

ULIL ABSHAR ABDALLA'S CRITICISM OF THE CALIPHATE CONCEPT OF HIZBUT TAHRIR IN INDONESIA



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Abstract

The polemic in discussing the concept of the caliphate has always been a never-ending debate. The Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia group is one of the leading forces that continuously promotes the caliphate, a system that some Islamic groups claim is the only solution to the problem of civilization, in which Muslim society is considered the main force in the glorious history of Islam. This qualitative literature study discusses the discourse of thought and criticism of understanding the *Khilāfah a la Hizbut Tahrir* concept. This study shows Ulil Abshar Abdalla's criticism of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's interpretation of leaders who must take conventional actions or allegiance; according to him, matters that are no longer relevant because matters of leadership are not regulated in detail in religion but social laws that apply depending on the conditions of society. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's understanding is a bad idea because it is considered an act of manipulating arguments and claims on things considered wrong. Their concept has a bad influence, triggering a wider internal conflict and the decline of the people, on the other hand. Islam does not want the existence of a state because, basically, Islam only regulates fundamental values in society.

Abstrak

Polemik dalam pembahasan konsep khilāfah selalu menjadi perdebatan yang tiada usainya. Kelompok Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia merupakan salah satu kekuatan utama yang terus-menerus menyuarkan khilāfah, sebuah sistem yang diklaim oleh sebagian kelompok Islam sebagai satu-satunya jalan keluar bagi persoalan peradaban, yang mana masyarakat muslim dianggap sebagai kekuatan utama seperti dalam sejarah kejayaan Islam. Artikel ini merupakan studi kepustakaan yang bersifat kualitatif yang membahas wacana pemikiran sekaligus kritik atas pemahaman konsep Khilāfah ala Hizbut Tahrir. Studi ini menunjukkan kritik Ulil Abshar Abdalla terhadap penafsiran Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia atas pemimpin yang harus melewati tindakan konvensional atau baiat; menurutnya, hal yang tidak lagi relevan sebab urusan kepemimpinan tidak diatur secara detail dalam agama melainkan hukum sosial yang berlaku tergantung kondisi masyarakat. Konsep pemahaman Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia ini merupakan ide yang buruk sebab dianggap sebagai tindakan manipulasi dalil-dalil dan klaim atas hal yang dianggap salah. Hal tersebut memberi pengaruh buruk, memicu konflik internal yang lebih luas, dan kemunduran umat di sisi lain. Islam tidak menghendaki keberadaan sebuah negara karena pada dasarnya Islam hanya mengatur nilai-nilai dasar di tengah masyarakat sosial.

INTRODUCTION

For each Muslim, Islam is a *kaffah* religion. *Kaffah*, in its simplest sense, is comprehensive or includes all things about the rules or guidelines of human life, in the sense that Islam is a religion that provides for the provisions of the rules of life for all humankind. Islam is not only considered a dogmatic religion and the concept alone, which does not stop at the level of thought and ethics but also has contextual involvement, including matters of World interest (Akbar, 2018).

The discussion of leadership in the Islamic world after the death of the Prophet is a complicated issue. There are many versions of views and various matters that give color



to the stage of the origin of the leadership of the caliphate form since the era of Abu Bakr, who held power as Caliph, the result of negotiations in Saqifah Bani Sa'idah after the death of Muhammad.

After that, Umar was entrusted as the second Caliph at the request of Abu Bakr. The leadership of Umar bin Khattab was continued by Uthman bin Affan, who became the third Caliph through determination by people whom Umar had selected before he died. At the same time, Ali ibn Abi Talib was appointed leader—fourth through a selection process whose maintenance consultative was far from perfect. The idea of thinking about the conception of leadership in Islam has strong roots in historical and empirical facts in the name of truth values and the humanist approach conveyed by The Messenger of Allah, then the companions and Khulafa ' ar—Rashidin. This solid foundation is not only a mere boast of the source of the arguments of Revelation (al—Qur'an and Hadith). However, it is recorded as a model of leadership that is recognized in terms of mechanism until its philosophy becomes a role model in the international world today (Yasri, 2014, p. 23).

On the understanding of the above and the arguments derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, some Muslim scholars and Islamic organization was born and tried to give birth to the basic idea of Islamic government, commonly referred to as the caliphate, to create a state order in accordance with what is in the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet, the presence of Thaha Husein, Jamaluddin al—Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Ali Abd Al—Raziq, Hasan al—Bana, al—Maududi, Yusuf al — Qardlawi, Taqiyuddin al Nabhani, and others (Idris, 2020, p. 85).

There are exciting things to reflect on, analyze, and discuss in the current era of the caliphate, where the design of the Islamic caliphate arises on the surface after some of the believers campaigned aggressively and harshly about what it means to be a part of the God kingdom. Certainly, this is influenced by the views of some groups who think that the secular Patriots attempt some defeat as the impact in governing the country.

In Indonesia, the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) always uses caliphate taglines as the main theme. This organization aims to establish a caliphate or a broad Islamic governance system, as they perceive that secular democracy and the existing government conflict with Islamic principles. In 2017, the Indonesian government declared that HTI was incompatible with Pancasila and the country's constitution. Consequently, HTI was banned due to concerns that it could disrupt national stability and social harmony, given its objective of replacing the existing governance system. In 2018, the Constitutional Court rejected HTI's lawsuit to lift the ban. Public opinions in Indonesia vary: some support the ban as a measure to uphold unity and stability, while others worry about potential dissatisfaction and polarization, especially among HTI's supporters (Marfiando, 2020).

This controversy reflects the intricate debate about the relationship between religion, state, and politics in Indonesia's multicultural and multireligious context, emphasizing forcibly to the general public if the establishment of the caliphate is a way out of our problems today. The demand is to be the form of the state wearing the role of the Khilāfah ar—Rashidin base of Islam at the time of the Prophet Muhammad and four companions; on the other hand, the administration should be based on Islamic Shari'a (Ganai, 1991; Siregar, 2018).

Hizbut Tahrir is one of the militant groups that use the caliphate system as the ideals and ideology of the movement. They states that the caliphate as a system of government is a mechanism which is arranged and organized with all the rules and regulations arranged for the preservation of social order that is adapted to the revelation (al—Qur'an and Hadith), as an affirmation that the caliphate was established at the behest and for Allah as its goal (Tahrir, 2009, p. 15).

Ulil Abshar Abdalla, an Indonesian Muslim thinker who was born and raised in the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) environment, is known as one of the national figures who have a track record that is considered to have some displeasure that culminated in criticism for some groups that are considered to have extremist (Budi, 2022). In addition, a movement emerged that was the opponent of HTI, namely the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), which was Ulil's movement with his friends. The emergence of JIL ultimately led to a conflict in the realm of thought and interpretation of the concept with HTI.

The main problem of this research is Uli's criticism of the concept of HTI–style caliphate and its relevance to the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. This research uses a qualitative approach and library research by collecting literature books and studying them. In the process of this research, the author will use information from reading, analysis, and separate collections as necessary material that can be taken from various literature related to the issues studied in this research, including primary books such as "Membakar Rumah Tuhan" (1999), "Menyegarkan Kembali Pemikiran Islam; Bunga Rampai Surat–surat Tersiar" (2007), and "Islam Liberal & Fundamental (Sebuah Pertarungan Wacana)" (2003) written by Ulil Abshar Abdalla. Using these primary book sources, the author will analyze Ulil Abshar Abdalla's views and criticisms of the concept of HTI–style caliphate and its relevance to the context of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia.

Previous research has been conducted by experts, including: Taufani, whose findings indicate that Ulil has a different perspective on the relationship between freedom and Islam compared to the traditional view that tends to perceive freedom as something restrictive. According to Ulil, freedom should not be considered foreign in Islam. He believes that the interpretation of Islamic teachings in Indonesian society is still influenced by a dogmatic approach, where reverence for Islamic texts remains dominant. Ulil suggests a more progressive and contextual interpretation of Islamic teachings to align with the current era. By recontextualizing the interpretations, Islamic teachings can align with the concept of freedom and open up possibilities for individual rights and freedoms in Indonesian society. Overall, this research highlights Ulil's efforts to bridge the gap between Islamic teachings and the concept of freedom, advocating for a more inclusive and adaptive approach that respects Islamic principles and the evolving needs of society (Taufani, 2016).

Another study by Citra Ageng shows that the concept of caliphate in history refers to a form of governance during specific periods, such as the Abu Bakr's Caliphate and the Umar ibn al–Khaṭṭāb's Caliphate, where individuals were entrusted with authority. In this context, the term caliphate can have secondary or broader meanings, referring to Islamic governance or governing institutions. This research examines the perspectives of Taqiyuddin An–Nabhani and Abdurrahman Wahid on caliphate. The research method used is library research, collecting data from the works of Taqiyuddin An–Nabhani and Abdurrahman Wahid. The research findings show that a caliphate is considered Allah's representative tasked with organizing and prospering the lives of humanity. However, there are differing views on caliphate, with some considering it a prophetic leadership position (Ageng, 2020).

Hasanal Muid, in his research, analyzes the ideal state concepts of Sheikh Taqiyuddin al–Nabhani and KH. Abdurrahman Wahid. According to KH. Abdurrahman Wahid, the current Pancasila–based Indonesian state, represents the Islamic state due to Pancasila's inclusion of monotheistic principles and its alignment with Islamic values of diversity. Conversely, Sheikh Taqiyuddin al–Nabhani defines the Islamic state as the caliphate, asserting that only through it can Islam's teachings be fully realized. This paper compares

and critiques these perspectives to uncover fresh insights from their contrasts. Findings reveal ongoing disagreement on the concept of the Islamic state. The topic remains intriguing for further exploration, serving as a reference in political thought.

In conclusion, the research underscores the differing views of Sheikh Taqiyuddin al-Nabhani and KH. Abdurrahman Wahid on the ideal Islamic state. Their opposing viewpoints—KH. Abdurrahman Wahid supports the existing Pancasila-based state, and Sheikh Taqiyuddin al-Nabhani emphasizes the caliphate—highlighting the discourse's complexity on the Islamic state concept. This study enriches our understanding of these diverse ideas and their implications in political thought and practice (Muid et al., 2023).

This article focuses on the concept of the caliphate as a system presented by HTI, which incidentally became a conversation that led to a debate among Islamic groups in Indonesia because of the strong desire to change the system of government and use Islam as the only major source in the system of government, which triggered criticism in the interpretation of the use and understanding of religious arguments of Ulil Abshar Abdalla on the idea with the condition of Indonesia as its relevance in the thinking of Ulil.

CALIPHATE AND HIZBUT TAHRIR IN INDONESIA

The definition of caliphate (*khilāfah*), etymologically and terminologically, refers to the emergence of the term that appears in Islamic history as a designation for political institutions to replace their function in religious and political affairs. The term caliphate has several meanings: representation, succession, or office of the caliph (*khalīfah*). This term comes from the Arabic word "khalīf," which means deputy, successor, and ruler. Some suggest that the word (kh-l-f) in its various forms contains a narrower meaning that is disputed, violating the promise that later gave birth to the words *khilāfah* and *khalīfah* (Munawwir, 1997, pp. 361–363).

Caliphate history, the term used in the system of government, began during the leadership of Abu Bakr and Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭab. In a broader context, the word caliphate has another meaning as a government or Islamic political system. Caliphate has the equivalent of the word Imamah, which means priesthood, leadership, and government (Hasim, 1987, p. 55).

The term caliphate and caliph (leader/head of state) were used in the first appointment process of Abu Bakr when he elected as the leader of the Muslims, and after that, the following three generations were Umar, Uthman, and Ali. Gazed at the condition of the Caliph as the interpretation as a substitute and successors of the Prophet as a political power in pursuing the ideals and *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (unity), not a substitute for the prophetic function (Ma'shum, 2013).

The birth of Hizbut Tahrir was motivated by the observation of Taqiyuddin Al-Nabhani, who saw the Islamic world in an intense severity. The conditions of colonization and intervention from the West were not only the main reason, but the condition of national political thought held by Muslim-majority countries which is not the same as a result of the use of "kufr" system that causes the loss of a sense of unity between Muslims (Azman, 2018).

Since its establishment, Hizbut Tahrir was led by Taqiyuddin Al-Nabhani until his death, on June 20, 1977. Taqiyuddin Al-Nabhani is an influential Palestinian scholar and doctor who graduated from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. He was previously a Supreme Court of Isti'naf, al-Quds, Palestine. After the death of Taqiyuddin Al-Nabhani, Hizbut Tahrir was led by Abdul Qadim Zalum until he died in 2003. Currently,

the leadership of Hizb ut – Tahrir is replaced by Shaykh Atha' Abu Rastah internationally (Turmudzi & Riza, 2006).

The entry of Hizbut Tahrir into Indonesia in 1982 – 1983 is known through several people, among others: M. Mustofa (as a spokesman for HTI) and Abdurrahman Al – Baghdadi, who today they are known as the leading promoters of the Daulah Islamiyah ideological movement in Indonesia. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) is part of the Hizbut Tahrir (HT) Network, a political party as well as an Islamic movement that moves internationally in more than 40 countries (Azman, 2018).

After its dissolution and ban in Indonesia on July 19, 2017, HTI faced challenges maintaining its existence. Despite the government revoking HTI's legal entity status and prohibiting its activities, the organization maintained influence and networks among its sympathizers and members. Although no longer able to operate openly and officially, HTI could continue its activities on a more limited scale, possibly more covertly. Some HTI members, cadres, and sympathizers might continue to maintain connections and communicate, as well as promote their views through social media, discussion groups, or other less visible activities to evade government scrutiny. However, after the formal dissolution and ban, HTI may have experienced a decline in impact and appeal to the broader society. The government might continue to monitor activities related to HTI and take legal measures if there are indications of ongoing violations. In this context, HTI's existence post – dissolution became more restricted and challenging. While their efforts to remain relevant and uphold their political vision might persist, their effectiveness could diminish due to the restrictions and surveillance imposed by the government (Zulfadli, 2018).

The view of Hizbut Tahrir lies in spiritual beliefs (aqidah ruhiyah) and political ideology (aqidah siyasiyah). In the end, ideals make Islam a new force with the spirit "The establishment of the Islamic Caliphate" unites all nations under the name of Islam with a transnational system.

PRINCIPLES AND EVIDENCE OF HIZBUT TAHRIR'S CALIPHATE

The principle of the caliphate, in the thought of Taqiyuddin An – Nabhani as the forerunner of the emergence of the Hizbut Tahrir group movement. It explains: "The caliphate is the general leadership for all Muslims in the world to enforce Islamic Sharia laws and carry out Islamic Da'wah throughout the world."

To understand more deeply about the caliphate, there are three points: first, if the caliphate is a series of systems for Muslims worldwide, the caliphate is not an extraordinary leadership (ri'asah khashkhash), a kind of leadership of a wali (governor) in an area (region), or a kind of special leadership in special aspects, for example the position of a Qadhi Qudhat has the power to regulate in terms of Islamic justice. Caliphate is part of the political equipment that intends to gather followers of Islam all over the Earth, not limited by the boundaries of such a state that exists today (An Nabhani, 2003, p. 14).

There are arguments for the Caliphate, the lift the caliphate there are four, namely the Qur'an, As Sunnah, Ijma Shahabat, and Qaidah Syar'iyah, among others: "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey His Messenger, and The Righteous Among you." (QS An – Nisa': 59)

"Whosoever gives a helping hand to a priest and his children, let him obey. When someone else wants to take over his power, then cut off his neck." (H.R. Muslim).

"Whosoever cometh to you while a caliph is in charge of your affairs, and then seeks to divide the community, then fight him." (H.R. Muslim).

The pioneer of Hizbut Tahrir, Taqqiyudin An – Nabhani, used the above arguments as the basis for the principle of the necessity of the establishment of the caliphate (politics)

as a single system and also as a form of firmness on the importance of appointing a leader, and required that a leader there should only be one leader. The conception of inheritance in Islam does not know about group leadership (An Nabhani, 2003, p. 126).

FORM, STRUCTURE, AND LEGAL BASIS OF HIZBUT TAHRIR'S CALIPHATE

The method of State Administration of the caliphate can be categorized as a centralized administration; the supreme power should only be held by the center and does not allow the separation of powers equal to the authority Center to avoid division and unity as ideals.

The concept of caliphate brought by Hizbut Tahrir is a new caliphate ideology that is different from the caliphate during the Khulafa ar – Rashidin and post – Khulafa ar – Rashidin. Some parts resemble the caliphate at the time of Khulafa ar – Rashidin, others: (a) Caliph; (b) *Wizarah*; (c) *Qadhi*; (d) *Amir Jihad* (warlord); (e) *Amir Imarah* (Governor); (f) In the Country; (g) The Industry; (h) General Interest; (i) Information. The caliphate system of government is unitary, for one state, not a union or federation system. Muslims throughout the world are not allowed to have more than one Islamic State (Tahrir, 2000, p. 76).

In HTI – style, Islamic State also will never tolerate the occurrence of separation of one of the regions so that these regions will not be separated just like that. The state will appoint commanders, guardians, commanders – in – chief, officials, and persons responsible for property and Economic Affairs. The state will also appoint law enforcers in each region. The state also appoints the person in charge as an official (judge). The state has a significant need of devices built for welfare (An Nabhani, 1996, p. 33).

The description above, makes it very clear that the structure of government built by the caliphate version of HTI differs from the structure of the Republic. However, it must be admitted that there are some similarities in terms of mention, but in reality, there are differences in responsibility. Because someone who has ascribed the mandate must indirectly follow the rules and all forms of implementation guided by revelation, if it is indicated that there is a violation committed, the reward obtained can be disbelief (Rodhi, 2012, p. 501).

ULIL ABSHAR ABDALLA'S CRITIQUE ON HIZBUT TAHRIR INDONESIA'S CALIPHATE CONCEPT

Ulil, a young Islamic thinker incorporated in the Islamic Community Utan Kayu (KIUK) which gave birth to The Liberal Islamic Network (JIL), abstractly adopts the ideas of free Islam and divides it into all circles through their networks. Also known as alumni of the Faculty of Shariah LIPIA (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab) Jakarta (Abdalla, 1999, p. 57). Now working as researcher and chairman Lakpesdam (Resource Research and Development Board Human Power) Nahdlatul Ulama, Jakarta (Budi, 2022).

His controversial journey of Islamic thought in Indonesia was marked by the writing of his ideas entitled Refreshing the Understanding of Islam, published in Kompas on November 18, 2002. His idea of Islam was widely criticized, and it was also highlighted in various discussion forums in his time to cause mixed reactions, especially on the right axis (HTI). On the occasion of the discussion, Ulil confirmed that he is not anti – Islamic Sharia, he is not anti – Muslim, but he is anti – understanding the Shari'a brought by people like that HT.

"I do not have time to explain why the caliphate is a nightmare that must be prevented so that it does not happen now. If a friend wants to discuss something, I'll be happy to share it. Bottom line: the caliphate system as a form is no different from the imperial system of

kingdoms that existed in other countries of the era (Persia, Rome, China, Mongol, and so on)." (Abdalla, 2007, p. 143).

Ulil offers a perspective on the caliphate concept characterized by skepticism about its practicality, distancing from certain interpretations, and a willingness to engage in open dialogue within the Islamic community. Ulil's criticism of the caliphate centers on its potential undesired outcomes, comparing it to historical imperial systems while rejecting specific interpretations like those of groups such as HTI. His approach showcases a commitment to discussing diverse viewpoints and fostering constructive debates, contributing to broader discussions on the role of Sharia in modern Islamic thought.

THE UTOPIAN LEADER

Many manipulations carried out by the HTI group are related to the arguments for the existence of a caliphate system. Mostly, the evidence of naqli (Hadith) that they use shows their relationship to the support of the caliphate. They often use references to the classical books on fiqh siyasah, as in the book *Al-Ahkam Al-Sulthaniyyah*, which explains or directs the obligation to appoint an imam. Ulil insists in his criticism: "With the usual common sense, in fact, it can be read simply. Indeed, the existence of a "imam/khalifa/Amir", ruler, or government is a basic requirement for the order of a society."

Siddik al-Jawi, who acted as one of the HTI officials, rejected the equalization of the structure or government of the caliphate during the dynasties that collapsed with the concept of the caliphate brought by the Hizbut Tahrir. He disagrees with the comparison between the ideals of the caliphate, that utopia is considered an ideal form and must be proven with the state system that has been established. It is considered as an equivalence between ideals and historical facts.

Ulil responded to this as dreams that are irrelevant to the conditions of existing reality. It can be seen how the West has stood with governments such as America with its democracy that has been running for about 200 years, then Britain with its monarchical system of government, and so on. This criticism continues on the assumption that the Group Hizbut Tahrir is a utopian dreamer who is too ambitious to establish a government or state based on the caliphate (Abdalla, 2007, p. 143).

Islam conceptually does not have an existing theory and can be used as the main reference in the organization of a state. The reality encountered is the emergence of the opinions of scholars who developed on this matter. Historical facts about the mechanism of the caliphate do not speak of the form of unity in the system of the caliphate. The opinion of scholars about this system also continues to evolve today. HT groups that often equate the caliphate or form of state with prayer, zakat, and Hajj have detailed rules in Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet, while different from the caliphate, which is not the same as that. If the caliphate is the teachings and doctrines of Islam, criticism of Ulil;

"How could the Prophet die without leaving a message and instructions on choosing an imam so that eventually friends were involved in a dispute and the Prophet's body was abandoned and not buried for three days. In fact, according to Hadith, the body of a Muslim must be quickly buried." With that, equate the doctrine of the caliphate if there is a so-called thing that with salat and zakat is, in the context of usul Islamic jurisprudence, *qiyaḍs Ma'a al-fariq*, an analogy that unfair." (Abdalla, 2007, p. 146).

Ulil said three things about the caliphate. According to him, it is a political caliphate, a caliphate of faith, and a spiritual caliphate. But in Islam, the ruling is a political caliphate or the so-called caliphate/*khilāfah siyāsah* (Hadi, 2022).

Zainal Abidin has an interesting opinion that certainly reflects the political situation of his time. In the book *Islam and Parliamentarianism* (1956), he asserts that the principle

of Shura taught by Islam can be translated into the form of parliamentary democracy, such as what happened in Indonesia in the 1950s. In other words, the system of parliamentary democracy is the Quranic and Islamic system (Maarif, 1985, pp. 133–136).

Buya Syafii Maarif believes that it rejects attempts to establish an Islamic state and implement Sharia law through unconstitutional and undemocratic means. He criticizes individuals who promote this discourse. Aside from theological and historical reasons, he argues that this discourse will not yield any benefits. In his perspective, Islam is already adequately recognized as the ethical foundation for a nation (Asroni, 2011).

According to Quraish Shihab's interpretation of the concept of Khalifah, as seen in Surah Al – Baqarah, verse 30, it is understood as the representative of Allah. Although the word "khalifah" is translated as "successor," in this context, "khalifah of Allah" cannot be interpreted as a successor to Allah, as there is no successor to Allah. The intended meaning here is someone whom Allah appoints to carry out tasks on Earth. In interpreting Surah Al – Baqarah, verse 30, Quraish Shihab suggests that the term "*khalifah*" originally meant someone who takes the place of or comes after someone else. Based on this, some understand "khalifah" in this context as referring to those who represent Allah in enforcing His will and implementing His decrees, not because Allah is incapable or intends to elevate humans to the status of God, but rather as a means for testing humanity and granting them honor. Others interpret it to mean those replacing other creatures inhabiting the Earth. Meanwhile, in Surah Sad, verse 26, the term "*khalifah*" is understood as a successor because, at that time, Prophet Daud was appointed as a successor to replace the previous ruler (Aini, 2020).

Ulil argues that the caliphate system is a historical coincidence. That is, by accident, that at the time. Hizbut Tahrir, who fiercely defends the caliphate system as a religious imperative, is the same as those who argue that a leader must come from the Quraysh tribe (the tribe from which the Prophet came). Quraysh (the tribe from which the Prophet came). Based on the well – known hadith "*al-a'immatu min quraisy*," (the leader is to be taken from the tribe of Quraysh). Ulil firmly said; "Of course, this hadith is conditional and cannot be maintained today, unless we want to make a mockery of history..." (Abdalla, 2007, p. 141).

Ulil's understanding of the caliphate system model led him to the thoughts of an intellectual and writer from the West Sumatra – born Masyumi party group, Zainal Abidin Ahmad, who also enlivened thoughts about the Islamic political system. Zainal Abidin has an interesting opinion that certainly reflects the political situation of his time. In his book "Islam and parliamentarianism" (1956), he asserted that the principle of Shura taught by Islam could be translated into parliamentary democracy, as in Indonesia in the 1950s. In other words, the system of parliamentary democracy is based on the Quranic and Islamic principles.

The analysis of Ulil Abshar Abdalla's critique of HTI is not yet fully apparent. The writer's analysis of the criticism previously conveyed by Ulil may involve several aspects. First, Ulil Abshar Abdalla may criticize HTI's concept of caliphate because he perceives HTI's view on caliphate as dogmatic and lacking openness to contextual interpretations that align with the realities of society and the present time. Ulil Abshar Abdalla tends to adopt a more progressive and contextual approach to understanding Islam and political systems.

Second, Ulil's critique might also be directed towards rejecting HTI's approach that demands the immediate and radical establishment of an Islamic state based on caliphate. Ulil Abshar Abdalla might lean towards an evolutionary approach that values democratic processes and gradual changes in achieving political and religious goals.

Additionally, in critiquing HTI, Ulil might highlight issues such as pluralism, freedom of religion, and human rights that could be influenced or neglected in HTI's concept of caliphate. Ulil may view that HTI's approach in advocating caliphate should pay more attention to the context of diversity and individual freedom in a democratic society. This analysis needs to be supported by references from more in-depth written sources on Ulil's thoughts and his critique of HTI's concept of caliphate. Thus, the understanding and analysis of Ulil's critique of HTI can become more comprehensive and objective.

CONCLUSION

Ulil presents an overview of various aspects related to the concept of the Khilafah and its interpretation, particularly within the context HTI, and the critique Ulil offers. The text emphasizes the complexity of this topic, including historical, ideological, and contemporary perspectives. The introductory section establishes the comprehensive nature of Islam and its role in providing guidelines for human life. It also sets the stage for the discussion of leadership in the Islamic world after the Prophet's death, leading to different views and interpretations about the concept of the caliphate. The text highlights the historical development of HTI, its origins, and its principles regarding establishing a global Islamic Caliphate. It delves into HTI's structure, ideological basis, and arguments for the caliphate system based on religious sources.

The presence of Ulil Abshar Abdalla in enlivening Islamic discourse in Indonesia is motivated by anxiety over the emergence of religious radicalism in the reform era, where one of the causes is the strong tendency of "text worship" in Muslims. As a result, Islam's teachings that emphasize freedom become neglected because the concentration of Muslims is more spent on "worshiping the text".

For Ulil, freedom is inherent in the teachings of Islam because it has a theological and historical foundation. To deconstruct the trend of text worship, a contextualization process of interpretation is needed that is in line with the real development of humanity. For this reason, the position of man is time to be placed on a par with the text because the teachings of Islam are very optimistic and appreciative of the glorification of man. With the potential of human reason as a differentiator between himself and other creatures, man should be actively involved in capturing the ethical vision of the Qur'an and putting it back into practice dialogue with more complex and ever-changing realities of life.

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