
EPISTEMOLOGY OF ISLAM NUSANTARA AND ITS IMPLICATION TO LIBERAL THOUGHT OF INDONESIAN ISLAM

Ilyas Supena*

*Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, Faculty of Dakwah and Communication, Semarang,
Jl. Walisongo, 3-5 Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia*

(Received 7 June 2020, revised 3 December 2020)

Abstract

‘Islam Nusantara’ is a model of Islamic understanding that is produced through a dialectical process with local Indonesian traditions, so Islam Nusantara tends to be close to traditionalist Islamic thought which offers religious concepts that are polite, friendly and tolerant to the diversity of Indonesia’s local traditions. Islam Nusantara also tends to be close to post-traditionalism which emphasizes liberal thought rather than its formal form. Therefore, Islam Nusantara does not pursue a formal form of an Islamic state, but how the implementation of a country’s government reflects Islamic values and gives benefit to all humanity. The transformation of Islam Nusantara from traditionalism to post-traditionalism is supported by an internal aspect of the epistemological concept of the intellectual tradition of classical Islamic thought (kitab kuning) by giving reinforcement to the methodological aspects of *mashlahah mursalah* (goodness not found in the text of the Al-Quran and hadith), *istihsân* (goodness obtained through rational thinking) and *‘urf* (good tradition). This framework of thinking has implications for the birth of liberal thought in Islamic Nusantara thinking.

Keywords: epistemology, Islam Nusantara, traditionalism, post-traditionalism, liberalism

1. Introduction

‘Islam Nusantara’, as a term of mode of thought, emerged in 2015 when Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, Nadhatul Ulama (NU), made the theme of ‘Strengthening Islam Nusantara for Indonesia and World Civilization’ in the conference which was held on 1-5 August 2015. However, Islam Nusantara applied with the paradigm of tolerance and harmony (*rahmatan li al-‘alamîn*) has existed since Islam first entered Indonesia. This religious style of Islam Nusantara particularly was practiced by Walisongo (literally means ‘nine saints’) who spread Islam for the first time in Indonesia. Thus, Islam Nusantara as a way of life of Indonesian Muslims has been ‘grounded’ before the conference of Nahdhatul Ulama (NU). However, the terminology of ‘Islam Nusantara’ has

*E-mail: ilyassupena@walisongo.ac.id, tel.: +62 85225745772

now been used to refer to the epistemological and methodological framework for understanding the sources of Islam such as Quran, Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas, and practicing in the social context of Indonesian Muslim [Muhajir Afifuddin, *Maksud Istilah Islam Nusantara*, <http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/60458/maksud-istilah-islam-nusantara>, accessed on 15 July 2018].

The epistemology of Islam Nusantara is understood as a model of Indonesian intellectualism that has a uniqueness that differs from Islamic intellectualism of the Middle East. This uniqueness is closely related to the accommodation of scholars (*kyai/ulama*) towards the diversity of local tradition in the aspect of religion, language and culture. They then offer an Islamic understanding model for diversity based on the principle of dialectics, dialogue, tolerance, humanism and pluralism. Through this model, Islam and local traditions unite in harmony without reducing the element of their existential. In the Islamic context, this existential element is a moral ideal that is normative-idealistic (*ushûliyyah*) so that it belongs to *ghairu qâbilin li al-taghyîr* (unchanged), while local culture is the historical-empirical (*furû'iyah*) and *qâbilin li al-taghyîr* (potential to change) [1].

Islam Nusantara epistemologically referred to a concept of universality of Islam. Islam Nusantara believes that the universality of Islam in the normative-idealistic (*ushûliyyah*) aspect is described as 'one' Islam for all Muslims in the world, while in the historical-empirical (*furû'iyah*) aspect, Islam is contextual and plural in nature along with the plurality of social, political and cultural life [2]. In a different expression, the universality of Islam is only on the aspects of Islamic theology (*ahkâm al-i'tiqâdiyyah*) and ethics (*ahkâm al-khuluqiyah*), while social, political and cultural aspects (*ahkâm al-'amaliyyah*) are dynamic (*ijtihâdiyyah*) [3]. Islam Nusantara further intends to apply the principle of Islamic theology and ethics for a social dimension (*ahkâm 'amalîyah*) in the Indonesian context [4], or known by the term 'culturalization of Islam' (*pribumisasi Islam*) [5].

This epistemology of Islam Nusantara is now beginning to be considered by contemporary Islamic thinkers, including Fazlur Rahman and Abdullah Saeed. According to Fazlur Rahman, Islam Nusantara (Indonesian Islam) although viewed as a fringe Islam (backwater Islam) far from the centre of Islam in the Middle East, it still presents a progressive activity of Islamic intellectualism in interpreting Islam [1, p. 82]. In addition to Rahman, Abdullah Saeed has a great interest in the progress of Indonesian Islamic thought. In particular, Abdullah Saeed refers to the intellectual activities of 'Liberal Islam Network' (Jaringan Islam Liberal) who has offered a critical understanding of Islam against conservative Muslim groups [6].

However, Islam Nusantara has emerged paradoxes. On the one hand, its respect for heritage, both intellectual tradition (*Turâts*) as well as social and local cultural traditions has made it often accused as *bid'ah* (heresy) and was labelled traditional Islam. But on the other hand, Islam Nusantara often offers products of Islamic thought that are far from the textual meaning and prefer the contextual meaning of the verse (text), so it tends to be accused as liberal Islam. This paper

wants to explain the epistemological framework that underlies the transformation of Islam Nusantara from traditionalism to post-traditionalism and its implication toward the liberal thought of Indonesian Islam.

2. Islam Nusantara and the Islamic traditionalism

The term Islam Nusantara can be understood from two different but interrelated aspects; namely the geopolitical aspect and the epistemological aspect. Geopolitically, it is Islam that exists in Indonesia as was first taught by Walisongo until now [7]. Meanwhile, epistemologically it is a model of dialogical Islamic understanding that accommodates Indonesia's local traditions while maintaining the identity of each entity. Epistemologically, it holds that Islam is an universal religion so that it can be compatible with any culture [8] and with a heterogeneous social and cultural plurality [9]. This universality makes Islamic teachings dynamic and therefore requires reformulation, reapplication, reinterpretation and contextualization in accordance with the dynamics of society. Therefore, *ijtihad* or contextualization is needed to formulate Islamic values in a new formula of society and Islam Nusantara is the product of *ijtihad* in the Indonesian context [10].

The idea of Islam Nusantara has a very close relationship with Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) as one of the Islamic organizations that have steadfastly defended the traditions that live in the community. Therefore, the idea of Islam Nusantara also tends to be close to traditionalism [11]. What is the meaning of traditionalism? Traditionalism comes from the word 'tradition', while the word 'tradition' itself comes from the word 'tradium' which means everything that is transmitted or transferred from past to present or from one generation to the next. As a result, tradition has always been authoritative without the need for argument. In other words, tradition encompasses everything that is taken for granted in society and goes through many periods, but it still exists today [12]. In the perspective of Perennial philosophy, tradition is 'something that comes from God' (divine origin). Tradition implies truth or principles that originate from God revealed or communicated to humanity [13]. Therefore, Seyyed Hossein Nasr places tradition at a higher place than norms or customs. Meanwhile, sociologically, tradition is something that is passed down from one generation to another through a process of socialization. In this process, individuals unite in a social group through a learning process that continuously preserves the beliefs, values, and ways of thinking of a social group.

Thus, in each tradition there is an element of transmission of belief and therefore religion implies the root meaning of the tradition. In other words, religion is closely related to tradition or even religion is tradition itself. This transmission process begins when religion is present through the process of revelation. The revelation is then translated by adherents in social life. The a-historical revelation then turns into an empirical-historical reality in the life of its adherents. In that way, revelation is transformed into a tradition that is continually nurtured and maintained in the social arena. Revelation and social

life then dialectically formulate norms that become a common consensus. In the transmission process, religion can be seen as 'the origin of tradition'. Religion, through revelation, has reflected the truth and divine principles which ultimately shape religious traditions. Thus, religious traditions are beliefs revealed by God and interpretations of these beliefs in social life [13, p. 305].

Through this dialectic, religious traditions emerged in several forms. First, religious traditions that cannot change (*ghairu qâbilin li al-taghyîr*) or often also referred to as pure ritual traditions. This type of tradition is inherited continuously from one generation to the next in which the form and procedure for its implementation are fixed as practiced by the early generations, such as the implementation of the prayer (*shalat*). This first tradition is also known as the dimension of normativity [14]. Second, religious traditions are the product of *ijtihâd* or the thought of ulama in past generations relating to social, cultural, economic or political issues that are contextual in nature. As a product of *ijtihâd*, this kind of tradition is very likely to change in the next historical period due to changes in the social context of Muslims such as the problem of *mu'âmalah* (social interaction). This tradition is known as the dimension of Islamic historicity and rationality. This type of tradition can change (*qâbilun li al-taghyîr*) in line with changes in society. Thus, tradition has a fairly broad scope. It includes traditions that are meaningful (*al-turâts al-ma'nawy*) such as thought, material traditions (*al-turâts al-mâdy*) such as norms and culture, national traditions (*al-turâts al-qaumy*) that come from their predecessors, as well as humanitarian traditions in general (*al-turâts al-insâny*) received from other people's treasures [15]. Thus, traditionalist Islam considers past products as the best example that must be followed for present life while taking into account the transmission chain so that the tradition remains original.

Based on this understanding, traditionalist Islam has the following characteristics. First, the epistemological structure of traditionalists refers to the scientific structure of Sunni schools or *madhhab* (i.e. al-Quran, Hadith, *Ijma* (consensus) and *Qiyas* (analogy) which are textual (*bayâni*) [16]. Second, the traditionalists are very concerned about the tradition chain, ranging from the traditions of the Prophet, Companions, *tâbi'in* (the follower of companion), *tâbi'i al-tâbi'in* (the follower of *tâbi'in*) to the ulama (*kyai*). The importance of this chain of traditions is a factor that distinguishes traditionalists from modernists who return directly to the al-Quran and the hadith. Modernists generally refuse to refer to classical intellectual products as the main reference (*taqlid*) and choose to be rational by promoting the spirit of *ijtihâd*, especially in the social field (*mu'âmalah*) [17]. Third, traditional scientific traditions rely on classical scientific heritage (the yellow book or *kitab kuning*, the term for the classic of Islamic book) or standard books (*al-kutub al-mu'tabarah*), both in the fields of Theology, Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and Sufism which continue to be preserved until now [18]. This chain of traditions (*ittishâliyah*) is able to connect across generations making Islamic traditions very distinctive and pervasive in the lives of traditionalist Islamic societies. These characteristics - *madhhab*, tradition chain and yellow book or *kitab kuning* - are strongly embedded in the

intellectual tradition of 'Islam Nusantara' as demonstrated by *nahdhiyîn* (followers of NU organization) [19].

3. Islam Nusantara and Islamic post-traditionalism

The traditionalist character inherent in Islam Nusantara is not static. Along with the socio-political dynamics of Indonesia, renewal of religious thought is urgently needed, so that Islam Nusantara is involved in contemporary issues such as women's leadership, non-Muslim leadership, democracy, Islamic and state relations, human rights and others. Responding to these problems, the interpretation of the ulama or *Kyai* (intellectual leader) was very progressive with a more contextual reading of the heritage of classical Islamic sciences so that the understanding of Islam Nusantara on contemporary issues could no longer be seen as a traditionalist, but rather tended to promote a substantive-inclusive understanding.

The model of substance-inclusive understanding itself has the following characteristics. First, believe that the content and substance of religion is far more important than its form and label. With this belief, the followers of the model of substance-inclusive understanding can find common ground with followers of other religions to form the same public rules. Second, believe that Islam (the Quran) is universal and eternal, but it must be constantly reinterpreted to respond to the changing and different eras. Third, believe in the limitations of the human mind in knowing God's will precisely, so that in interpreting the Quran there is the possibility of mistakes. With this attitude, they will be more tolerant, open, and dialogical towards the diversity of interpretations. Fourth, accept Indonesian Republic (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia/NKRI) - which is not an Islamic state - as the final form. With this belief, they will not try to establish an Islamic state that makes the state an instrument of the Islamic religion [20].

The substantive-inclusive paradigm believes that Islam as a religion does not formulate a theoretical framework in politics. The Quran does not provide comprehensive information on socio-political issues. The Quran only contains ethical aspects and moral guidelines for human life, including how to uphold justice, freedom, equality, democracy and others. In addition, Muhammad's prophetic mission, like the previous prophets, was to uphold the values of virtue, not to establish a particular state or system of government. At the same time, the moral message of the Quran is universal so that it cannot be limited by certain national boundaries. Therefore, Islamic religious messages are not limited to specific ideas of the political system. Thus, Islam emphasizes the substantial manifestation of Islamic values in political activity. In the context of Indonesia, this paradigm tends to prioritize the articulation of Islamic values in the cultural face of modern Indonesian Islamic society [21].

In this way, Islam Nusantara tends to be post-traditionalism that wants to maintain the intellectual tradition of classical Islam (*turâts*) critically and contextually by making new interpretations of religious texts in a fresher, more

modern and beneficial way. The basis of this argument is the principle which states: *al-muhâfadah 'ala al-qadîm al-shâlih wa al-akhdh bi al-jadîd al-aslah* ('keeping to the good old traditions while taking the better new ones'). This view is following Fazlur Rahman's neo-modernism idea. Rahman even said that a form of Islamic thought that was not rooted in the realm of classical Islamic thought or separated from the ability to trace its continuity with the past was not authentic [22]. Nevertheless, all the treasures of classical Islamic thought must be tested and critically examined in the light of the holistic values of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The legacy of Islamic thought (*turâts*) must be appreciated and placed accordingly [23].

There are two reasons why the Islamic intellectual tradition needs to be re-examined. First, the re-examination of the Islamic intellectual tradition aims to find out how far the tradition truly reflects the values of the Qur'an. Traditions that reflect the values of the Qur'an must be maintained and developed, while traditions that do not adhere to the Qur'an must be discarded [24]. Second, sociologically, Muslim traditions - like other traditions - in reality are born from a certain era, place and condition that are constantly changing. In this process of social and intellectual dynamics, according to Thomas Kuhn, there is the possibility of anomalies in the basic structure of the classical Islamic sciences [25]. In order for the Islamic intellectual tradition to be dynamic and able to dialogue with changing times, a critical and systematic study of that tradition is absolutely necessary [13, p. 35-37].

4. Islam Nusantara and the liberal thought of Islam

The criticism of Islam Nusantara against the classical Islamic intellectual tradition (*Kitab Kuning*) then produces religious understanding which tends to be liberal. Some examples of liberal understanding are as follows. First, non-Muslim leadership. In the context of the selection of state leaders, Islam Nusantara has an assumption that the leader of Indonesia does not always have to be Muslim, and Indonesia does not have to be an Islamic state, but more important is how the state and the leader are able to benefit for Indonesian Muslims. Second, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) which was agreed as the final form of the state. In the theological concept of 'Islam Nusantara', Indonesia is seen as a form of state that is final and has a legitimate leader. 'Islam Nusantara' views the state as an instrument for creating public benefits as a universal Islamic goal. This view is a response to the plurality of Indonesian society [10].

Third, women's leadership. Islam Nusantara accepts the concept of female leadership, although this theme is contrary to the Sunni discourse which generally places leadership on men. Based on the principles of moderation, balance and tolerance, Islam Nusantara allows women to be leaders by referring to the main principles of Islam that do not differentiate between men and women [26]. In addition, the ability of women to become leaders cannot be separated from efforts to uphold the benefit that changes with changing times. Even so, the

domestic role of women must not be abandoned under any circumstances. The concept of women's leadership adheres to the principles of *tawassuth*, namely moderation of domestic and public roles [27].

Fourth, Pancasila (five principles) as the basis of the state. Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) as a supporter of Islam Nusantara is the first organization that accepts Pancasila as the only principle for all social organizations. In fact, one of the formulators of the Pancasila itself is K.H.A. Wahid Hasyim, a NU scholar. Adhering to the principle of Sunni theology, Islam Nusantara places Pancasila and Islam as two entities that have the same breath in overcoming the problem of Indonesians and Islam. One of the scholars who contributed to the process of NU's acceptance of the Pancasila principle was K.H. Ahmad Siddiq. He was analogous to Pancasila with fruit that has been eaten every day by Muslims and Indonesian people for decades, thus questioning whether the fruit is *halal* (allowed) or *haram* (prohibited) is a-historical. Pancasila has been integrated into the life of the nation and state, and therefore acceptance of it as the only principle is an obligation that does not conflict with Islamic creed. Even K.H. Ahmad Siddiq stated that a State based on Pancasila was the final form of the target of the Muslim political struggle. With this statement, Islam Nusantara has contributed to the reconstruction of Islamic political ideas in Indonesia by eliminating the ideas or issues of the Islamic State [28].

Fifth, religious pluralism. The idea of the liberalism of Islam Nusantara can be seen from the views of some NU figures about pluralism. These figures include KH Abdurrahman Wahid, KH Ali Yafie, and KH Mustafa Ali Ya'kub. They agreed that pluralism is a necessity and that pluralism which is the basis of the spirit of interfaith relations will not negate the theological principles in Islam. At the same time, pluralism also opens space to establish constructive social interactions between religious communities and social groups [29]. Therefore, KH Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) said that the classical Islamic law concerning human rights issues needed to be reinterpreted, because the two seemed contradictory. If the declaration of human rights recognizes the freedom to convert to religious beliefs, then classical Islamic law threatens harsh penalties - even the death sentence - against apostates. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, if the formulation of this classical Islamic law is implemented in Indonesia, more than 20 million Indonesian people who converted from Islam to Christianity since 1965 must be sentenced to death. Because of that, Gus Dur argued, the Muslim inevitably had to do *ijtihad* to change the provisions of Islamic law that had been followed for centuries. Abdurrahman then referred to the provisions of *ushul fiqh* which said: *al-hukmu yadûru ma'a 'illatihi wujûdan wa 'adaman* ("Islamic law is entirely dependent on the causes, whether there is or no law itself") [21, p. xxi-xxv].

5. Transformation of Islam Nusantara - some factors

In the perspective of Philosophy, the transformation of Islam Nusantara from traditionalism to post-traditionalism was caused by several factors.

First, the transformation of Islamic thought underpinned by the epistemological structure of Islam Nusantara sourced from the inheritance elements of classical Islamic thought, especially the epistemology of Islamic law in the form of the *mashlahah mursalah* methodology (goodness not found in the Quran and hadith), *istihsân* (goodness obtained through rational thought), and *`urf* (good tradition). By referring to the proposition ‘what is considered good by most humans, then that is also good according to Allah’ (*mâ ra’ahu al-muslimuna hasanan fahuwa `inda Allah hasanun*), Malikiyah scholars did not hesitate to make *istihsân* as a legal proposition. One form of *istihsân* formulation is to leave general law (*hukm kulli*) and take the law of exclusion (*hukm juz’i*). If *istihsân* makes many exceptions, *`urf* often accommodates local culture.

Islamic law principle also states *al-`âdah muhakkamah* (‘cultural traditions can be used as a source of law’). In this case, the scholars divided cultural traditions into positive cultural traditions (*âdah shahîh*) and negative cultural traditions (*âdah fasîd*). Positive cultural traditions are traditions that do not conflict with religious teachings so that these traditions can be preserved, while negative cultural traditions are traditions that are contrary to religious teachings so that these traditions must not be preserved [30]. As long as the tradition does not tarnish the principles of humanity, it can be maintained. Conversely, if the tradition contains elements that injure the dignity of humanity, then there is no reason to preserve it. Thus, Islam Nusantara respects tradition because it respects human values that need to be maintained. In the rules of *ushûl fiqh* explained that the benefit of humans is the goal of the imposition of law (*taklîf*) in Islam (*innama al-takalîf kulluha rajî’atun ila mashâlihil `ibâd*). Thus, the benefit that is not textually affirmed by the Qur’an and hadith can be used as a source of law, which is then called *mashlahah mursalah*.

Thus, Islam Nusantara methodologically relies on three propositions, namely *mashlahah mursalah*, *istihsân* and *`urf*. The three propositions are considered relevant because the true Islam Nusantara moves more on the aspects of *ijtihâd tathbîqy* than *ijtihâd istinbâthy*. If *ijtihâd istinbâthy* is devoted to how to create law (*insya `al-hukm*), then *ijtihâd tathbîqy* focuses on aspects of applying law (*tathbâq al-hukm*). If the validity of *ijtihâd tathbîqy* is seen, among others, in terms of the coherence of its arguments, then the validity of *ijtihâd tathbîqy* can be seen from its correspondence with aspects of expediency in the field [31].

NU’s intellectual tradition refers to the recognized *Kitab Kuning* or the standard works (*al-kutûb al-mu’tabarâh*) as a reference. The methods used in reading *al-kutûb al-mu’tabarâh* to solve a contemporary problem are as follows. First, *taqrîr jamâ’i*, namely the determination of the law collectively by determining the choice of one of several opinions (*qawl*) based on *al-kutûb al-mu’tabarâh*. Second, *ilhâq al-masâil bi nadhâ’irihâ*. *Ilhâq* means analogizing a new problem of Islamic law (*furu’*) that is not found in the text of the ‘*Kitab Kuning*’ with the problem that has been found in the text of the *Kitab Kuning* (*ushûl*). This *Ilhâq* is used to replace the term *qiyâs* (analogy), so that the procedures and requirements of this *ilhâq* are similar to *qiyâs*. The difference,

mulhaq bih (main source, *ushûl*) in *ilhâq* is the opinion of the scholars (*qawl*) written in the text of the *Kitab Kuning*, while *mulhaq bih* (main source, *ushûl*) in *qiyâs* is the Qur'an and Sunnah. Third, *istinbâth*, namely the formulation of Islamic law which was carried out collectively by practicing the rules of *ushûl fiqh* (*qawâid ushûliyyah*) and *fiqh* rules (*qawâid fiqhiyyah*) formulated by *mujtahid* (the founder of *madzhab*). *Istinbâth* is the last method used in the forum of *bahtsul masail* (discussion of problems) in NU, when problems or cases are not found in the standard works (*al-kutûb al-mu'tabarâh*) and it is not possible to practice *ilhâq* procedures [32].

The epistemological framework consisting of *mashlahah mursalah*, *istihsân*, *'urf* and *ilhâq* has resulted in the Islamic thought of NU being very relative and flexible in accordance with differences in social situations. With *mashlahah mursalah*, *istihsân*, and *'urf*, universality of Islamic dimension can be realized in the dynamics of diversity of Indonesian society. Meanwhile, with *ilhâq*, the intellectual tradition of classical Islamic sciences can be interpreted contextually. NU's religious thought became alternating between traditionalism and liberalism. Traditionalism can take place in socio-religious areas, such as reading *qunut* at *shubuh* prayer and *tahlilan* (prayers for people who have died), while liberalism can take place in the socio-political field, such as the acceptance of the concepts of democracy, Pancasila and Indonesia republic [33].

Second, the strengthening of the transnational Islamic movement in Indonesia since the reform era. According to Van Bruinessen, the background of establishment of NU was related to the dynamics of the development of international Islam in the mid-1920s, such as the abolition of the *khilâfah* position, the Wahabi invasion of Mecca, and the search for a new pan-Islamism [34]. At the same time, the idea of modernism initiated by Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Ridha, Jamaluddin al-Afghani had developed and influenced the development of Islam in Indonesia. The idea of Islamic modernism initiated by these figures tended to respond negatively to local Indonesian traditions, while NU kept trying to dialogue and maintain the tradition.

Entering the reform era, religious issues began to shift from socio-religious issues, such as local traditions and culture, to political issues, especially the strengthening of the idea of *Khilafah* and *sharia* local regulations. This is the main issue raised by transnational Islamic movements such as Hizbut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) [35]. By utilizing the reasons for democracy and religious freedom, the transnational Islamic movement gained momentum to expand its influence [36]. They translated books written by Hasan al-Bannâ, Sayyid Qutb, Sayid Hawwâ, Muhammad al-Ghazâlî, Taqiyal-Dîn al-Nabhânî, and Nâshiral-Dîn al-Bânî [37]. According to Bruinessen, there are at least three networks of transnational Islamic movements, namely: the Tarbiyah Movement, Hizbut-Tahrir, as well as the Salafî movement. In addition, Bruinessen also saw the Ahmadiyya, Shiite and Jamaah Tabligh as part of a movement that had a transnational network. One of the main issues initiated by the transnational Islamic movement is to establish a state with a *khilafah* system [34, p. 49].

Responding to these dynamics, Islam Nusantara remains consistent with the idea of Islamic and Indonesian relations. This consistency is demonstrated by the attitude of Islam Nusantara which is adaptive to local culture and at the same time adaptive to Indonesian political systems. Islam Nusantara (NU) accepts the Indonesian state government system as a nation-state and not an Islamic state. According to Kiai Achmad Shiddiq, Islam can be fully integrated in the modern nation-state of Indonesia, and therefore Islam and the Pancasila can operate in harmony. NU accepted a monotheistic nation-state while maintaining the full Islamic identity.

This gentle, flexible and tolerant attitude which is the hallmark of traditionalist Islam is able to place NU in a strategic position in the building of Indonesia's diverse politics and at the same time NU continues to apply the rules of Islamic law (*fiqh*) in the lives of Indonesian Muslims. NU's acceptance of Pancasila was implicitly a rejection of the idea of an Islamic state and showed NU's loyalty to the Republic of Indonesia [37, p. 78]. As a consequence of the acceptance of Pancasila (and the 1945 Constitution), NU has issued an official statement rejecting groups that support the Islamic *Khilâfah* or the Islamic state [38]. NU argues that there are no texts in the Qur'an that underlie the idea of an Islamic state or the need to establish an Islamic state. The idea of the Islamic State or the *Khilâfah Islâmiyah* is entirely *ijtihâdiah* or mere interpretation. In the context of Indonesianness, the *Khilâfah Islâmiyah* is a transnational ideology that is irrelevant and can endanger the integrity of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) saw the glory of Islam when this religion was able to play a cultural role, so that Abdurrahman offered a culturalization strategy or more popularly known as 'Pribumisasi Islam' (the indigenization of Islam), and rejected the shari'atization strategy [39]. Pribumisasi Islam means understanding Islam as normative teaching originating from God by accommodating cultures that come from humans without losing their individual identities. Pribumisasi Islam does not use a purification strategy that wants to purify Islam from local traditions, nor does it use an Arabization strategy that seeks to equate the religious practices of Indonesian Muslims with the religious practices of Muslim communities in the Middle East. Pribumisasi Islam is not oriented towards presenting 'Authentic Islam' or 'Purificative Islam' which wants to carry out a project of Arabism in every Islamic community throughout the world, but wants to eliminate the polarization of religion and culture, without eliminating their respective identities. Therefore, indigenous Indonesians have a contextual, progressive, liberating, and universal character [40].

6. Conclusions

Islam Nusantara is a model of Islamic understanding that is produced through a dialectical process with local Indonesian traditions, so Islam Nusantara emerges a model of Islamic understanding that is uniquely Indonesian. Because of this dialectic between Islam and local culture, Islam Nusantara has two

different characters. On the one hand, Islam Nusantara tends to be close to traditionalist Islamic thought which offers religious concepts that are polite, friendly and tolerant of the diversity of Indonesia's local traditions. However, on the other hand, Islam Nusantara tends to be close to liberal Islamic thought which emphasizes religious substance, rather than its formal form. Therefore, Islam Nusantara does not pursue a formal form of the Islamic state, but how the implementation of a country's government reflects Islamic values and gives benefit to all humanity. The transformation of Islam Nusantara from traditionalism to post-traditionalism is supported by the intellectual tradition of Islam Nusantara which relies on elements of the inheritance of classical Islamic thought (the yellow book) by giving reinforcement to the methodological aspects of *mashlahah mursalah* (goodness not found in the text of the Al-Quran and hadith), *istihsân* (goodness obtained through rational thinking) and *urf* (good tradition). This framework of thinking has implications for the birth of liberal thought in Islamic Nusantara thinking.

References

- [1] F. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1982, 141.
- [2] F. Rahman, *Approach to Islam in Religious Studies: Review Essay*, in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, R.C. Martin (ed.), The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1985, 195-196.
- [3] A. Saeed, *Interpreting the Quran*, Routledge, New York, 2006, 71-76.
- [4] A.M. Ghazali, *Metodologi Islam Nusantara*, in *Islam Nusantara: dari Ushul Fiqh hingga Paham Kebangsaan*, A. Sahal & M. Aziz (eds.), Mizan, Bandung, 2015, 25.
- [5] T.W. Ramdhan, *Al-Insyiroh*, **2(2)** (2018) 73-91.
- [6] A. Saeed, *The Qur'an An Introduction*, Routledge, New York, 2008, 223.
- [7] M. Maimun, *Al-Ihkam*, **11(2)** (2016) 392-408.
- [8] K.M. Luthfi, *Shahih*, **1(1)** (2016) 1-12.
- [9] S. Mustofa, *Epistemé*, **10(2)** (2015) 405-434.
- [10] A. Chalik, *MIQOT*, **11(2)** (2016) 431-448.
- [11] G. Barton, *Studi Islamika*, **4(1)** (1997) 29-80.
- [12] H. Ahmad, *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, **3(1)** (2013) 58-74.
- [13] S.H. Nasr, *Traditional Islam In The Modern World*, Kegan Paul International, London, 1987, 11.
- [14] M. Amin Abdullah, *Studi Agama: Normativitas atau Historisitas*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, 1995, 25.
- [15] A. Basid, *Tafaqquh: Jurnal Penelitian dan Kajian Keislaman*, **5(1)** (2011) 1-14.
- [16] M.A. Al-Jabiri, *Bunyah al-'Aql al-'Arabî: Dirâsah Tahlîliyyah Naqdiyyah li Nudzûm al-Ma'rifah al-'Arabiyyah*. Markaz Dirâsah al-Wahidah al-Arabiyyah, Beirut, 1992, 556.
- [17] D. Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam di Indonesia 1900-1942*, LP3ES, Jakarta, 1985, 46.
- [18] M.Z. Shofiyullah, *Jurnal Asy-Syir'ah*, **42(1)** (2008) 37-54.
- [19] Z.M. Husni, *Jurnal Islam Nusantara*, **2(1)** (2018) 45-57.
- [20] M. Haris, *Al-Tahrir*, **15(2)** (2015) 283-308.

- [21] M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita Membingkai Potret Pemikiran Politik KH Abdurrahman Wahid*, in *Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita; Agama Masyarakat Negara Demokrasi*, A. Suadey (ed.), The Wahid Institute, Jakarta, 2006, x.
- [22] F. Rahman, *Major Themes of the Quran*, Bibliotheca Islamica, Chicago, 1980, 79.
- [23] N. Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah*, Paramadina, Jakarta, 2000, 65.
- [24] F. Rahman, *Islamic Studies*, **50(3/4)** (2011) 449-457.
- [25] T. Khun, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970, 52.
- [26] U. Isnatin, Al-Tahrir, **14(1)** (2014) 93-115.
- [27] J. Ma'mur Asmani, Addin, **9(1)** (2015) 33-50.
- [28] A. Warid, *Jurnal Asy-Syir'ah*, **43(1)** (2009) 211-230.
- [29] F. Fathorrahman, *Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum*, **49(1)** (2015) 101-119.
- [30] S. Syaikhudin, *Esensia*, **8(2)** (2012) 187-202.
- [31] C. Anam, *Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan NU*, Duta Aksara Mulia, Surabaya, 2010, 46.
- [32] E. Susanto and M.M. Abadi, *Karsa*, **23(2)** (2001) 194-208.
- [33] A. Mutakin, *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum dan Pemikiran*, **18(2)** (2018) 192-210.
- [34] M. van Bruinessen, *NU Tradisi, Relasi-Relasi Kuasa: Pencarian Wacana Baru*, LkiS, Yogyakarta, 2009, 79.
- [35] M. Hilmy, *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, **6(1)** (2011) 1-13.
- [36] A.K. Fata and I. Moch Nur, *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, **11(2)** (2017) 339-364.
- [37] A. Wahid, *Ilusi Negara Islam: Ekspansi Gerakan Islam Transnasional di Indonesia*, The Wahid Institute, Jakarta, 2009, 56.
- [38] T. Bilfagih, *Jurnal Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality*, **2(1)** (2016) 53-67.
- [39] A. Wahid, *Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita; Agama Masyarakat Negara Demokrasi*, The Wahid Institut, Jakarta, 2006, 259.
- [40] A. Fitriah, *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam*, **3(1)** (2013) 39-59