



RELIGIOUS MODERATION AS A UNIFIER OF THE NATION AND CONQUEROR OF NEGATIVE SENTIMENT

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Abstract:

Indonesia is a democratic country that guarantees freedom for its residents to practice their respective religions. This is stated in the first principle of Pancasila which states that belief in one God and freedom of religion is guaranteed in Article 29 paragraph 2 of the 1945 constitution. Religious diversity in Indonesia is in the spotlight because social conflicts with religious backgrounds that arise in society result in negative sentiment from various parties, both domestically and abroad. This research aims to discuss the sharpness of religious sentiment in Indonesia, religious moderation due to social conflict, and the role of society in realizing neighborly peace in religious differences. This research uses a library research approach, the data analysis used in this research is content analysis. This study concludes that Indonesia has a variety of beliefs with the need for understanding and awareness in respecting differences in religious sentiments, pluralism, and interacting with everyone fairly. An attitude of religious moderation is needed to teach respect for differences, chat well, be non-violent, maintain local wisdom, and create harmony between religious communities. The role of religious counselors and community leaders is needed to promote moderation and peace in the dynamics of religious diversity in society.

Keywords: *Sentiment, religious moderation, religious counselor, peace*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a democratic country with the sovereignty of the people, which is explained in Article 1 paragraph (2) which states that sovereignty is in the hands of the people and is implemented according to the Constitution (Arum Sutrisni Putri, 2020). Apart from that, the proclamation of Indonesian independence on August 17 is proof that Indonesia is a democratic country. Implementation of popular sovereignty, such as the implementation of the presidential election of the Republic of Indonesia, and the election of the DPR RI which has been held from the past until now. Another implementation that Indonesia is a democratic country is a country that obeys the law, Indonesia has its regulations and laws to be followed as Indonesian citizens, if they are violated and not obeyed, the perpetrator will be subject to separate punishments up to further criminal law, imprisonment. or something else. Apart from that, Indonesia is a country that resolves its problems through discussion or in a family manner, as stated in the fourth principle of Pancasila, which reads "The people are led by wisdom in representative deliberations." This principle clearly shows that Indonesia is a very peaceful country without violence. Everything is resolved through discussion.

Human rights in Indonesia are very high, Indonesian people have the basic right to live in prosperity and freedom, freedom from slavery, misery, and crime, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and study, and freedom to embrace religion according to their respective beliefs without any coercion from anyone. This freedom of religion is written in the first principle of Pancasila "Belief in One Almighty God". This is what it means as an Indonesian citizen to believe in the existence of the Almighty God by obeying the rules and carrying out his worship, and every Indonesian citizen individually and as a community has the right to embrace the religion they wish and believe in without any coercion at all, and respect each other and respect different religions. Freedom to embrace religion is also strengthened in Article 29 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution. The state guarantees the freedom of every resident to embrace their religion and to worship according to their religion and beliefs. Then it is further detailed in Article 28 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution.

This article provides the freedom to embrace a religion, not the freedom not to embrace a religion. From the freedom to embrace religion and belief, with this freedom, Indonesia has several different beliefs and also different types of worship. The existence of differences in religions and places of worship should not bring division to the citizens of this beloved Indonesian country. These differences, including differences in beliefs, should be unique for Indonesia and should also be a spirit of unity to show to the world that Indonesia is a very epic country with differences that can become. The motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* with the meaning Different remains One. Recently, Indonesia has been in the spotlight of several parties from within and outside the country. All because of social conflicts with religious backgrounds that have emerged in recent years. Starting from religious blasphemy, destruction of places of worship, terrorism, suicide bombings, and heretical teachings. Incidents like this have made religious sentiments in Indonesia even sharper. This sharpness forms groups within groups according to their own beliefs, resulting in a reduced sense of kinship, unity, and closeness among Indonesian citizens which will result in divisions.

This failure to dialogue and provide an understanding of religion with the social realities of democratic, multicultural, and diverse Indonesia is the root of social conflict with a religious background (Yunus dan Arhanuddin Salim, 2018). Failure to dialogue and understand religion is experienced by several individuals who cannot think broadly and cannot appreciate it. So, from these adverse events, Indonesia needs a mind that is not distracted or idle, a healthy mind that is not too fanatical or radical. From here, diverse moderation must become mainstream and appropriate for this diverse Indonesian nation. It is clear and straightforward that moderation is very suitable in a diverse country because it does not take sides with anyone, and does not follow the flow in any aspect. The definition of moderation itself is the

middle way. Just as a moderator who runs a discussion in a forum does not take sides with anyone or any opinion, being fair to all parties. Religious moderation is also good and fair, meaning it is in the middle. So, mixed moderation is a middle way according to the definition above. With religious moderation, a person is not extreme and fanatical in practicing his religion.

Therefore, religious moderation is very necessary in life to form characters that respect each other, appreciate each other, are anti-sarcastic, and create harmony within religious communities. The upholding of religious moderation needs to be monitored together, religious instructors and community leaders must speak out about moderation loudly and no longer choose to remain silent. Everyone, without exception, does not discriminate between men and women, considering that violence in the name of religion can be carried out by both men and women (Kementrian Agama RI). The role of the state is also important in spreading this moderation, both providing public space facilities to create interaction between people. The presence of religion must facilitate, not vice versa (Kementrian Agama RI).

RESEARCH METHODS

In writing this article, the research used a library research approach, where this research was carried out using scientific literature related to culture, values, and norms that developed in the social situation being studied, from notebooks, and notes on reports of research results from previous research.

The data analysis used is content analysis, this research is a discussion of the content of written or printed information and then summarized based on the data that has been collected and analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Indonesia is a democratic country with high dignity

Indonesia is a democratic country whose government system allows and gives citizens the right and freedom to express opinions and voice decision-making in the government. By definition, the concept of democracy in Indonesia is defined as the process of implementing a system of state power carried out by the people, by the people, and for the people.

The definition of democratic operations can also be measured by, 1. What is the attitude of the community in carrying out elections well; 2. How do people's representatives solve problems by deliberating or exchanging ideas well; 3. How do people's representatives handle differences well without having to insult or be sarcastic towards some groups, both in expressing opinions politely and ethically; 4. How are the rights of community representatives used properly and appropriately; 5. How the people and people's representatives respect each other and respect existing differences; 6. The concept of "unity in diversity" is used in this concept of life full of

differences; 7. A sense of nationalism is rooted in most people and young people always remember the struggle for Indonesian independence. So, if the points that have been mentioned are implemented, there will certainly no longer be anarchism, the tyranny of the majority over the minority. Overall, these are variables to measure whether this country is truly a true democracy with high dignity.

One of Indonesia's missions is to create a dignified society as a great nation. The size of a nation is largely determined by how it acts in its relations with other nations. Judging from natural resources, human resources, and the area of Indonesia, no one doubts that Indonesia is a big country. Natural resources and human resources are unrivaled in the world. Mineral resources, abundant and abundant fuel, diverse flora and fauna resources, and the many long coastlines of Indonesia are extraordinarily productive resources. Judging from all this, Indonesia should be a great nation. From a historical aspect, the Indonesian nation has also been great in the past. Almost all large nations have a very strong culture. The Egyptians with their pyramids, and China with its great walls. All great nations have a cultural heritage that reflects their greatness. However, being modern and dignified does not depend on cultural heritage (Nur Syam). But how to restore Indonesia's image as a country that obeys regulations and laws, improves justice in the country, and eradicates corruption for personal interests? So that this nation can rise again to meet the future. We must remember the expression "The greatness of a nation is not because it never falls or is down, but a great nation is that we fall or are down and can rise again." From that we have to be very grateful that we have everything, we look after each other, look after both natural and human resources love each other, respect each other, don't think about mass organizations, don't think about parties, don't pursue group or ethnic interests, we have to remain one to Indonesia is without the slightest doubt, Indonesia is a diverse country with a society that has a burning spirit, high tolerance without looking at the slightest difference, a country with freedom of opinion, a country that has laws that its people obey, with democracy, Indonesia is a country with high dignity.

B. Religious Freedom in Indonesian Democracy

It has been explained that Indonesia is a democratic country that allows and gives freedom to its citizens to embrace their religious teachings according to their beliefs without any coercion at all. According to Pancasila, the first principle "Belief in One Almighty God", this principle has an important meaning in religious life. Having meaning in it as an acknowledgment of the existence of God Almighty as the creator of the universe, being a human being who obediently worships according to their respective beliefs, this Sila also discusses religious freedom, people can freely embrace the religion they wish, and then practice the religion they believe in without coercion and has been stipulated in religious law and the Constitution. The Constitution which guarantees freedom of religion is written in Article 29 paragraph

(1) of the 1945 Constitution that "the state guarantees the freedom of every resident to embrace their religion and to worship according to their religion and beliefs".

Then, it is further detailed in Article 28E of the 1945 Constitution which explains that every person has the right to embrace religion and worship according to his religion, also detailed in Article 28I paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution "The right to life, the right not to be tortured, the right to freedom of thought and conscience, the right to religion, the right not to be enslaved, the right to be recognized as a person before the law, and the right not to be prosecuted based on the letter of the applicable law are human rights that cannot be reduced under any circumstances." It is quite clear from this article that it guarantees the right to freedom of religion and worship for all Indonesian citizens.

It needs to be clarified that Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution provides the freedom to embrace a religion, not the freedom not to embrace a religion (Fatmawati, 2011). The reason is that understanding godlessness aims to eliminate belief in God, this could endanger the first principle of Pancasila (Makna Pasal 29 UUD 1945 Tentang Kebebasan Beragama).

C. Conflict that Caused Sharp Sentiment in Indonesia

Indonesia has various freedoms of opinion, voice, and freedom to embrace one's religion. So there is no doubt that Indonesia has several kinds of religions and beliefs. As a societal value, religion is like two sides of a coin. On the one hand, religion is a tool to bond people together, but on the other hand, religion is also a source of conflict. Understanding religion as a belief system requires being tolerant towards followers of other religions. However, if someone only understands religion formally then he will see that only his religion has a claim to truth and is the best. This attitude gives rise to religious hegemony and excludes other religions. And generally, this kind of attitude gives rise to conflict between religious communities.

Humans and society are required to relate to each other with a tolerant attitude and positive thinking, not too fanatical and radical. This process of interaction and society will give rise to self-concept or self-concept according to Charles H. Cooley, a small example of a young man who sees himself positively will receive positive treatment and will form a view of other people's views of himself, and form a young man's self-concept with positive vibes. This concept must be ingrained in people who live side by side with differences, especially religious differences.

In reality, the conflict situation between religious communities in Indonesia experiences ups and downs. In Tanjung Balai, North Sumatra, for example, there was a conflict with racial nuances, especially religion and ethnicity in 2016. This case was categorized as having a religious background because it was triggered by the presence of a place of worship, the climax of which was the rejection of the call to prayer using loudspeakers in the mosque. Then, the Poso conflict in 2001 was caused by regional expansion and regional head elections which resulted in a fight between

Muslims and Christians. The root of the conflict is power politics but wrapped in religion (Makna Pasal 29 UUD 1945 Tentang Kebebasan Beragama). Suicide bombing on May 13 2018 at three Indonesian Christian churches on Jalan Diponegoro, Santa Maria Ngagel Church, and the Pentecostal Church on Jalan Arjuno. The suicide bomb explosion was caused by a family suspected of being a terrorist who had a motive for jihad but it is suspected that there was another motive wanted revenge. This conflict dynamics situation shows that conflict dynamics are greatly influenced by the identity of the conflict parties, whether religious, ethnic, economic, or personal grudges.

This has caused sharp religious sentiment both at home and abroad, destroying Indonesia's image as a peace-loving country. These are the various cases of conflict in relations between religious communities, these can be localized and controlled by applying thinking that is not too right-leaning and not too left-leaning.

D. Middle Way Moderation Solves State Conflicts

The many conflicts and sharp sentiments in Indonesia require calm thinking, and the appropriate solution is moderation. This country needs moderation in thinking, considering that it is a diverse country with differences, a democratic country that obeys regulations and laws. Moderation itself is a middle way, as moderators handle the running of discussion forums. As a moderator, you cannot choose which side and do not take sides with any opinion. Moderation is also the best thing, something in the middle is usually between two bad things. Like the generous nature of good nature which is flanked by the nature of wastefulness and stinginess.

In connection with the existence of religious conflict in Indonesia, moderation is very necessary. Religious moderation itself means that the middle way of religion is taken according to the meaning of moderation. With religious moderation, a person is not extreme and does not overdo it when carrying out the teachings of his religion. People who practice moderation are called moderates.

The extreme nature of religion is very bad, not to mention the extreme nature of something excessive is very bad, such as arrogance, even something that is considered good if it is excessive is not good and becomes bad. A small example of a generous attitude that is good, if you do it excessively you will fall into wastefulness. Likewise, religion should not be excessive. Someone religious can also be called excessive when they have no ethics in religion, demean other people's religions, or insult and insult certain religious symbols (Tanya Jawab Moderasi Beragama", Jakarta 2019). In cases like this, he has been trapped in extremities that are not by the principles of religious moderation.

Positioning yourself as a moderate must be in the middle, standing between the two extreme poles. The moderator does not overdo religion but also does not underestimate religion. Not too right, not too left, just right in the middle, not too

extreme in glorifying religious texts without thinking and reasoning, nor do you embarrass reason to the point of ignoring the text. Religious moderation aims to invite the two extreme poles to move towards the middle without being too excessive, returning to the essence of religious teachings, to humanize humans.

Moderate thinking in Islamic religious teachings prioritizes tolerance in accepting differences, and openness in accepting diversity. Both insects and various religions. Differences do not prevent cooperation, with humanitarian principles (Darlis 2017). Do not insult each other's religion. So there will be brotherhood and unity between religious communities. Moderation must also be understood as growth and development as a joint commitment to maintain perfect balance, where every community, regardless of ethnicity, and culture, especially religion, listens to each other and learns from each other, trains the ability to process and understand the differences between one another.

The upholding of religious moderation needs to be monitored together, religious instructors and community leaders must speak out about moderation loudly and no longer choose to remain silent. Everyone, without exception, does not discriminate between men and women, considering that violence in the name of religion can be carried out by both men and women (Tanya Jawab Moderasi Beragama", Jakarta 2019).

The role of religious instructors in society is very important because some people still view the importance of ideal figures as figures or leaders in social life, therefore religious instructors have a high potential to spread and preach this moderation. The role of religious instructors is to build awareness in this moderate attitude as;

1. Information and educative, religious instructors as preachers who teach religion
2. As consultative, religious instructors can make themselves problem solvers, problems faced in society
3. As administrative, religious instructors have the task of planning, reporting, and evaluating the implementation of counseling and guidance (Agus Akhmadi 2019).

Apart from religious instructors, the state also plays an important role in spreading this moderation by providing public space facilities to create interaction between people.

CONCLUSION

In democratic life, it is necessary to understand moderation as an antidote to the sharp sentiments that exist in Indonesia, which respect differences, and pluralism and act fairly by prioritizing groups rather than personal interests.

Facing religious differences requires an attitude of religious moderation. An attitude of religious moderation in the form of recognizing the existence of other parties, having an attitude of tolerance, not feeling superior, and respecting and appreciating to create a warm and peaceful life without violence.

The role of religious and state counselors is to provide explanations and accommodate the spread of moderation.

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