

Contemporary Development and Religious Modernization

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ABSTRACT

The era of digitalization and technological developments that accompany humans in this century have certainly resulted in various kinds of polemics in society, especially in religious communities, the threat of orthodoxy, radicalism and pluralism in the midst of the various religions embraced by humans and bridges between generations that are not yet connected to each other which results in the delivery of religious teachings among young people that they consider as old-fashioned teachings that do not follow the development of the times and seem monotonous. Therefore, it is important for religion to also follow the development of the times, especially the delivery that includes contemporary modernization in conveying religious teachings.

Keywords: Contemporary Developments, Modernization of Religion, Religious Teachings

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INTRODUCTION

The current era of globalization and digital has brought about changes in values in society, one form of change in values is the weak attitude of mutual respect between community groups and religious communities, this life is contrary to Islamic teachings and the conditions of Indonesia's diversity. The conditions of diversity in Indonesia have existed since long ago, both in religion, ethnicity, culture and language. Islam in Indonesia utilizes local wisdom to create harmony between religious communities. This means that moderate Islam always prioritizes an attitude of tolerance, mutual respect while still believing in the truth of the beliefs of each religion and sect.

The current condition of religious life in Indonesia is colored by differences in religious adherence, which then builds community groupings based on understanding in understanding religion. The condition of religious life in Indonesia is also marked by various social and cultural factors, such as differences in the level of education of religious adherents, differences in the socio-economic level of religious adherents, differences in cultural backgrounds, and differences in ethnicity and region of origin, and added with increasingly developing technology whether religion will be eroded by the development of the times.

METHODS

This study uses a type of library research in which information is collected from various journals, books or articles which are then processed and analyzed. The data analysis used is descriptive analysis which provides an explanation of the problems studied so that it has academic value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Contemporary Religion and Modernization of Religion

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI.Online: 2023) contemporary refers to something that happens or exists in the present or at the same time as something else. This term is often used to describe works of art, music, literature, or events that are relevant to the present and reflect current values and trends.

Meanwhile (Samiuddin: 2024) explains in his journal about Contemporary issues are problems that have been discussed before but are still interesting to be re-examined and have relevance to a theme that wants to be raised, So we can conclude that contemporary religion is religion with the current era or religious issues that are being discussed or problems that have been discussed before but are still interesting to be re-examined and have relevance to a theme that wants to be raised especially in the field of religion.

Meanwhile, according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI.Online: 2023) modernization is the process of shifting attitudes and mentality as citizens to be able to live in accordance with current demands. Meanwhile (Abror: 2024) Modernization comes from Latin, namely *modernus*, from the words 'modo' which means road and 'ermus' which means current period. In Indonesian, the equivalent of the word "modernization" is "renewal," which comes from the word "baru" or "baharu" and means something that has never existed, been seen, known, or heard before. The verb form "new" or "new" is "renewal," which means the process of becoming "new," "restarting," "starting over," or "replacing with something new."

So from the explanation, etymologically, modernization can be understood as an idea that contains three continuous meanings, which cannot be separated from each other. The three meanings can then be formulated as follows: First, something that is renewed already existed, its existence is clear, and is also known by humans. Second, something has been eaten by time so that it becomes old-fashioned, not up to date, and left behind. Third, something is then returned to its original state, which is up to date, actual and relevant. Terminologically, Modernization is the process of shifting attitudes and mentalities as citizens to be able to live according to the demands of today's life (Nasution: 2024)

Religious modernization aims to adapt human nature to Islamic religious values and the most appropriate thing is to emphasize the principle of returning to the Koran and Sunnah. According to Harun Nasution as quoted by Hamdani Hamid, renewal (*al-tajdid*, modernism) in Islam means thoughts and movements to adapt Islamic religious ideas to new developments brought about by advances in modern science and technology. (Abortion: 2024).

According to Nurcholish, what is called modern is when it is rational, scientific, and in accordance with the laws that apply in nature. This is because modernization means the application of science which is a must. (Nasution: 2024) Therefore, we can take the understanding that religious modernization is making religion something that is renewed that previously existed, its existence is clear, and is also known by humans so that it does not become old-fashioned, left behind and is actual and relevant in the present.

B. Factors Driving Religious Moderation.

The beginning of the 20th century technological progress was very rapid, with the discovery of electricity, cars, airplanes, computers, and various other technologies, which made it easier for humans to live their lives. And at that time the migration was so massive and spread

throughout the face of the earth, then at that time religion as a belief that was embraced and believed by humans began to lag behind technological progress and the spread and growth of humanity, so when religion began to follow modernization, there were several drivers, including:

a. Globalization

Interaction between culture and exchange intensive information push people religious For reflect return teachings his religion in global context.

b. Development Technology.

The use of social media and the internet makes it easier distribution information religious, but also opens up room for emergence various interpretations.

c. Urbanization.

Transfer resident to urban create a more society heterogeneous, so that demand tolerance and dialogue between people religious.

d. Education.

Increasing level education public push emergence thinking critical and rational in understand religion.

So if viewed from an Islamic perspective, the driving factors for the occurrence of religious modernization are as explained by, (Nasution: 2024) The background that caused the emergence of modernization in Islam, specifically there are two factors, the first is the internal factor, namely as follows:

a. The decline of Islamic thought

The decline of Islamic thought occurred after the closing of the door of ijtihad due to the dispute that occurred between fellow Muslims in the issue of caliphate with the limitation of the fiqh school of thought to only four imams, namely the Maliki school, the Syafi'i school, the Hanafi school and also the Hambali school. Meanwhile, the field of theology was dominated by Ash'ariah thought and the field of Sufism was dominated by the thought of Imam Al-Ghazali. The closing of the door of ijtihad has caused a very big negative effect, Muslims no longer have a high scientific ethos and reason is not empowered optimally so that what is produced by Muslims is merely repetition of previously existing writings without the necessary innovations in accordance with the progress of the times.

b. The mixing of Islamic teachings with elements outside it

In addition to the decline of Islamic thought, the background to the birth of modern thought in Islam is the mixing of Islam with elements outside it. In the period before the 19th century AD, many Muslims did not know their religion well, so that many elements outside of Islam were considered as religion, so Islam was mixed with foreign elements that manifested in heresy, superstition and superstition. Muhammad Abduh who was continued by his students Muhammad Rasyid Ridha and KH. Ahmad Dahlan in Indonesia were Islamic thinkers and reformers who were very concerned about the eradication of superstition, heresy and superstition among Muslims.

The second factor that caused the emergence of modernization in Islam is an external factor, namely:

a. Western imperialism

Imperialism and colonialism by the West occurred as a result of the disintegration or division that had occurred among Muslims that occurred long before the destruction of Islamic civilization in the mid-13th century AD, namely when small dynasties emerged that broke away from the central government during the Abbasid Caliphate. After the

collapse of the Islamic civilization, the division that occurred within the Muslim community also became worse with the rise of rebellions against the central Islamic government which would also result in the fading of Islamic political power and the release of areas that were previously part of Islamic rule.

b. Contact with modernism in the West

Since the 16th century AD, the West has experienced a new chapter in its history, namely the modern era with the birth of modern thinkers who voiced the progress of science and succeeded in overthrowing the power of the church (religion). Because of this success, Western civilization was achieved which still dominates the world today. Meanwhile, in the Islamic world at that time it was in decline, because its interaction with modernism in the West began to realize the importance of progress and inspired them to think about how to advance Islam again as they had achieved in previous times so that Islamic thinkers were born such as At-Thahthawi and Muhammad Abduh in Egypt, Muhammad Ali Pasha in Turkey, Khairuddin At-Tunisi in Tunisia and Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India.

c. Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt.

The emergence of renewal in Islam is closely related to the expedition that Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-18210) had made to Egypt. When Napoleon entered Egypt, he also made an expedition both culturally and politically. So that it shook the foundation of the country that used Arabic. They introduced French culture and Western science to the Egyptians, then these Arabs as a whole, opened the eyes of Egyptian Islamic leaders to make renewal.

In the expedition, Napoleon brought scientists, administrators, and professional bureaucrats to organize/manage the government in Egypt. Williem Clivelant said that Napoleon came to Egypt with a political and intellectual mission. He brought engineers and scientists to conduct scientific research. Meanwhile, politicians and administrators were planned to be able to improve government administration, taxation, and communication. The intensity of contact between the Islamic world and the West turned out to make the Islamic world aware of its weaknesses. Muslim intellectuals began to diagnose the factors that caused the backwardness of the people and then studied the West. Then Muslim reformers put forward their ideas about efforts to overcome backwardness and advance the people which were often accompanied by an invitation to emulate the West (westernists) in various aspects of life.

C. The Impact of Religious Moderation.

At this time, religious fundamentalism movements still emerge, both in Christian, Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist circles. Some of these movements merge with the Right-wing populist movement. Religious radicalism and extremism are caused by several factors or also called root causes, both theologically, sociologically, and psychologically, both internationally and domestically (nationally). (Abdillah: 2019)

So modernization, with all the social, cultural, and technological changes that accompany it, has a significant impact on the practice and understanding of religion. This impact can be positive or negative, depending on how religion adapts to the changing times and is a complex process that has a wide impact on people's lives. This process does not always run smoothly and often gives rise to various challenges. So the impacts of modernizing religion are:

a. Positive impact.

- a) Expanding Access: Information technology allows religious teachings to spread more widely and quickly. People have easier access to various religious sources, whether through the internet, social media, or applications.

- b) **Interfaith Dialogue:** Modernization encourages more intense interfaith dialogue. This allows for mutual understanding, tolerance, and cooperation between religious communities.
 - c) **Relevance of Religion:** Religion can become more relevant to modern life by integrating religious values into various aspects of life, such as social, economic, and political.
 - d) **Empowerment of the Community:** Modernization can provide opportunities for religious communities to be more active in religion, for example through social activities, religious education, and leadership.
- b. **Negative impact.**
- a) **Radicalism:** Modernization can also trigger the emergence of radical movements that interpret religion narrowly and exclusively.
 - b) **Secularism:** The increasing influence of secular values may lead to a decline in interest in religion and a weakening of religious practice.
 - c) **Commercialization of Religion:** Religion can become a commodity that is bought and sold, so that its spiritual values are marginalized.
 - d) **Religious Fragmentation:** Modernization can cause fragmentation within a religion, the emergence of various different streams and sects.

D. The Impact of Religious Moderation.

Religious intolerance is a complex thing. In contemporary times, religious intolerance grows in a situation of technological disruption. As a result, technology—especially social media—has a significant role in increasing religious intolerance. The desire to consume signs that have no reference to the realities of contemporary society is affirmed by the world of signs, the world of simulation, which is manifested in social media. (Wibowo: 2022)

So, the modernization of religion is the process of adapting religion to changes in the times, social values, and technological developments. This process does not always run smoothly, and there are many challenges to be faced. Here are some of the main challenges in the modernization of religion:

- a. **Maintaining Orthodoxy,** How to maintain the core teachings of religion without appearing rigid and irrelevant to the times
- b. **Overcoming Radicalism,** How to prevent the emergence of extreme and radical religious interpretations that can trigger violence
- c. **Bridging Generations,** How to unite the older generation who hold fast to tradition with the younger generation who are more open to change.
- d. **Responding to Pluralism,** How to live side by side with adherents of other religions in an increasingly pluralistic society.
- e. **Facing Secularism,** How to maintain the relevance of religion amidst the increasing influence of secular values.
- f. **Facing the Commercialization of Religion,** How to prevent religion from being used as a commodity to be bought and sold.
- g. **Embracing Technological Developments,** How to utilize technology to spread religious teachings without sacrificing religious values.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary religion and modernization of religion are two words that have different meanings, because contemporary religion is religion with the current era or religious issues that are being discussed or problems that have been discussed before but are still interesting to be re-examined and have relevance to a theme that wants to be raised especially in the field of religion. While etymologically modernization can be understood as an idea that contains three continuous meanings, it is impossible to separate one from another. The three meanings can then be formulated as follows: First, something that is renewed already existed before, its existence is clear, and is also known by humans. Second, something has been eaten by time so that it becomes old, not up to date, and left behind. Third, something is then returned to its original state, which is up to date, actual and relevant. So at least the beginning of the 20th century technological progress was very rapid, with the discovery of electricity, cars, airplanes, computers, and various other technologies, which made it easier for humans to live their lives. So modernization, with all the social, cultural, and technological changes that accompany it, has a significant impact on the practice and understanding of religion. This impact can be positive or negative, depending on how religion adapts to the changing times and a complex process that has a wide impact on people's lives. So, the modernization of religion is the process of adapting religion to changes in the times, social values, and technological developments. This process does not always run smoothly, and there are many challenges that must be faced such as radicalism, orthodoxy and how to bridge generations amidst pluralism, secularism, and the rampant commercialization of religion and the massive development of technology.

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