



Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's Thoughts about Pan Islamism: The Struggle between Unity and Diversity in the Islamic World

Muhammadong ^{1*}, Sitti Muthmainnah ², Nurhilaliyah ³, Kharunnisa ⁴, Dalilul Falihin ⁵

¹⁻⁵ Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author: **Muhammadong**

Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 05

Issue: 06

November-December 2024

Received: 28-09-2024

Accepted: 30-10-2024

Page No: 677-680

Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's ideas about Pan Islamism. According to him, Islam must be restored to its glory and free itself from Western slavery as an orientation for progress in various aspects. In the concept of Pan Islamism, the Islamic world must be united, returning the situation to a conducive state to ensure a life of peace. The idea of renewal that was developed was to break away from the shadow of the West which could hinder progress in the Islamic world. The idea of a political movement is the right step to fight against the Western world. The form of unity that is developed can be described in a broader sense. In the understanding of Pan Islamism, Muslims must unite against colonialism by strengthening Islamic teachings to society. The form of unity and diversity developed by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani must return to Islamic teachings as a guide to life and escape from foreign pressure. To catch up with the Western world, don't confuse *Sunnatullah* theology with rational thinking as a gap in finding the weak points of Muslims.

Keywords: Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, Pan Islamism, Unity and Diversity

1. Introduction

The progress of science and technology is a new chapter in the progress of thought achieved by mankind, so that with this progress we can enter all aspects of life in terms of religious thinking. This does not only happen in the Western world as the basis for modernism, but can also spread to the Eastern world, including the Islamic world.

According to Harun Nasution, advances in modern science and technology can penetrate into the Islamic world, especially after the beginning of the 19th century, and are seen by historians as the beginning of the modern period in Islam. The Islamic world's contact with the West brought new ideas to the Islamic world such as rationalism, nationalism, secularism, democracy, but also had a negative impact on socio-political and economic life, even on religious life. Because the West's presence is colonial in nature, it tends to control and even regulate everything, so that many Islamic countries have fallen under its rule. This greatly weakens the foundations of the social life of the Muslim community.

The fall of Egypt into the hands of the West in 1800 AD as well as other Islamic world countries made the Islamic world and its leaders aware of its weaknesses and at the same time opened their eyes to the progress of civilization achieved by the West and the weaknesses of its defenses. This situation encourages leaders and leaders of countries in the Islamic world to improve the quality, strength and defense of the Muslim Ummah in order to regain its glory (John L Esposito, 1990) ^[8].

With the defeat after defeat experienced by Muslims from the West, accompanied by the progress of their civilization, thoughts and movements arose in the Islamic world to adapt Islamic religious ideas to new developments brought about by modern science and technology. Because only in this way do modern Islamic leaders hope to be able to release Muslims from their setbacks and backwardness, and then lead them to progress (Daud Rasyid, 1998) ^[18].

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, as one of the leaders of reform in Islam, was born in Afghanistan in 1897 AD, in his reformist thinking he believed that Islam was suitable for all nations, all times and all circumstances. If there appears to be a conflict between Islamic teachings and conditions brought about by changing times and changes in Islamic teachings as stated in the Al-Quran and Hadith. For this interpretation, *ijtihad* is required and the door to *ijtihad* is wide open for it to be carried out.

The emergence of a thought idea that is considered new and original from a thinker is not something that stands alone without any connection to the environment where the object of thought is addressed. So that an ordinary thought idea arises from an anomaly in a thought, then tries to provide a new paradigm from these thoughts and conditions. (Nurcholis Madjid, 1984) ^[14].

Jamaluddin al-Afghani in looking at the real conditions of society and the Islamic world, which initially achieved glory, then a stagnation of thought occurred, causing Muslims to be in the trauma of defeat after defeat. The Islamic world is under the pressure and power of invaders from the West, which previously was very far from what had been achieved and achieved by Muslims, in fact the Islamic world became the foundation and hope for the outside world.

In such conditions, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani concluded that the decline of Islam was not due to Islamic teachings as was widely suspected and stated by people who were not happy with Islam, so that Islam was considered not in accordance with changing times and new conditions. However, the decline of Islam was caused by the Muslims themselves. Muslims have abandoned the true teachings of Islam and followed teachings that came from outside and were foreign to Islam (Abdul Aziz, *et al*, 1994) ^[12].

According to Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, the true teachings of Islam only remain in speech and on paper and these foreign teachings are brought by people who pretend to be holy, pious, as if they know a lot about Islam. As a result, many people have misleading beliefs and some people create false hadiths of their own making. Likewise, there is a misunderstanding of religious teachings, especially those related to the issue of qadha and qadar, which has been damaged and transformed into a fatalistic ideology which then leads Muslims to a static state and does not provide positive changes in the Islamic world (Abdul Basir Solissa, *et al*, 1993) ^[15].

2. Methodology

This research is included in library research. The method used is analytical descriptive using qualitative analysis. The data collection technique used in this research was carried out by collecting the books or works in question to investigate other people's work on the topic being researched. The data found is processed and analyzed to find accurate data so that it does not reduce the meaning of the intended research, making it easier to find the conclusions studied.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Renewal of Jamaluddin al-Afghani's Thought

In an unfavorable political situation, several Islamic regions collapsed one by one in the face of Western attacks supported by the discovery of the New World. The great trade routes with Eastern Asia were destroyed for the benefit of Western sailors. While the Islamic world faces this reality, it is different from when it was in its heyday, which was close to its original sources and relied on them. Islam at that time, in Jamaluddin al-Afghani's view, was laden with the burden of customs and khurafat that were foreign to Islam, and was symbolized by a movement of denial that led to the decline of the past. There is no doubt that the true and upright values that still exist must continue to be upheld. However, for the Western world it is impossible to see these values clearly with its arrogant and arrogant attitude that is as unwavering as the arrogance of a conqueror and winner. (Fazlur Rahman, 1994) ^[17].

This is what Jamaluddin Al-Afghani sees as something that is misleading and very dangerous for Muslims and the Islamic world, which then encourages Jamaluddin Al-Afghani to defend Islamic teachings and the Islamic world. Jamaluddin Al-Afghani is a Muslim who is fully aware of the dangers of Western domination. Therefore he devoted himself to warning the Islamic world of this danger and seeking thorough methods of defense. By Western colonial powers, he was soon branded as a dangerous agitator as a stern warning to Jamaluddin Al-Afghani about Europe and the Christian world in particular.

According to Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, to be able to successfully restore the glory of Islam to the past and at the same time to face the Modern Age, Muslims must return to being adherents of a purer Islam because the people's understanding and experience of their religion as he witnessed has proven to bring defeat to non-Muslim nations. This is what causes Jamaluddin Al-Afghani to believe that there are misunderstandings and errors in experience in religion, as well as a loss of a purer form of Islamic spirit which is fading and becoming less focused on the weak spirit of rational thinking among Muslims. (Mohammad Hashim Kamali, 1996) ^[11].

Jamaluddin al-Afghani's direction of reform is not only his call for rational and free thinking, but he also knits and builds the strength of the Muslim community through Islamic solidarity to be used as a weapon against the provocation and political agitation of the British government and the Western world in general which will divide Muslims and destroyed the power of Islam. What Jamaluddin Al-Afghani did has contemporary similarities to what Ali Syariaty did in Iran (Gibb, H.A.R, 1983) ^[9].

In his efforts to build Islamic solidarity, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani is considered the most important initiator who had a tendency to change Islam from a religious belief held by Ulama and rulers to a political-religious ideology that emphasized targets that were traditionally considered irreligious. Because he and many people after him saw Islam primarily as a source of solidarity, especially solidarity in the face of invasions and violations by Western governments and in fact this emphasis on anti-imperialist ideology and solidarity has continued to be at the forefront of a number of Islamic and nationalist movements in the Muslim world since the time of Jamaluddin al -Afghani (Alrahman, 1998) ^[3].

3.2. Jamaluddin al-Afghani's thoughts on Pan Islamism

One thing that worries Jamaluddin al-Afghani in his struggle to defend Islam and the Islamic world is his desire to unite Muslims in a place of religious unity with the label of Islamic brotherhood. One of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's efforts to fortify and arm Muslims against Western imperialism and the excesses it causes, as well as to counter political provocations and agitation, especially the British, is to strengthen Islamic solidarity.

Islamic Solidarity, which was built as a forum for uniting Muslims, was later labeled with the name Pan-Islamism, a term put forward by Westerners regarding the thoughts of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani who yearned for the unity of Muslims throughout the world, not Islamic countries as seen in the West morally. with Islam which was then interpreted politically by the West. Because Jamaluddin Al-Afghani himself named the unification of Muslims throughout the world through the power of Islamic solidarity with the term al-Jami'ah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Encyclopedia Editorial

Board, 1994) ^[7].

Apart from the initial issue of the term Pan-Islamism, the clear understanding of the unification of the Islamic world which is the core of Pan-Islamism, has only become clearer and more unequivocal in Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's thoughts. Because the idea of Pan-Islamism is closely related to the condition of Muslims in the nineteenth century AD, which was in its decline, while the Western world was progressing and controlling and colonizing Islamic countries (Kenneth W Morgan, 1986) ^[15].

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani was the first person to fully realize the dangers of Western domination, not only for the socio-economic and political aspects of life in the Islamic world, but also for the development and progress of Islamic teachings and the Islamic world. Jamaluddin Al-Afghani dedicated himself to warning Muslims and the Islamic world about this, as well as trying out the best and most thorough ways to survive. Because of this, the Western colonial powers considered Jamaluddin Al-Afghani to be an agitator who was very dangerous for the survival of his mission and colonies, especially the British people. (Kamdani, 2007) ^[12].

In the mid-nineteenth century, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani saw how Western nations, especially England, were interfering in Islamic countries, especially in his own country, Afghanistan, then in India, Egypt and Iran, as well as in other Islamic worlds. How Islamic countries, especially their rulers, do not realize the dangers of this interference. This is what further strengthens his belief that the Islamic world is becoming a political game for colonialists from the West, especially England and is a serious threat to the Islamic world. This also strengthened his obsession with mobilizing and realizing efforts to unify the Islamic world, which was later called Pan-Islamism.

The political reform suggested by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani has two main elements, namely the unity of the Islamic world and populism. The doctrine of political unity of the Islamic world, known as Pan-Islamism, was advocated by Jamaluddin al-Afghani as the only bulwark against foreign occupation and domination of Islamic countries. The populist doctrine arises both from considerations of its intrinsic justice and from the fact that a constitutional government by the people alone will be strong, stable and a true guarantee against foreign forces and intrigues. (Iqbal, 1978) ^[10].

To mobilize universal unity in the Islamic world as a manifestation of a political ideology based on solidarity and brotherhood, it is necessary to be ready and willing for every Muslim nation to delve into the depths of itself until all of them become strong and powerful to form a family of living republics. A true and living unity is not so easily achieved solely by the existence of one symbolic ruler. God is slowly awakening to the truth that Islam is not nationalism or imperialism, but a league of nations that believes in artificial boundaries and racial differences for ease of reference only, and not to limit the social horizons of its members.

Pan-Islamism developed into a league of nations, which still believed in the existence of artificial boundaries including ideological differences, because of the nationalism of each league, this became something real. Other organizations were formed as a forum for Muslims around the world, which is a sign of the spirit of Pan-Islamism, even though it is still in a preconceived form, and is still looking for a form that is more appropriate to the developments of the times and conditions of the Islamic world.

3.3. Criticism of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's Thoughts

The idea of reform carried out by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, in an effort to revive the spirit of patriotism and the spirit of unity to unite Islam throughout the world, after being in adversity and helplessness in facing western imperialism, is a necessity for a Muslim, to ask himself again about the defeat he has faced. The progress that has been achieved by Muslims and the Islamic world in the classical century and even up to the seventeenth century, both in the advancement of science, civilization, economics and welfare of the people as well as from political aspects is a historical fact, so that at that time the world of the past was able to bring about profound changes. dramatic, and enjoyed by humanity in general.

On the one hand, this is an extraordinary progress that is unmatched in the world. Europe at that time was still in its dark and middle ages. Byzantium was in a state of decline and was destroyed by the Ottoman Empire in 1453 AD, while America had not yet appeared, and Russia had not yet gained popularity. This has led Muslims and Islamic leaders to gradually become fascinated with the progress they have experienced in terms of achievements which do not lead to being more productive but dissolve and become static.

On the other hand, when the high Islamic civilization, through philosophy and science which was translated into Latin in Toledo, Spain, Palermo and Sicily, brought Europe out of the dark ages and entered the era of renaissance and then entered the modern era in the sixteenth century. And then it impacted other countries. Islamic countries and the Islamic world in general, until then the Islamic world was powerless and even reviled. It was only then that Muslims and Islamic leaders were shocked and realized that they could not do anything more.

This raises very basic questions, including for Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, so that he then believes that Islam is not in accordance with current developments, because its noble teachings are a guide for humans who are always in line with the time and era wherever they are. According to Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, the root of the problem lies, so it is necessary to reorganize and re-examine ideas that are considered inappropriate, and even drag people into ignorance and decline.

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's first step in renewing religious understanding was the aspect of the approach used to read religious teachings. That is why he advocates a rational approach and freedom to think. Because with a rational approach with human freedom to think, humans can be freed from the numbness of thinking (M. Arkoun, and Louis Gardet, 1997) ^[4].

What Jamaluddin Al-Afghani initiated with his Pan-Islamism, not only awakened universal Islam, but also aroused local or national enthusiasm in various Islamic countries. Because it leads to Pan-Islamism and nationalism, which can sometimes collide with each other. In addition, the spirit of Pan-Islamism has penetrated strongly into the Islamic world and has been officially incarnated in the ideology of certain countries. The term nationalism has side meanings that differ from one country to another, both essentially and sociologically (Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas, 1981) ^[1].

One country and another must claim the truth of its political ideology which then becomes an idiom of nationalism, and is then claimed as a sovereignty that demands the highest loyalty of each country. Such a concept can form local

extremist attitudes which are actually very contrary to Islamic values. The existence of Pan-Islamism remains a spirit for change and progress in Islam, if the Islamic concept of Unity and Diversity as the basic idea of Pan-Islamism is interpreted as a substance while diversity is interpreted as a manifestation or existence of the problems faced. (Maryam Jamilah, 1997)^[13].

4. Conclusion

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's renewal of Islamic thought was motivated by the real conditions of society and the Islamic world which were marked by downturn and backwardness both in terms of the social life of the community, as well as in the aspect of the life of diversity, which was in times of decline. This happened, in addition to internal problems of the people who had misunderstood the teachings of their religion, as well as external problems caused by colonialism in the Western world, especially England, which was able to conquer Islamic countries.

Based on the real conditions of Muslim society and the Islamic world at that time, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani made arrangements using a rational approach and free thinking, because he saw the teachings which he believed to be the source of truth, and had even been able to lead the people to their past glory. To regenerate the defense strength of the Ummah and the Islamic world, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani initiated the concept of Ummah solidarity which was built on the basis of the unity and unity of the Ummah and the Islamic world, then developed into a unified political ideology, within the framework of unity and diversity, then labeled with Pan-Islamism.

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's idea of renewal with Pan-Islamism as a political ideology was able to inspire Muslims and the Islamic world into unity, and even foster a spirit of nationalism among Islamic communities and countries. As concrete proof that the Islamic world is able to create official institutions whose members are Muslim-populated countries such as the OIC, CIC and other institutions that are considered relevant to the times and needs of the people and the Islamic world to this day.

5. References

1. Al-Attas SM. Islam and Secularism. Translated by Djojosuwarno K, 1st ed. Bandung: Pustaka; c1981.
2. Aziz A, editor. Contemporary Islamic Movements in Indonesia. 3rd ed. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus; c1994.
3. Alrahman, editor. Pioneers of Islamic Revival. Translated by Hasan I, 3rd ed. Bandung: Mizan; c1998.
4. Arkoun M, Gardet L. Al-Islamul-'Amsu wa Islamul-Ghad. Translated by Mohammad A, Islam Yesterday and Tomorrow. Bandung: Pustakan; c1997.
5. Solissa AB, editor. Al-Qur'an and Cultural Development, Dialogue and Transformation. Yogyakarta: LESFI; c1993.
6. al-Jabiri MA. Arab-Islamic Philosophy: A Contemporary Critique. Translated by Ichwan MN, Contemporary Criticism of Arab-Islamic Philosophy. 1st ed. Yogyakarta: Islamika; c2003.
7. Dewan Redaksi Ensiklopedi Islam. Islamic Encyclopedia III. Jakarta: PT. Ichtiar Baru van Houve; c1994.
8. Esposito JL. Islam and Politics. Translated by Sou'yb HMJ, Islam and Politics. 1st ed. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang; c1990.
9. Gibb HAR. Mohammedanism. Translated by Salamah A, Islam in the Historical Trajectory. 4th ed. Jakarta: Bhratara Karya Aksara; c1983.
10. Iqbal. Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. Translated by Raliby O, Rebuilding the Islamic Mindset. 2nd ed. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang; c1978.
11. Kamali MH. Freedom of Expression in Islam. Translated by Nukman EY, Basri F, Freedom of Opinion in Islam. 1st ed. Bandung: Mizan; c1996.
12. Kamdani, editor. Islam and Humanism. 1st ed. Yogyakarta: IAIN Walisongo Semarang; Pustaka Pelajar; c2007.
13. Jamilah M. Islam and Orientalism. Translated by Husein M, Islam and Orientalism. 2nd ed. Jakarta: Rajawali Grafindo Persada; c1997.
14. Madjid N, editor. Islamic Intellectual Treasures. 3rd ed. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang; c1984.
15. Morgan KW. Islam the Straight Path. Translated by Salamah A, Anwar C, Islam Jalan Lurus. 3rd ed. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya; c1986.
16. Nasution H. Renewal in Islam: History and Movement. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang; c1984.
17. Rahman F. Islam. Translated by Muhammad A, Islam. 1st ed. Bandung: Pustaka; c1994.
18. Rasyid D. Islam in Various Dimensions. 1st ed. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press; c1998.
19. Syariati A. What Is To Be Done: The Enlightened Thinkers and Islamic Renaissance. Translated by Astuti R, Building the Future of Islam. 2nd ed. Bandung: Mizan; c1989.