

AL-IKLIL FI MA'ANI AL-TANZIL AND FAMILY PLANNING IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This article discusses tafsir *Al-Iklil Fi Ma'ani Al-Tanzil*, written by K.H. Misbah Mustafa with special reference to the social problem about keluarga berencana/KB (Family Planning). Based on the theory of sociology of knowledge Karl Mannheim, the article finds that Kiai Misbah's interpretation has been influenced by coastal culture and tradition of pesantren where the writer grew. Through tafsir *al-Iklil*, Kiai Misbah refuses the concept of KB based on political as well as theological arguments. Politically, KB is seen as a method of government in reducing the number of Muslim population in Indonesia. Theologically, he anchors his argument on QS. 6: 151 which prohibits us from killing a child. His tafsir is an example of how the Qur'an was used to provide an alternative view over the issue of family planning in modern Indonesia.

Keywords: Al-Qur'an, Tafsir, Pegon, Archipelago, Pesantren

Introduction

Since 19th Century, Kiais (traditional Islamic religious scholar) in pesantrens had written tafsir Al-Qur'an, for example, K.H. Muhammad Salih bin 'Umar al-Samarani (1820-1903 AD) wrote *Faiḍ al-Raḥmān fī Tarjamah Kalam Mālik al-Dayyān*, K.H. Ahmad Sanoesi (1888-1950 AD) wrote *Raudhat al-'Irfān fī ma'rifah al-Qur'ān* with Pegon script and Sundanese language, K.H. Raden Muhammad Adnan (1889-1969 AD) wrote *Tafsir Qur'an Suci Basa Jawi*; K.H. Bisri Mustafa (1915-1977 AD) wrote *Al-Ibriz Lima'rifah Tafsiṁ al-Qur'ān al-'Aziz*; and K.H. Misbah Mustafa (1917-1994 AD) wrote *Al-Iklil fī Ma'ānī al-Tanzil* and *Tāj al-Muslimīn*. These works represent a kind of traditionalist camp of pesantrens. *Al-Iklil fī Ma'ānī al-Tanzil* (furthermore will be mentioned as *Al-Iklil*) written by K.H. Misbah bin Zainul Mustafa (furthermore will be mentioned as Kiai Misbah) is an example of them. Through this tafsir, he demonstrates his comprehension of Al-Qur'an, and relates his tafsir to social, economic, politic, and religious issues including KB.

Method

I deploy Karl Mannheim's perspective on the relation between the existence of the subject, and the practice of interpretation, in which both cannot be separated (Mannheim, t.t). Knowledge is always contextualized and not coming from space. By this frame, I identify that Kiai Misbah's interpretation in his work *Al-Iklil* could not be separated from himself, and his context regarding social, politic, and religious dimension. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus affirms Mannheim's theory of sociology of knowledge. Bourdieu explains that the existence of subject within series of preferences is stimulated for acting and reacting by certain methods (Rusdiarti, 2003: 34; Bourdieu, 1993).

Using the perspectives mentioned above, I focus my analysis first on the grammatical aspect of the discussed text, and second, on psychological aspects of Kiai Misbah's interpretation. In so doing, I try to disclose what has not been said surrounding internal aspects of tafsir (*mā fī al-tafsiṁ*), and external ones (*mā ḥaula al-tafsiṁ*) (Al-Khūlī,

1961: 307-310).

Kiai Misbah was born in 1917 AD from the couple of H. Zainal Mustafa and Chadijah (Huda, 2005: 8) at Sawahan village, Gang Palen, Rembang, in Middle Java. He is the third child from four brothers; Mashadi (then famous by Bisri Mustafa name), Salamah (famous by Aminah name), Misbah and Ma'shum (Huda, 2005: 9, 20). His father was a large-scale merchant and famous as a philanthropist.

The writing of tafsir *Al-Iklil* was begun in 1977. The purpose of writing it is to provide information that can hinder from unintended deed for Indonesian Muslims, as reflected in the title of this tafsir. The meaning of *Al-Iklil* is a crown or something covering the head. This name was used because the author expects that that Al-Qur'an a could be crown and patron for Muslims in their life, accordingly, their life would be respected and safe now and in the judgment day.

The writing of *Al-Iklil* was completed in 1985. The tafsir was published for the first time by Ihsan, a publisher company located in Surabaya. Like similar books, *Al-Iklil* was also reprinted using a cheaper paper to reach the larger audience. Muhammad Nafis informs that Kiai Misbah spent the money he got from this publication for constructing a mosque and pesantren Al-Balagh, Bangilan. Writing technique of *Al-Iklil* written by Pegon script and *gandul* meaning is based on *muṣḥaf* sequence and printed as *juz* in Al-Qur'an, then tafsir *Al-Iklil* consists of 30 volumes.

Discussion

Tafsir *Al-Iklil* was written in the era of New Order regime. Critical voices—in the mass media (Hanazaki, 1998), published book, academic circle (Widjajanto, 2006) music performance, and theater (Sirait, 2005; Irawanto, 1999) and also aspiration in the parlement (Effendi, 1990: 6)—were being gagged based on stabilization of socio-politic. The power of bureaucracy was restrained to submit to higher authority, not to the public. Task and function of the legislative and judicative institution were reduced, to facilitate the executives of the New Order a greater authority in carrying out their policies and programs.

Kiai Misbah demonstrates his understanding in the Qur'an as well as in the context where disputes between the New Order regime and the religious scholars occurred. *Al-Iklil* is a kind of tafsir which refutes some policy of New Order, proposing alternative views extracted from religious perspective.

Program of KB and The History of Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*)

The program of *keluarga berencana* (KB) (Zuhdi, 1993: 54) was launched as the national program by Indonesia government through number 26th of President Instruction in 1968 (Sahly, 1995: 152). Kiai and pesantren were being involved in socialization and its practice. In the context of law, National Conference of Ulama about Demography, Health, and Establishment in 17-30 October 1983 has supported the government's KB program as far as its practice did not oppose syariat of Islam (Depag, 2003: 182-184). In 1974, Lembaga Kemaslahatan Keluarga of Nahdlatul Ulama gave support to KB program (Pedoman Penerangan, 1982: 10-18). The basis principle of KB is such strategy to regulate the birth (*tandīm al-nasl*) not restrict it (*taḥdīd al-nasl*). By this program, hopefully the number of inhabitants could be managed well, economic prosperity and education of society would be more guided.

On the KB program, Kiai Misbah has disputed it clearly in *Al-Iklil* when he explained the meaning of Q.S. al-Qasas [28]: 4 (Mustafa, t.t: v. 20, 3370). This verse talks about the history of Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) being fear because he was predicted by his

wizard that his power would be reduced down by the generation of the Children of Israil (*Bani Israil*). Based on it, Fir'aun took important decision. He enforced Egyptian from Bani Israel to work. The reason for its practice was retarding birth of them. Second, Fir'aun made announcement that every male baby from Bani Israel should be killed. (Mustafa, t.t: v. 20, 3370; Shihab, t.t: 305-307)

By connecting substance of the history above, Kiai Misbah rejected KB program proclaimed by New Order regime. He wrote clearly and directly:

Kang mengkene iki kedadihan diulangi ana ing zaman sak iki. Raja dunya, yaiku Amerika lan Rusia pada usaha ngurangi rikate pertumbuhan penduduk, ana ing kalangan umat Islam lewat Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa nuli lumaku ing negara-negara sak dunya iki, termasuk Indonesia kanthi alasan pangan bakal ora bakal ngukupi, nguwaterake akihe pengangguran lan liyo-liyane. (Mustafa, t.t.v. 20, 3370-71)

There are two concernings from the citation above as a basis for rejecting it. *First*, the political reason. Implicitly, Kiai Misbah has been afraid that KB program socialized by the government massively in the Muslim circle, especially in pesantrens, will impede the development of Muslim inhabitants. He also concluded that KB program was exactly the method to subtract the number of Indonesian Muslim population. If it is the case, the political role of muslim would be limited and not impossible they also would be eliminated and oppressed.

Second, theological reason. According to him, KB program was reason and attitude disparaging God. By referring to Q.S. al-An'ām [6]: 15—the verse talking about prohibition to kill children as God's mercy, because afraid to be poor and could not fulfill their necessary—he described that muslim should not be afraid to the fate of their children, because truly Allah managed their future. Kiai Misbah assures readers that we need not be worried about the increase of the number of population, because God has promised to guarantee all creatures including all human beings (Mustafa, t.t: v. 8, 1184-85)

Kiai Misbah's rejection of the KB program was seen as 'another voice' among the existing voice held by ulamas which supports the success of the KB program's implementation. For the government, Kiai Misbah's opinion was an obstacle. Therefore, the government made several efforts to persuade as well as to suppress him. First, the government convinces Kiai Misbah to be active in Golkar party, the supporting party of the government. By doing this, the government expects that he would change his mind over the issue of family planning. Kiai Misbah was indeed active as a member of Golkar party, but after knowing that he was persuaded to support the Government's KB program, he left the party (Interview with K.H. Muhammad Nafis). Second, the government through Judiciary and Bureau of Research and Development of Ministry of Religious Affairs established a task force, and assigned them to study the views of Kiai Misbah in his work *Al-Iklil*, especially on the issues which were considered potential to impede government program (Interview with M. Syatibi Alhaqiry). Although Kiai Misbah was under pressure from all directions, he consistently did not turn out from his view and his conviction related to KB program.

Conclusion

Tafsir *Al-Iklil* is a local tafsir which was written in Javanese pegon, and written by Kiai Misbah. Technically, the taste of culture and characteristic of pesantren appear within this tafsir, that is the application of Pegon script and model of *makna gandul*. This two techniques become useful tools for reader within understanding the meaning of the text of Al-Qur'an a grammatically and also expressions used.

Kiai Misbah's discussion about KB in his *Al-Iklīl* paradigmatically reflects a contextual awareness in which he was in the oppositional position. In this case, his interpretation does not only refers to the text with all structural problems and with its history of the text. Moreover, in his tafsir, he read the Qur'an by contextualizing it into the existing problems in society regarding social, politic, and religious perspective. In other words, as a kiai of pesantren, he blends his knowledge about the Qur'anic exegesis, and knowledge about the context where he lives, in interpreting the verses of Qur'an.

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