


# LIBERATION THEOLOGY OF LEFTIST ISLAM IN THE THOUGHT OF HASSAN HANAFI AND ITS CONTEXTUALIZATION



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## Abstract

Theology is one of the critical factors for the survival of Muslims. However, with the shift in all aspects included in the lives of Muslims, theology cannot adjust or even solve all the problems occurring in the body of Islam. This research aimed at discussing and studying the theology of Leftist Islam in the thought of Hassan Hanafi to obtain its authenticity. The method used in this study was the historical–philosophical method. This historical method is to describe the history and development of Islamic theology. In comparison, the philosophical method examines a character's thoughts and analyzes the thoughts being studied. The results of this study explained that Leftist Islam is an idea, concept, and new theology initiated by Hassan Hanafi in response to the challenges of the West. In the Leftist Islam, Hassan Hanafi has three crucial elements, namely revitalizing the classical scientific tradition, opposing Western civilization, and analyzing the reality of Muslims.

## Abstrak

Teologi merupakan salah satu faktor penting bagi kelangsungan hidup umat Islam. Namun dengan adanya pergeseran seluruh aspek yang termasuk dalam kehidupan umat Islam, teologi tidak dapat menyesuaikan atau bahkan menyelesaikan seluruh permasalahan yang terjadi dalam tubuh Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membahas dan mengkaji teologi Kiri Islam dalam pemikiran Hassan Hanafi untuk mendapatkan otentisitasnya. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode historis-filosofis. Metode historis untuk menggambarkan sejarah dan perkembangan teologi Islam. Sebagai perbandingan, metode filosofis mengkaji pemikiran tokoh dan menganalisis pemikiran yang dipelajari. Hasil penelitian ini menjelaskan bahwa Kiri Islam merupakan sebuah ide, konsep, dan teologi baru yang digagas Hassan Hanafi sebagai jawaban terhadap tantangan Barat. Dalam Kiri Islam, Hassan Hanafi memiliki tiga unsur krusial, yakni merevitalisasi tradisi keilmuan klasik, menentang peradaban Barat, dan menganalisis realitas umat Islam.

## INTRODUCTION

In its early appearance, Islam was a liberating religion. Islam firmly opposes oppression, discrimination, and exploitation as its character (Riadi, 2012). It was recorded in the history of Islamic civilization when Rasulullah SAW led Muslims and liberated oppressed people such as enslaved people, women, and poor people (Prasetyo, 2004). Furthermore, Islam has become a moral, spiritual, political, and economic movement. In this case, Islam seeks to deconstruct an oppressive social structure and replace it with a fair and prosperous social system. A concrete example of the above is that Islam can live side by side with two powers, namely Roman and Byzantine powers (Faqih, 2002). Currently, Islam has lost its spirit of liberation due to the influence of internal and external factors. Internal factors include various theological sects that only tend to theocentric issues and ignore human problems so that Islam becomes passive towards all social problems, and its adherents always surrender to the problems they face (Ulya, 2017).



Meanwhile, the external factors include colonialism by the West on Islamic countries (Yusdani, 2002). Besides, the 20th century was a human civilization filled with the impact of various advances in the West (Ridwan, 1998). As the impact, the information is quickly obtained by humans to the rural area, so there are many changes and shifts in all fields. These changes include economic, political, social, tradition, philosophy, and religion. The shift caused by the progress of the West has influenced human consciousness and minds, especially among Muslims (Hanif, 2015). In a socio-political context, the West often triumphed and became more decisive yearly. This is illustrated by the movements of communism, socialism, liberalism, and nationalism. However, some Islamic revolutionary thinkers such as Mohammad Arkoen, Al-Jabiri, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Jamal al-Banna view that the progression of the West has inflicted various setbacks in Islamic and developing countries. This can be seen through the movements of imperialism and colonialism (Zamzami, 2015).

Hassan Hanafi views that Western imperialism is the most fundamental problem that Muslims must resolve (Shimogaki, 2012). Based on this problem, Hassan Hanafi also believes that the theology adopted by Muslims today does not lead to concrete and factual things. Still, it refers to soar things, religious rites, and a form of unconsciousness of life. This is a consequence of the Western culture that pervades Muslims so that they face backwardness, oppression, injustice, and so on (Hanafi, 2015b). Thus, Hassan Hanafi offers a new theology that makes human liberation the basis of Islamic theology. It is based on the problems Muslims have faced and is a basis for solving social problems today. The theology is Leftist Theology. The main problem in this research is the Leftist Islam theology in Hassan Hanafi's thought. The formulation of the problem in this study is how the Leftist Islam theology is discussed in Hassan Hanafi's thought. The purpose of this study is to examine, comprehend, and explain in detail concerning the Leftist Islam theology in Hassan Hanafi's thought. Then, the result of this research is expected to give some benefits, contributions, and insights into the scope of Islamic science, both in theoretical and practical applications.

Many researchers have conducted previous studies regarding the analysis of Hassan Hanafi's thoughts. One is research by M. Rodinal Khair Khasri (2019), in which the results of this study were listed in Hanafi's thinking strategy regarding the problems faced by Muslims, which included two problems. Firstly, the loss of human values in education was caused by Western traditions. Secondly, Hassan Hanafi's thinking strategy was centered on raising awareness among Muslims for their existence of many human problems on this earth. This research was a literature study with a historical-factual approach.

In addition, Rohmatun Nafi'ah (2020) also showed that Leftist Islam was the idea of Hassan Hanafi, who called out to fight against the colonialists. The backwardness experienced by Muslims was the main problem in Hassan Hanafi's thought. It became the basis for initiating Leftist Islam to raise the spirit of Muslims to liberate oppressed people, uphold justice, and unite Muslims. This idea was related to the violent phenomenon faced by Muslims in the Uighur region of China. Verily, some rules restricted Muslims in the Uighur from disseminating their religious teachings. The method used in this research was the library method with a descriptive analysis approach.

Furthermore, Nurul Chotimah and Maulana Masudi (2015) found the explanations of Hassan Hanafi's thoughts, which were divided into six parts. First, the idea of the Leftist Islam focuses on upholding justice and eliminating various forms of oppression faced by poor people. Apart from that, the Leftist Islam also became the foundation in fighting for equality between people. Second, Occidentalism is a scientific study conducted by Islamic scientists related to Western civilization, including all its strengths and weaknesses. Third,

tauhid (monotheism) should be seen as a solid foundation for applying Islamic teachings in life that is incorporated into the Islamic relational network. Fourth, revitalizing classical science is the most important thing for Muslims to do. This refers to the knowledge of rationalism pioneered by Al – Kindi and Ibn Rushd. Fifth, hermeneutics is a method used by Hassan Hanafi to reinterpret Islamic theological teachings. Sixth, anthropocentrism explains humans as the most important thing in human life, both its problems and social relations. The similarity between this research and the previous one lies in the character appointed, namely Hassan Hanafi. The difference is that this research only examines the Leftist Islam initiated by Hassan Hanafi.

The left and the right could never be separated from the tradition of Islamic thought. Following Hassan Hanafi, as explained by Shimogaki, the left seems to have relocated rationalism, naturalism, liberalism, and democracy to the realm of Islamic intellectuals. Therefore, the left and the right exist at social, political, economic, and historical levels. For Hassan Hanafi, the recognition of the term "left" and people who are categorized as "leftist" is the core of efforts to eradicate the remnants of imperialism (Ulya, 2017). The Leftist Islam is conceptualized as a theology that tends explicitly to people who are weak, oppressed, and lack justice in their lives. Moreover, the Leftist Islam is a follow – up project from Al – Urwah Al – Wutsqo pioneered by Al – Afghani, which is to against colonialists and all forms of violence faced by Muslims. Therefore, the Leftist Islam seeks to accomplish Al – Afghani's journey of raising the spirit of Islam. Then, the Leftist Islam became a solid foundation for disclosing all Muslims' socio – political phenomena and tendencies (Hanafi, 2010).

The method used in this study was the historical – philosophical method. This historical method is to describe the history and development of Islamic theology. In comparison, the philosophical method examines a character's thoughts and analyzes the thoughts being studied (Herdiansyah, 2010). The type of research was qualitative research with a literature approach that aimed to collect various data. The data sources in this study were primary data in the form of various writings written by Hassan Hanafi, namely Al – Yasar Al – Islami, Dialogue of Religion and Revolution, From Aqidah to Revolution, Philosophical Studies 1, and Philosophical Studies 2. Meanwhile, the secondary data was in the form of supporting data related to research objects such as books, journals, documents, and so on (Sugiyono, 2016). The technique of data collection in this research was library research. Then, interpretation, description, and analysis were used as the techniques for analyzing the data in this study (Yusuf, 2017).

## **SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF HASSAN HANAFI**

Hassan Hanafi was born into a family of musicians on February 13th, 1935, in Al – Azhar village, Cairo. Hassan Hanafi has been dealing with violent affairs committed by colonialists since he was a child. This matter raises Hassan Hanafi's spirit of nationalism, so it is not surprising that in 1948 when he was 13 years old, he enrolled as a volunteer for a Muslim youth group during the war with Israel. However, his persistence was rejected by Muslim youths for two reasons. First, he was still very young. Second, Hassan Hanafi was not from that group. Then, Hassan Hanafi also saw how British soldiers killed Islamic fighters in the Suez Canal when he was still studying at school (Baharun et al., 2019).

In 1948, he completed his primary education and graduated from Tsanawiya Khali Akha Madrasa, Cairo, in 1952, as the continuation of his study. During his education, Hassan Hanafi tried to develop his thoughts by familiarizing himself with several discussion forums and social activities. In this regard, he focused on religious thought and

social change. Hence, Hassan learned a lot about Sayyid Qutb's thoughts to extend his thoughts on social justice and Islam (Sholeh, 2014). In 1967, Hassan Hanafi began his career as a lecturer; then, in 1973, he was appointed as head lecturer, followed by gaining the title of professor of philosophy in the Philosophy Department of Cairo University in 1980, where he was then given the position of head of the Philosophy Department at the university. During his life, Hassan Hanafi has been a guest lecturer in various countries.

Hassan Hanafi was a professor of philosophy at Cairo University. Historically and traditionally, Egypt has been a city influenced by various massive civilizations such as the Pharaoh, Byzantine, Arab, Turkish, Mamluk, etc. It illustrates that Egypt, especially Cairo, has an essential meaning in shaping Hassan Hanafi's thoughts (Aisyah, 2011). Hassan Hanafi has contributed his thoughts to the Islamic scientific tradition as an intellectual. These thoughts were influenced by the violent phenomenon faced by Muslims and traditional theology, which did not defend the oppressed Muslims. Emphatically, Hassan Hanafi firmly stated that apart from being a religion, Islam can also be the basis of change (Syarifuddin, 2012).

Hassan Hanafi offered a new concept in Islamic theology that aims to make Islamic theology not only teaches about empty or worthless things, yet leads Muslims to be aware of their reality and incarnate as the basis of social struggle (Santalia, 2011). For him, Muslims have embraced the traditional theology that only tends to metaphysical matters. So, in traditional theology, all exclusive interpretations of the Qur'an are claimed to be true (Hidayat, 2004). Thus, Hassan Hanafi's ideas related to theology seek to change traditional theology, which only tends to have metaphysical values towards human values. It is based on two reasons; first, the need for a new theology that can compensate for the progression of the era, and second, the importance of theology, which is not only theoretical but that is the basis for actualizing a movement in the history of human civilization (Saleh, 2014).

Based on the two reasons above, Hassan Hanafi proposed two theories. The first is the analysis of language, in which theology is defined as the legacy of previous ancestors, which has become a doctrine so that many suppose the truth cannot be doubted. Hassan Hanafi assumed that the term theology is not only inclined to unseen things but also opens up the characteristics of scientific epistemology, such as empirical, rational, and so on. Faith, good deeds, and fair behaviour can illustrate this. The second is the analysis of reality. For Hassan Hanafi, this analysis is used to examine the history and social conditions for the inception of theology and its influence on people. Then, this analysis is helpful for shaping a new theological concept that aims to be a theology that can solve all the problems Muslims face (Hanafi, 1991a).

In applying his thoughts, Hassan Hanafi used three methods, namely dialectics, phenomenology, and hermeneutics. As a method, dialectics is used to trace historical developments that occur through confrontation consisting of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. A thesis is an initial statement or idea proposed as a particular view or position, an antithesis is a statement or idea that contradicts the thesis, whereas the synthesis results from a contradiction between the thesis and the antithesis. Furthermore, Hassan Hanafi used this dialectical method to explain various problems in the history of the Islamic scientific tradition, especially in the field of theology. As a matter of fact, Hassan Hanafi strongly criticized the dialectical method used by Marx. He argued that Marx failed to encourage people, in which this failure can be seen from the inception of totalitarianism (Ridwan, 1998).

In this case, Hassan Hanafi did not follow what Hegel and Marx did, but Hassan Hanafi used this method based on Islamic scientific traditions and social conditions at

that time. Later, the phenomenological method was used by Hassan Hanafi to trace the core of phenomena that occurred at the time. In addition, in using a phenomenological method, Hassan Hanafi tried to comprehend, study, and analyze the entire political, economic, social realities, Islamic scientific traditions, and Western challenges that occurred in Egypt so that it was easy to shape a revolutionary movement. By this method, Hassan Hanafi insisted that Islam should be seen from the perspective of Islam itself rather than from the West (Helmi, 2019). Then the last method Hassan Hanafi used was hermeneutics to explain his ideas about anthropocentric theology. Hassan Hanafi argued that hermeneutics is not only used as a science of interpretation, but it is a science talking about all desires of God for mankind in this world (Hanafi, 1991b).

## **HASSAN HANAFI'S NEW THEOLOGICAL OFFER IN SOLVING SOCIAL ISSUES**

Muslims have known the term Left in Islam since the appearance of a journal written by Hassan Hanafi in 1981 entitled *al-Yasar al-Islami*. In the journal, Hassan Hanafi affirmed that the Leftist Islam is a movement that defends the poor, oppressed, and weak. (Hanafi, 1981). The inception of the Leftist Islam is a gift in the tradition of Islamic science because it is a response to all the suffering that Muslims have experienced. Furthermore, the dichotomous difference between the West and the East is a factor in the inception of the Leftist Islam. Hassan Hanafi presumed that the West is an entity that is always associated with colonialism. Thus, Hassan Hanafi affirmed that the task of the Leftist Islam was to curb and restore Western civilization as its former self (Yusdani, 2002).

Generally speaking, the Leftist Islam initiated by Hassan Hanafi is based on three elements: the resurrection of Islam, the change in understanding of tauhid (monotheism), and the unity of the Muslims. Those three policies can be realized in detail; first, regarding the revitalization of the scientific tradition, Hassan Hanafi explicitly said the importance of rationalism is to renew the classical scientific tradition because rationalism is an attempt to make Muslims aware of all the problems that are being experienced and to realize the welfare of Muslims. Second is the importance of opposing attitudes towards the West. Hassan Hanafi has warned Muslims of the dangers of Western culture, which focuses on eliminating the original cultures in Islamic countries. The third is analyzing the reality of Islam. This effort is needed to criticize the method of interpretation of the sources of Islamic teachings. Hassan Hanafi proposes a new method of interpreting a source because it encourages Muslims to view their religion from the Islamic rather than the Western perspective. (Yusdani, 2002). The three elements constructed by Hassan Hanafi can be understood in detail as follows:

### **1. Revitalizing the Tradition of Classical Islamic Sciences**

According to Hassan Hanafi, revitalizing is a behaviour that can make classical science a valued history. One of the classical sciences is Islamic theology. He affirms that the thoughts in Islamic theology tend to be theocentric, empty concepts, and elitist. Hassan Hanafi aspires to an anthropocentric, transformative, and practical theology. (Hadirois & Ediyono, 2015). Hassan Hanafi has taken three steps: deconstruction, reconstruction, and integration. First, the deconstruction by Hassan Hanafi aims to explain the essence, methodology, and social and historical realities that are the foundation for the inception of traditional theology and its development. Moreover, the deconstruction aims to see the advantages and shortcomings of traditional theology as well as its function in this era. Second, the reconstruction was taken to unlock old theories that some people still preserved and then renewed into new theories based on the conditions of the times.

Later, the new theory was embodied as a framework for Muslims who tend to humanitarian issues.

The third is integration. It is a step of integrating traditional science and theory. Hassan Hanafi argued that the integration is to transform some fields of science in Islam into research methodologies or other sciences that are wider and universally applicable. Among them are; (a) Ushul Fiqh becomes Research Methodology. (b) Fiqh becomes Political Science, Economics, and Law. (c) Tasawuf (Sufism) becomes Psychology and Ethics. (d) Hadith becomes Historical Criticism. (e) Islamic theology with its concepts like Imamah, Naql – Aql, Khalq al – Af'al, and Tauhid successively becomes Political Sciences, Research Methodology, Social Psychology, and Sociology of Knowledge. By carrying out such transformations, Hassan Hanafi wanted to show that the various disciplines of Islam can be integrated into the broader modern sciences and apply universally as well as become a foundation for people who prioritize humanitarian issues (Hanafi, 1992).

According to Hassan Hanafi, tradition can be seen at various levels. First, it can be found in various manuscripts, books, and other writings. Second, tradition can be found in the ideas that are now present among Muslims. As a new theology, Leftist Islam attempts to criticize the classical tradition, which aims to re – enact the thought patterns of Muslims. Besides, studying classical culture does not mean preserving it but trying to eliminate its negative aspects. Thus, the efforts to revitalize the Islamic tradition begin with the culture and traditions that the Muslims have pursued for centuries. (Badruzaman, 2005).

The classical theology that Hassan Hanafi considers irrelevant is the theology in Islamic science, especially the theocentric ones who tend to be busy arguing about God and other metaphysical matters so that human issues are neglected. As for the relevant theology, Hassan Hanafi stated that liberation theology is not just empty religious dogmas but rather a science of social struggle that makes traditional beliefs function effectively as an ethical and moral foundation which are capable of liberating Muslims from all forms of oppression and injustice (Haq, 2020).

## 2. Opposing Western Culture

The opposition to the West has been done by the Afghans confronting military imperialism. However, Hassan Hanafi focused his opposition on cultural imperialism, which has eliminated all the originality of Islamic culture. Hassan Hanafi has warned the people of the dangers of Western culture. Occidentalism is a form of resistance by Hassan Hanafi to Western culture. Hassan Hanafi explained that Occidentalism is a vital movement to manifest the attitude of Muslims to be critical in facing attacks from the West. In addition, he also affirmed that Occidentalism is a vital discourse to accommodate the potential of Muslims to regain the rational knowledge that the West discussed in the 16th century. (Hadirois & Ediyono, 2015). Hassan Hanafi has invited Muslims to embrace Western culture through Occidentalism. The invitation is a study aimed at changing people's perceptions and positions. It is often said that this invitation is a call for liberation from the power and superiority of Western culture (Badruzaman, 2005).

In his Occidentalism, Hassan Hanafi criticized some aspects of Western culture. Among them are:

- a. The West is considered too individualistic and materialistic, thus ignoring more important social and spiritual values.
- b. The West is thought to be too focused on technological and economic progress, thus neglecting more basic human needs such as social justice and a healthy environment.

- c. The West is regarded as exaggerating rationality and science, thus ignoring the irrational and mystical aspects of human life.
- d. The West is viewed as excessively imposing their values and standards on other cultures, thus ignoring the diversity and uniqueness of those cultures. (Rihlasyita, 2019).

Nevertheless, Hanafi did not reject or oppose Western culture as a whole. Instead, he taught how to respond to Western civilization, not a matter of rejecting or accepting, but rather of criticizing the consciousness of human liberation in its entirety.

### 3. The Analysis of the Reality of Muslims

Hassan Hanafi argued that transforming classical theology into an anthropocentric discourse is needed in analyzing the reality of Muslims. In other words, Hassan Hanafi, who has a pragmatic thinking style, strongly criticizes the discourses of classical thought, which tend to be theocentric and elitist. Therefore, Hassan Hanafi renewed the theology that tends to be elitist into a transformative one (Yusdani, 2002). Later, an understanding of local realities and Western realities can be obtained by figuring out the current realities. Thus, there must be a detailed division of issues, challenges, and needs in this era. It aims to establish a traditional order that can adapt to Western traditions. (Hanafi, 2015a).

To this day, Western imperialism is a critical problem to be resolved by the Islamic world. In the economic context, Western imperialism has transformed into a world enterprise. Furthermore, in the context of cultural imperialism, the West seeks to influence people to adopt Western culture so as to achieve the goal of eliminating local traditions. (Badruzaman, 2005). Thus, the Leftist Islam discloses all the issues within the body of Islam to make people aware of external threats from Western culture, such as imperialism and capitalism. Meanwhile, the internal threats include backwardness, oppression, and poverty. (Shimogaki, 2012).

In fact, religion comes to the world as a vessel to liberate the oppressed mankind. Besides, religion also has a vital role for the rulers. It is shaped through the economic, social, political, and religious sectors. According to Hassan Hanafi, humans have free will, which becomes their responsibility for life. Hassan Hanafi also emphasized that humans will never be responsible for their actions when they do not have freedom (Hanafi, 1991a). The liberation in Leftist Islam includes:

#### a. The Liberation of Aqidah

Generally, aqidah has always been related to the history of human civilization. Aqidah is the basis of human behavior, because Aqidah describes a system that changes belief to a law. According to Hassan Hanafi, Aqidah is not a well-established thing, but it is something that brings prosperity to mankind. (Hanafi, 2003). According to Hassan Hanafi, as described by Shimogaki, Muslims have to look back at the theology received from classical scholars. It aims to reconstruct the theological formulations that are inclined to human affairs in order to solve the challenges and all humanitarian problems in this era (Badruzaman, 2005). The Leftist Islam tries to trace the revolutionary teachings in Islam and explains the fundamental things between religion and change. It aims to make religion the basis of the change movement so that it can adapt to the times. This effort is Hassan Hanafi's goal to actualize the important things of Islamic civilization as well as to make Islam an actor in shaping the history of human civilization. Thus, the aqidah in Hassan Hanafi's thought embodies a firm behavior and the belief to apply teachings for human life and social structural system changes (Shimogaki, 2012).

Hassan Hanafi began his efforts in reconstructing liberation theology in which the main step was to rearrange the meaning of tauhid that had been believed by the Muslims.

All Muslims agree that the sentence of tauhid is "Aku bersaksi bahwa tiada Tuhan selain Allah, dan aku bersaksi bahwa Muhammad adalah utusan Allah" (I testify that there is no God but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). Hassan Hanafi remarks that the sentence contains three meanings, including "I testify that", "there is no god but Allah", and "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." From these three meanings, Hassan Hanafi attempts to interpret the syahadat as an important thing that must be felt and contemplated by mankind. Besides, the syahadat is not only sufficient to be expressed, but it must be present among the human race in order to bring about significant change. In other words, the syahadat is *amr ma'ruf nahi munkar*. It means that wherever syahadat exists, it must turn the people to be better and remove all forms of evil (Sipahutar, 2021).

#### b. The Liberation of Mind

Based on Hassan Hanafi's idea, it is said that the mind is a tool for understanding human behavior. So that, humans are not robots that can be controlled. Rationality is a method that aims to defend human rights and duties as well as to prioritize freedom. The mind is also seen as a benchmark for the creation of a more advanced human civilization (Hanafi, 2003). Hassan Hanafi put the mind in the first place when discussing the issue of mind and *naqli*. According to him, the mind is used to realize human knowledge of religious sciences and efforts to enforce justice. Mind and *naqli* have a very close relationship because the mind is the basis of *naqli*. Hassan Hanafi remarked that all considerations that use the mind are a hope for upholding justice and the welfare of Muslims. Therefore, since Hassan Hanafi prioritized the mind, he carried out an analysis of scientific history from both sources and other Islamic teachings (Badruzaman, 2005).

#### c. The Liberation of the People

For Hassan Hanafi, people who live in a condition of retardation will not constitute a change; therefore, it is necessary to investigate the things that lead to the backwardness of the people. Hassan Hanafi mentioned that the backwardness of the people was caused by the rulers who completely dominated the people. A step that can change the backwardness is altering the *taqlid* that exists in the people, the renewal, the tradition, and the intellectual freedom. Therefore, for Hassan Hanafi, the mind must be used to criticize the established rulers and become the basis of the people's movement. Besides, by the use of the mind, then the factors of backwardness can be revealed and become one of the efforts to liberate the people, namely freeing the people's point of view (Badruzaman, 2005).

The next step is to liberate the faith of the people who have always believed in Jabari theology. Hassan Hanafi argued that *jabariyyah* theology was deliberately used by religious leaders to establish the rulers and suppress the opposition. Thus, to liberate the people, the theology of *jabariyyah* must be transformed into a theology that prioritizes freedom. Then, the challenge for the Leftist Islam is fighting the rulers. A reconstruction of people's beliefs begins with the importance of facing new challenges. Thus, Hassan Hanafi emphasized that the new theological framework should be based on reality since it aims to form a theology that is always coherent with the times and responsible for all its purposes. (Hanafi, 1991a).

Hassan Hanafi's explanation of people's liberation needs to be reaffirmed in order to realize a human liberation that liberates people and upholds justice, equality, as well as democracy. Therefore, the theology of the Islamic Left must be able to play its fundamental role in the political field by creating a social structure recognized by the people and ensuring freedom, equality, unity, and justice. In the economic context, a government must know that all natural resources belong to God. For Hassan Hanafi,



people are only given the right to utilize these resources and use them optimally. Hassan Hanafi explicitly rejected exploitation, as it could lead to unequal distribution. (Badruzaman, 2005).

d. The Liberation of culture

The Islamic Left has called on the people to be free from all forms of Western culture. Occidentalism is seen as a way to fight against Western culture and stop it. During its development, Occidentalism did not only focus on resistance against the West but also functioned as ideas that could confront the West. For Hassan Hanafi, Occidentalism aims to eliminate all Western cultures that exist in the body of Islam. The primary key to liberating the people after the liberation of the people *aqidah* is in the political, economic, and colonial context. There are some benefits of occidentalism in the body of Islam, including; the study of Western culture so that it can resist all the threats currently being experienced by Muslims, raising the awareness that the West is an indivisible civilization in history, erasing Western culture existed in the body of Islam, the existence of historical studies to place the West as it is, and efforts to gain freedom from all forms of exploitation. (Badruzaman, 2005).

The explanation regarding the construction of the Leftist Islam as a new theology is an alternative to classical theology, which has yet to discuss human issues for a long time. According to Hassan Hanafi, functioning theology is the basis of the current Muslim movement, namely by rearranging and reconstructing a more progressive epistemology. He also said that carrying out theological reconstruction is a concrete method so that theology can provide benefits for the history of human civilization. Furthermore, Islamic theology is a grounded theology. Thus it should be able to deal with the challenges of the times and the problems that arise in human life. The thing that needs to be done to solve the problems of people when they are still covered by poverty, colonization, oppression, and stupidity is to reformulate the meaning of *tauhid* (Badruzaman, 2005).

Hassan Hanafi was one of the revolutionary Islamic thinkers who believed that Islamic teachings were the ideological basis of change. It is believed that Muslims do not drift between secularism and traditionalism, westernism and fundamentalism, progressivism and conservatism. Thus, in order to overcome this, Hassan Hanafi sought to explore the classical Islamic culture which has a wealth of science and acquire its positive values that are considered relevant to the conditions and situations of the times. It is aimed at opposing the hegemony of Western culture that has been rife in the Islamic world. Basically, the Leftist Islam emerged from a consciousness that wanted freedom from the West. The Islamic Left is seen as a movement to defend the oppressed, weak, and poor. Fighting against all – powerful and oppressive movements is the consequence that must be passed by the Leftist Islam Thus, the Leftist Islam is the Islam of protest, revolution, and opposition (Supriyandi, 2003). Then, as an idea, the Islamic Left certainly faces challenges from two angles. The first is from the body of Islam itself, namely the orthodox scholars, and the second is groups that side with the rulers. Orthodox scholars emphasized that Islam has no left or right, but one. Then every new thing, like the left and the right, is judged as a *bid'ah*. In contrast, the pro – government group interprets the ideas of the Left as provocative and causes of conflict. With such opinions, the Leftist Islam consciously blunted both its movements and ideas.

According to Hassan Hanafi, the accusations made by the Orthodox scholars are directed at the agreed truth. It is true that there is no right and left in Islam, but as long as humans live in the world, it is effortless to find class differences in the political, social, and other spheres. Thus, the left and the right are two constantly opposing forces, even this is a historical law (Syariati, 2001). Leftist Islam is described as a leftist teaching that

explicitly rejects a form of exploitation. In addition, Hassan Hanafi's leftist Islamic ideas differ from the Islam that most Muslims understand. Hassan Hanafi stated that Islam has only been interpreted as a religion teaching submission. Such meanings lead Muslims to passivity in living their daily lives, especially when dealing with the rulers. When religion is dominated by scholars who support and become a stronghold of rulers, then Hassan Hanafi views this as the servant of the rulers. Then, capitalism is a system that exploits humans. It is based on the loss of justice and the inception of social inequality (Engineer, 2009).

The Leftist Islam, investigated by Hassan Hanafi, is an attempt to reconstruct the persistence of thought that is being embraced by Muslims, with the aim of enabling people to see Islam as they should. Hassan Hanafi wants a condition in the midst of the developments of the times in the Islamic world. One of the significant changes in Iran was the inspiration for the inception of the idea of the Leftist Islam (Badruzaman, 2005). Hassan Hanafi criticized the Sufi concept of tradition in general, which he believed that it was curved in a valley and disconnected from human problems. Hanafi conceptualized tradition using phenomenological hermeneutic approaches and expected the interpretation of tradition to impact human problems. He believed the absence of tradition in human reality was due to the disconnection between tradition and human problems. Hanafi's approach is to uncover artificiality and inauthenticity that occur in order to discover the authenticity of God's revelation. Hanafi's concept of tradition is a form of his concern for the reality of Muslims (Fahrudin, 2010).

The existence of religious inclinations that sides the rulers has resulted in the emergence of empty and worthless religious rites in people's lives. So, as a religion, Islam is only an ornament rather than the basis of truth. The Leftist Islam must oppose such a phenomenon. The facts have shown that the rulers are unfair because they do not prioritize the people's interests. Thus, individuals and groups who side with power are a form of betrayal against the people (Hashem, 2008).

The Leftist Islam movement's basis is Muslims' awareness of reality. The Leftist Islam is trying to change the reality of the people to make Islam the religion that influences the world. In this regard, the Leftist Islam has a primary agenda that needs to be fully resolved. The problems currently experienced by Muslims are the focus of studying the Leftist Islam. It is because the attitude described by Hassan Hanafi is a critical attitude towards the classical scientific tradition, which causes Muslims to experience all kinds of suffering (Badruzaman, 2005). Thus, the Leftist Islam is a new theology offered by Hassan Hanafi for the survival of Muslims today.

## CONCLUSION

Hassan Hanafi is a Muslim intellectual who has offered a new theology that focuses on liberation and social change in society. This theology is called the Leftist Islam, which aims to respond to the challenges and problems faced by Muslims in this era. In an effort to achieve liberation, Hassan Hanafi proposed several steps which include revitalizing the tradition of classical Islamic scientific tradition, namely an attempt to renew classical scientific thought by focusing more on rational and relevant understanding of this era. Furthermore, opposing Western culture is an attempt to criticize the culture that is considered individualistic, materialistic and eliminates social and spiritual values. Lastly, analyzing the reality of Muslims is to understand the problems and challenges faced by Muslims. By using the mind, Muslims have to criticize theocentric classical thought and find solutions for liberation.

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