Representation of Indonesian Democratic Leaders by Jamā’ah Anṣāru Tawḥīd and Ḥizbut Taḥrīr as Radical Muslim Groups

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Abstract—This study aims (1) to describe how radical-muslim groups representate Indonesian democratic leader in Indonesia; (2) to identify the implication from the way they representate system of democracy. To get these aims, we collected data, i.e., postings on the websites they managed. We focus on Jamā’ah Anṣāru Tawḥīd (JAT) and Ḥizbut Taḥrīr Indonesia (HTI) as representatives of radical-muslim groups, indicated by democracy refusal. We analyze their postings by adopting Leeuwen’s model of discourse analysis. We find that JAT representate democracy as a “religion”. For JAT, democratic leaders are “Islam apostates”, “kāfir”, “ṭaghūt”. Meanwhile, HTI regard democracy as an instrument for capitalists or colonialists. They regard Indonesia democratic leaders as a colonialist’s cat’s paw. We conclude that radical muslim groups have different perspectives and rationale in representing and delegitimizing leaders within democracy context. Language functions as a structure to oppose, delegitimize democratic leaders. Even more, the practice of language can be used to legitimize violence. For example, construction of “democracy as a religion” and “leader as a kāfir” legitimize sacred violence, e.g. terrorism.

Keywords—radical-muslim groups; delegitimization; democracy; discourse analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Leaders in any states with a democratic system result from mechanism of general election. Indonesia as a democratic one holds general election regularly. Indonesia has held general election in 1955, 1971, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014, regional election in 2018. And, Indonesia will hold the presidential election in 2019. This election is a mechanism for realizing democratic leaders [1].

The leaders will conduct leadership: persuasive activities within social system (group, community, organization, nations) to achieve shared goals. They have an important role in changing culture and systems, and in driving organizational resources. They achieve the goals by influencing, facilitating individual and collective efforts, persuading and giving models to community members, making transformative changes, articulating and realizing the vision, and creating an environment that supports the achievement of organizational goals [2].

Because leaders are the result of a democratic process, peoples make different meaning towards leaders. This is the implication of the different construct among peoples, especially among muslim towards democracy. Some muslim accept democracy e.g., Nahdatul ‘Ulamā, Muhammadiyah. But others reject it e.g., Ḥizbut Taḥrīr, Jamā’ah Anṣāru Tawḥīd [3,4].

Those accepting democracy are affixed a label to as moderate muslim or muslim with substantivism. Those disagreeing and opposing to democracy are named as fundamentalists [5,6], scripturalist [7,8], revivalist [9], literalist, “mutilāśibīn”, “mutaṭārīfīn”, ‘right extremist’ [10], or radicals. They believe that they are fighting against forces threatening their most sacred values [11]. They think of the sacred texts as God’s stipulation. The texts are free from mistakes and self-interpretation, glorious, authoritative, and everlasting [12]. They fight against those who threaten their existence, fight for their life goals and identity, and fight in the name of God [13].

Two variants of the radical groups are Jamā’ah Anṣāru Tawḥīd and Ḥizbut Taḥrīr Indonesia (hereinafter referred to as JAT for the former and HTI for the latter). These groups reject democracy and delegitimize democracy leaders. This article focuses on answering research questions about “how radical-muslim groups representate democratic-leaders”. This article aims: (1) to describe how radical-muslim groups representate democratic leaders in Indonesia; (2) to identify the implication from the way they representate democracy and the leaders as a product of democratic process.

We harness perspective of linguistics (practice of language usage) in describing representation of social actor (democratic leaders) and action (e.g. leadership). Every language serves as a channel to externalize author’s consciousness, ideology. Languages play a role in the constitution of social reality and individual experience. Thereupon, they are not neutral and passive in describing external reality [14-16]. Instead of transmitting message, languages transmit ideology because their function as material of ideology [17]. The answer to the question above offers a perspective in explaining the relationship between state and society.
II. METHODOLOGY

This article focuses on JAT and HTI. Those two organizations as an institution have been dissolved. But, as consciousness or ideology, their though still exist. We limit this research problem to the level of texts, namely: articles posted on their websites. Those websites belong to JAT website (http://ansharuttauhid.com), and HTI (http://hizbut-tahrir.or.id). At the present time, we identify that their websites are not active anymore. Website is communication medium in disseminating their construction towards reality of democratic leader and democratic leadership. We collect data by searching for articles on the website using the word of "democracy" in the website search functionality. The word of “democracy” is the context of this research. Then, we sort articles to determine the ones dealing with democratic leaders. We analyze the data with a discourse analysis as introduced by Van Leeuwen [18]. His discourse analysis model is called representation of social action and representation of social actors. Leeuwen focuses on ways to investigate the representation of actions or social actors: how they are positioned within texts. This discourse analysis approach includes (1) the strategy of exclusion: how texts eliminate, exclude social actors or actions; and (2) the strategy of inclusion: how the texts present, include social actors or actions.

A. Exclusion Strategy

For Leeuwen, text eliminates social actors and social action through techniques of suppression and backgrounding. The suppression techniques exclude social actors and action in order not to be traced in any texts. Meanwhile, exclusion by the backgrounding technique leaves traces for readers (researchers) in order to detect and identify social actors and action excluded.

The suppression technique can be identified from the structure of sentences. The structure consists of: passive voice, nonfinite or infinitive clauses, removal of beneficiaries (actors who benefit from an actions), nominalization, adjective sentences, absence of participant. The backgrounding technique can be identified from the structure of elliptical sentence, nonfinite clauses, infinitive clauses, and paratactic clauses [18].

B. Inclusion Strategy

This strategy presents social actors with certain techniques. First, role allocation (by active or passive voice), participation by prepositions (among others, with "by" or "from"), nominalization, possessive pronoun, generalization (by assimilation and collectivization techniques) or specifications (with singularization), association / dissociation, determination and indetermination, personalization and impersonalization, and inclusion by over determination, for detail, see [18].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Jamā’ah Ansārū Tawhīd (JAT)

JAT made de-legitimization against democratic leaders. It’s as consequence of their view towards general election. In democratic system, general election is absolute condition in choosing leaders in any states. JAT issued a decision No.: 05 / VII / 1430, 2nd July 2009, on the presidential election of the Republic of Indonesia. This official decision was a response to the presidential election held on July 14, 2009. JAT’s response are: to abandon democracy. JAT advise muslim to refer to and practice Islamic teachings perfectly.

They encouraged muslim to adopt system of jamā’ah-ah-wal-Imāmah and the system of ahlul-halli-wal-‘aqqiṣ or leadership among muslim. JAT encouraged muslim to reject the practice of leadership on the basis of secularism, including democratic system. For JAT, Muslims should not justify democracy by manipulating Islamic teachings. JAT decided not to get involved in the agenda of election for national leadership because they regarded it did not practice Islamic system and did not uphold Islamic law.

JAT delegitimized election with a theological perspective. For them, democracy was a heresy. Therefore, they criticized muslim practicing Islam and democracy at the same time [19]. They argued that Islam and democracy were different to each other. Democracy placed the sovereignty onto the peoples and man-made law. On the contrarily, Islam placed sovereignty onto Allah on the basis of the law of Islam (Al-Quran and As-Sunnah). They disagreed because in democracy, everyone had the same right to become a representative. In Islam, the representatives are ‘u’lamā (plural Arabic word of ‘ālim or ‘alim to mean muslim scholars in Islamic studies). According to JAT, democracy separates religion and world or secularism, but Islam does not [20].

JAT labelled "democracy as a religion". They encouraged Muslims living in any states with democratic system to reject democracy because it was an ideology of kāfir [20]. They argued: democracy allowed everyone to become apostate; democracy tolerated false beliefs/religion, wickedness, and (democracy) supported permissive values [21]. Hence, according to them, implementing democracy meant recognizing institutions and principles of kāfir.

For JAT, democracy promulgated Islamic law or sharī‘ah and combined “the-right” and “the-wrong”. "Islam” and “jāhiliyyah (Arabic language for stupidity of Islamic teachings, or age of ignorance in pre-Islamic era)” [21]. They also encouraged every muslim to replace democracy with Islam by doing "da’wah and jihād". If having not been able to do da’wah and jihād, JAT obligated muslim to prepare maximum strength or emigrate to countries which allowed them to carry out the sharī‘ah perfectly [20].

The language JAT used to representate democracy was associating democracy with belief out of Islam. JAT stated that participating in democracy mean following Judaism. JAT also named democracy with bad labels. Those labels are: “incubation of heresy”, system of kāfir, system of vanity, jāhiliyyah, a mother of disbelief. Regarding democratic leader representation, JAT believed that leaders resulting from democratic process belonged to religion of democracy. This can be seen in this excerpt:

“Jamaah ansharut tawhid tidak seperti dari berbagai pressure yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah yang..."
mengusung agama demokrasi” (Jamā’ah Ansārū Tawḥīd was not free from various pressures carried out by the government which belonged to religion of democracy) [22].

JAT represents leaders (government) through website texts by using generalization technique. By this technique, we don’t know the leaders (which government) they meant. Social actors were not clear. The phrase of “religion of democracy” informs us about JAT’s belief which regards democratic leaders as non-Muslim. Democratic leaders were murtād (convert from religion of Islam to the one of democracy). JAT regarded democratic leaders as tāghūt (object worshipped). Government servants were murtād as well. This is the excerpt.

“Muslims becoming government servants whole-heartedly are murtād, as long as they loyal to head of state (tāghūt), do not regard him/her as a kāfir, do not hate and fight against tāghūt. Instead, they defend and protect tāghūt” [23].

JAT believes that the government do not create justice [21]. For them, neither muslim nor non-muslim get justice. Law that democratic leaders make is for ordinary peoples, not for rulers. JAT represents democratic leaders as actors having responsibility, playing a role in committing bad actions. The bad actions include: to open the door for lust expression and permissiveness, “to drive fractionality and disputes”, “to support colonialism programs”, “to divide Islam into tribalism, nationalism, small nations”, “to integrate the righteousness and the vanity”. JAT represents leaders negatively by technique of epithets. Democratic leaders were labelled by ill-favored epithets. They were: “despotic rulers”, “foul rulers”, “haughty rulers”. JAT also featured leaders with bad qualities: “hypocrite”, “hedonic”, “arrogant”, and “liar”.

Leader’s representation as ”murtād” and “kāfir” become a foundation for JAT to legitimize or sacralize violence, e.g., terrorism. Indonesia became the target of terrorism acts on October 12, 2002 in Bali. The actors were: Amrozi, Imam Samudra / Abdul Aziz, Mukhlas / Ali Ghufron. They were sentenced to death consecutively on 7th July 2003, 10th September 2003, and 2nd October 2003 by Bali high court. And, they were executed in Nusakambangan Island on 9th November 2003. However, JAT legitimized their crimes. They regarded Bali Bomb actors as “muḥādīd (martyr). They refused the execution of death penalty [24]. Instead, JAT represented the Indonesian leaders as wrongdoers because of making decision opposing God’s law. On the contrarily, they regarded Bali bombers as “their Muslim brothers” [24]. On the contrary, JAT supported the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS (Jihadist militant organization in Syria and Iraq) and Jabhah Nusrah. Both of them are radical group in The Middle East. JAT also recognized ISIS as a khilafah and persuaded others to acknowledge it.

The word of ”brother” indicates representation with the honorification technique. It indicates that JAT are appreciative, proud of Bali Bombers. JAT have a sense of empathy, feeling of in-group, solidarity towards Bali Bombers. For JAT, terrorism is not a crime or violence but it is a part of sacred violence. We argue that ideology of “democracy as a religion” is the base for sacralizing violence, including terrorism.

This is in line with JAT method in achieving their goal. Their method is ”Da’wah and jihād”. Da’wah or proselitizing is attempt to improve behavior in order to be in line with Islam. Jihād is persistence in carrying out Islam or holy war. If I cannot do that, they suggested muslim to make i’dād (preparation) for “da’wah” and “jihād” or ”ihīrah” (move to somewhere in order to practice Islam perfectly) [20].

B. Ḥizbāt Taḥrīr Indonesia (HTI)

HTI legitimated Indonesian democratic leader as a consequence of delegitimating the general election. HTI’s view towards democracy is reflected in these articles, posted on their website. Those article titles are: “Demokrasi Sistem Rusak, Menghasilkan Kerusakan (Democracy is a Damaged System, Produces Damage)” (21 April 2014), “Pemilu, Sulap Demokrasi Kelabui Rakyat” (General Election, Magic of Democracy in the Deception of the People) (23 April 2014), “Harapan Semu Demokrasi” (Pseudo Hope of Democracy) (8 Mei 2014), “Selama Menerapkan Demokrasi Kapitalisme Liberal Jokowi JK Tetap Antek Penjajah!” (As long as Applying the liberal-capitalism Democracy, Jokowi-JK remains colonialist stooge!) (29 Oktober 2014), “Ganti Demokrasi Dengan Syariah dan Khilafah Untuk Indonesia Lebih Baik” (Replace Democracy with Sharia and Caliphate for Indonesia Better) (11 November 2014).

There are two perspectives on which HTI’s argument based in repudiating the general election: theology and political-economy. From the theological perspective, HTI views (first) democracy as a ”kufur system”. Hence, all process and elements of democracy are kufur. For HTI, the election contradicts Islam, Allah law. Therefore, democracy is illicit to adopt, practice, and disseminate [25]. HTI did not recognize the islamization of democracy. They regarded democracy as a form of ”shirīq” (polytheism). Democracy makes humans as competitors of Allah because of making rules for human life [26].

In the perspective of political economy, HTI rejects democracy system because the election is an instrument for the rulers and the businessmen, instead of “from, by, and for the people”. Ruler's policies always get influences from the businessmen because they sponsor the rulers in the general election. The policy will always support interests of the political elites and the capital owners. Election is only a tool to turn political investment back and keep in power [27].

In the election, politician distributes money without violating the election rules, instead of fighting for programs. As a result, corruptors keep to arise because of having to return capital and profits. The corruption will be something reasonable and keep to occur. Election is only a tool for interests of the western countries. The interests are secularization and liberalization of the Islamic world, colonialism and efforts to distance muslim from Islam.

The implication and consequence of the general election rejection is the rejection democratic leaders. HTI considers the Indonesia democratic leaders to be “the lackey of invaders”,
and "the corruptions" so that they will not make betterment for Indonesia. They are only imprisoned in neoliberalism which sided with the capitalists rather than the people [28]. According to HTI, the deterioration of Islamic countries results from bad tafâ’ul: The Straight Path, 3rd ed. London: Oxford aqīda with out kāfir murtād”. HTI stands as illustrated above cannot be separated from what they called mbâda as explained by An-Nabhan (founder of Ḥizbut Taḥrīr). Mbâda is “aqīda ‘aqīliyyah”: the foundation of thought which gives birth to the rules of overall life and becomes the ideological bond. It functions as a qiyādah fiqriyyah (intellectual leadership) and qādah fiqriyyah (principles and system of thought). Mbâda determines how individuals interpret reality (e.g., economy, politic, social, culture). Accordingly, mbâda can be named as an ideology, worldview, or weltanschauung (in Germany).

Meanwhile, HTI methods are -tathqīf (Arabic language for formation and improvement of cadres), tajfâ’il ma’a al-ummah (interacting with the umma), istilām al-ḥukmi (power acceptance). Criticism of HTI is the effort to build awareness for formation and improvement of thought (e.g., economy, politic, social, culture). Accordingly, mbâda can be named as an ideology, worldview, or weltanschauung (in Germany).

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