Islam and the Archipelago are like a struggle between text and context which gives birth to a friendly, inclusive, and flexible Islam (Mulyadi, 2018).

The idea of Islam Nusantara emerged because of the Islamic ideology introduced by Saudi Arabia following Abdul Wahhab (Wahhabi) (Mukri Aji, Ahmad, Gustiawati Mukri, Syarifah, 2018). The meeting of Islam and Indonesian customs then formed the social, educational, and constitutional systems. This tradition was later referred to as Nusantara Islam. (Mukri Aji, Ahmad, Gustiawati Mukri, Syarifah, 2018)

Quite a lot of views have emerged related to the terminology of Islam Nusantara itself. This is proven by several articles or journals that focus on studying Indonesian Islam. *First*, Khabibi Muhammad Luthfi wrote about Islam Nusantara, the relationship between Islam and local culture. This article explicitly examines Islam Nusantara from the theoretical structure of the relationship between Islam and local culture using a philosophical, socio-anthropological approach based on data from nu.or.id. (Luthfi, 2016). *Second*, Al-Ma'arif wrote about Islam Nusantara, epistemological, and critical studies. The emphasis of this writing is on the epistemological area and critical analysis of Indonesian Islam itself using a historical-anthropological approach and critical analysis methods. (Ma'arif, 2015)

Third, Yulius Erick Tanabora wrote about Islam Nusantara: Hopes and Challenges. His writing presents a description of Islam Nusantara, Manhaj Fikrah Islam Nusantara as well as

various criticisms of the concept of Islam Nusantara as well as epistemological-critical analysis of the concept of Islam Nusantara in the future. (Tanabora, 2020). *Fourth*, Ahmad Sul-ton wrote about Archipelago Philosophy as a third way between Western philosophy and Eastern philosophy. It explains the study of Western and Eastern philosophy which is used as an affirmation of the existence of Indonesian philosophy from the data found. (Sulton, 2016). *Fifth*, Syarif Hidayatullah wrote about the idea of Islam Nusantara as local wisdom in Indonesia. The focus of the writing is the main ideas of the Nusantara Islam discourse, the approach of NU leaders in promoting the Nusantara Islam discourse, and the public's response to the Nusantara Islam discourse.(Hidayatullah et al., 2019). None of the Islamic Archipelago reviewers above have predicted Nusantara Islam with a purely philosophical approach, namely in its ontological aspect. The ontological terminology described by the Islamic Archipelago reviewer above is not yet what the researcher will write, of course, the researcher will explain the ontological status of the Islamic Archipelago itself by its terminological roots. Even with the epistemological and axiological aspects of Islam Nusantara itself. The problems that arise above are the reason for the focus of research which will analyze the idea of Islam Nusantara from the perspective of ontology, epistemology, and axiology of Islam Nusantara.

B. Methodology

This research uses a type of research library research that examines Indonesian Islam from an ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspective. Researchers using qualitative research methods are intended to be able to explain phenomena in as much depth as possible by collecting data that shows aspects of the depth and detail of the data studied. This depth is the basis for researchers in studying Indonesian Islam in this philosophical aspect. The main data that the author took from the book is Mulyadi's work entitled Islamic Philosophy of the Archipelago and Ahmad Baso's work entitled Al-Jabiri, Europe and Us Dialogue on Archipelago Islamic Methodology for the World, with additional secondary data in the form of journals that are still related to this research. Data collection in this research used literature study techniques and documentation obtained from primary and secondary data sources. Data retrieval primer in the form of literature about the idea of Indonesian Islam in Indonesia. Primary data, what Kaelan calls primary sources, are basic sources that constitute main evidence or witnesses to past events can be in the form of official records made in an event or ceremony, an eyewitness account, meeting decisions, photos, and so on. Meanwhile, secondary data or secondary sources are notes that are far removed from the sources and informants who are not the first source (Kaelan, 2005).

After data collection, the data is then recorded descriptively and reflected which is then analyzed. This data analysis was carried out to search and systematically organize (construct) records (descriptions) of the collection results data to improve the researcher's understanding and meaning of the object study. This is done because it considers that, apart from research philosophy has qualitative characteristics, according to (Kaelan, 2005:57) characteristic descriptive. With this characteristic, philosophical research can describe, illustrate, and depict a philosophical thought or view. The descriptive research model is seen as particularly relevant for philosophical research. Thus, this research with a descriptive research model. Meanwhile, at the use data analysis stage To obtain the results of this research, several common methods will be used, including others: analysis method, verstehen (understanding) method, interpretation method, and method hermeneutics (Kaelan, 2005: 68-80). The method must contain the research design, research subject, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis. Include a picture to explain the method used.

C. Result and Discussion

Philosophy and Its Branches

Definition of Philosophy. The root of the word philosophy comes from Greek, *Phil*, and *shopia*. *Philo* means love and *Sophia* means wisdom or wisdom. (Waris, 2014). So, etymologically philosophy means love of wisdom. Wisdom or wisdom itself is understood as an effort to reach the truth through knowledge and reason. Terminologically, philosophy is defined as a science that discusses universal principles of existence or a series of propositions and

issues of existence as existence. (Gharawiyani, 2021:77). From the definition above, it can be simplified that philosophy is a science that studies reality using the principles of philosophy itself (Gharawiyani, 2021:30).

Ontology

Linguistically, ontology comes from Greek, *ontos* and *logos*. *Ontos* means existence and *logos* means knowledge (Bahrum, SE, M. Ak, 2013:35). So, etymologically, ontology is the science of existence. In philosophy, the study of ontology is the study with the highest status of difficulty because it discusses the nature of everything, in this case, the nature of existence. Here the author wants to explain the difference between existence as a form and its quiddity (*mahiyah*), most people assume that existence and quiddity are the same thing. Even though the two are different. It is very inappropriate if ontology is understood as an answer to the question what is? (what is it?) because the answer to the question of what is is what is called quiddity (*jahiliyyah*) (Adlany, 2021). So, once again ontology is a science that will discuss the nature of reality.

Epistemology

The origin of the word epistemology comes from the Greek, *episteme*, and *logos*. *Episteme* means knowledge or understanding and *logos* is knowledge (Taufiqurrahman, 2022). Etymologically, epistemology is the science of knowledge or the author defines it as "the science of ways of knowing". According to Murthada Muthahari in his book entitled *Mas'ale-ye Syenokh* which was translated by Muhammad Jawad Bafaqih (Muthahhari, 2019) explains that knowledge has instruments as a tool for obtaining knowledge. First, *Indra*. The five human senses are tools or instruments possessed by humans to obtain knowledge. So there is a saying by Aristotle which states, "Whoever loses a sense, he loses a knowledge" (*man faqada hissana faqad faqada 'ilman*). Second, *Reason*. The glory of humans as creatures is because they are given reason. The reason is also the reason humans are burdened with the responsibility of worship. The reason is what differentiates humans from other creatures. In this case, the role of reason is quite urgent in gaining knowledge. Third, *Heart*. What is meant by "heart" as an instrument of knowledge is purifying the soul, purifying the heart. The Koran's argument about the role of the heart in acquiring knowledge is found in Surah al-Nahl verse 78:

And Allah brought you out of your mother's womb while not knowing anything, and He gave you hearing, sight, and heart, so that you may be grateful. (QS. al-Nahl: 78)

Axiology

Axiology comes from Greek *axios* and *logos*. *Axios* means useful and *logos* means knowledge. So etymologically axiology means the science of value (usefulness). There are also other opinions, for example, expressed by Suriasumantri that axiology is a theory of values related to the usefulness of the knowledge obtained (Muthahhari, 2019) According to Bramel, who was also quoted by Fithriani, axiology is divided into three parts. First, *Moral Conduct*, namely moral actions which are also called ethics. Second, *Aesthetic Expression*, namely an expression of beauty also gives birth to a discourse about aesthetics (beauty). Third, *socio-political life*, namely social and political life will also give birth to discourse on socio-political philosophy (Muthahhari, 2019).

Islamic Philosophy of the Archipelago

Ontology of Islamic Archipelago

Islam was brought by the Prophet Muhammad from Arabia and then its expansion was continued by his friends and *tabiin* until Islam reached the archipelago. When Islam came to the archipelago, at that time the archipelago was not a space without people. When Islam came, there was already a religious society and there was already a culture within it. Also, just like Islam in Arab lands, there are already people with their own culture who live there (Ubaidillah, 2022). Ontology, as described above, is the science of "being". If it is predicated on Islam Nusantara, it means that what is meant by the ontology of Islam Nusantara is the existence of Islam Nusantara. That is, what is the justification for Islam Nusantara having "existing" status? The simple logic is that if Islam Nusantara did not exist then it would not be possible to become a discussion discourse in the current era. So, ontologically, Islam Nusantara "exists". Islam Nusantara referred to here is Islam in the archipelago. Then it is reviewed from the aspect of its quality and the question is raised, what is Islam Nusantara? quoting Zainul Milal's opinion which was also quoted by Idris Siregar that Nusantara Islam is a unique Indonesian style of

Islam, a combination of theological Islamic values with local traditional values, culture, and customs in the country. (Siregar, 2020). The historical traces of Islam in the archipelago are in fact that before Islam came to the archipelago, the people of the archipelago already had their own beliefs and their cultural style. So, what I understand is that the basic ontology of Indonesian Islam is the existence of Islam in the archipelago which interacts with culture in the archipelago.

Epistemology of Indonesian Islamic Philosophy

Islam appeared to change all forms of social order at that time in Arab lands. This means that Islam is present in a cultured space. Quoting Ali Sodiqin's opinion, which was also referred to by al-Ma'arif in his journal entitled *Islam Nusantara*, epistemological and critical studies explained that there were three things that Islam did in dealing with Arab society and culture at that time. *First*, Tahmil (adoptive-complement). Second, Tahrim (destructive). Third, Taghyir (adoptive-reconstructive) (Ma'arif, 2015). Tahmil (adoptive complement) is an appreciative attitude given by the Koran to Arab culture. The Koran only accepts and does not change its substance and provides additional information regarding proper morals and ethics carried out and is not binding. This appreciation is reflected in provisions or rules that are general in nature, meaning that the governing verses do not touch the most basic issues and the nuances are in the form of recommendations and not orders. Included in this group are trade issues and respect for the haram months.

Tahrim (destructive) is a 100% rejection by the Koran of the developing culture of society. This attitude is demonstrated by the prohibition of the traditions referred to in the Koran as well as threats to those who practice them. Included in this category are the habits of gambling, drinking wine, the practice of usury, and slavery. Taghyir (adoptive-reconstructive) is a Koranic attitude that accepts Arabic traditions, but the Koran modifies them in such a way that the basic character changes. The Koran still uses existing social symbols or institutions. However, its implementation was adapted to Islamic teachings, so that its original character changed. The Koran transforms its values into existing traditions by adding several provisions to these traditions. Among the Arab customs that fall into this category are women's clothing and intimate parts, the institution of marriage, adopted children, inheritance law, and qishash diyat. (Ma'arif, 2015).

Reviewing the methodology of Islamic Archipelago in the View of Contemporary Tafsir

The Islamic Archipelago methodology which later became its principle was the concept of al-Muhafazhah (tradition) and al-Akhdzu (tajwid) (Baso, 2018). Discussion of methodology cannot be separated from discussion or vision of reality (rupiah). Each methodology always starts from a specific view of overt or implicit reality. Ahmad Baso in his work, *Al-Jabiri, Europe and Us* offers methodological steps with three starting points as alternative steps, namely: First Vision, Unity of Thought, and Unity of Problems (Wahdatu-l-Fikr; Wahdatul-Isykaliyah). A thought in a society, in a certain period, forms a special unity that has the essence of its existence where every school of thought merges into it. Meanwhile, the unity of thought referred to here is problematic unity. Isykaliyah is defined as a system of relations that is woven, in the context of certain thoughts, by several interrelated problems, which cannot possibly be solved separately, the solution from a theoretical perspective is only possible to obtain within the framework of a general solution.

Second Vision, The History of One Thought: Locating the Epistemological Domain and Ideological Substance of One Thought. What is meant by the historical realm there is a certain age, period, or period of an isykaliyah of thought. Then, the epistemological realm that allows one thought to work and function. Finally, ideological content is something that is contained by one thought. This means an ideological (socio-political) function given by thinkers to the epistemological material above.

Islam Nusantara: An Axiological Review

Islam in Indonesia has extraordinary appeal due to its role as a religion that comes from Arab lands but can enter into the diversity that is characteristic of the Indonesian nation. Since its arrival, Islam in Indonesia has been able to change the way of beliefs of indigenous people in very simple ways, namely using habits, customs, or culture that it feels can be Islamized. Islamic ethics were quite accepted by Indonesians at that time so Islam was easily accepted and used as

a way of life for the Indonesian people. Even though Islam is currently the majority religion, it still maintains the principles of Islam, namely rahmatan lil-vitamin, so that there can be harmony between religious communities. The Nusantara Islamic Paradigm has become a beacon of Islam that the world is proud of. Indonesian Islam is an open Islam that always invites people of other religions to work together to advance the archipelago. Isn't this the correct way of religion and desired by all countries?

D. Conclusion

Judging from its ontological, epistemological, and axiological aspects, the existence of Indonesian Islam can be proven in reality by the number of adherents of the Islamic religion itself. In building its epistemology which refers to the Islamic archipelago methodology itself, it is a breakthrough as an example for other countries that Indonesia has its characteristics and characteristics in its Islamic aspects. From an axiological aspect, Islam Nusantara is part of the Indonesian Islamic paradigm which maintains the existence of other religions with its tolerant and moderate principles.

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