



# DEMOCRACY AS POLITICAL JIHAD: EVALUATING YUSUF QARADHAWI'S VISION AND ITS APPLICATION IN INDONESIA



Risky Aulya Ramadan\*<sup>1</sup> , Shofiyullah Muzammil<sup>2</sup>

## \*Correspondence:

Email:

[riskyauliyaramadan@gmail.com](mailto:riskyauliyaramadan@gmail.com)

## Authors Affiliation:

<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan  
Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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## Abstract

This article examines the influence of Western secular thought on Islamic civilization, focusing on its repercussions within the political domain. The dominance of secular politics, which often conflicts with Islamic values, poses a significant challenge to Islamic governance principles. In response to this ideological shift, Yusuf Qaradhawi has called for a political reformation grounded in Islamic teachings, framing this transformative effort as a form of jihad. To investigate this perspective, the study employs qualitative research methods, specifically library-based research, and document analysis. Primary data is sourced from Yusuf Qaradhawi's own writings, while secondary data includes a range of books, scholarly journals, bulletins, and encyclopedias pertinent to the topic. The analysis reveals that the core principles of democracy—such as the right of citizens to elect their leaders freely—are compatible with Islamic values. However, the study also identifies notable deviations from these democratic ideals in practice. In the context of Indonesia, where Islamic values have been incorporated into the democratic framework, discrepancies between theoretical principles and actual political practices remain significant. This paper not only highlights the alignment between Islamic principles and democratic values but also critically assesses the challenges and inconsistencies faced in their implementation.

## Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji pengaruh pemikiran sekuler Barat terhadap peradaban Islam, dengan fokus pada dampaknya dalam ranah politik. Dominasi politik sekuler, yang sering kali bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai Islam, menimbulkan tantangan signifikan terhadap prinsip-prinsip pemerintahan Islam. Menanggapi pergeseran ideologis ini, Yusuf Qaradhawi menyerukan reformasi politik yang berlandaskan pada ajaran Islam, dengan membingkai upaya transformatif ini sebagai bentuk jihad. Untuk menyelidiki perspektif ini, penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif, khususnya penelitian berbasis pustaka, dan analisis dokumen. Data primer bersumber dari tulisan-tulisan Yusuf Qaradhawi sendiri, sedangkan data sekunder mencakup berbagai buku, jurnal ilmiah, buletin, dan ensiklopedia yang relevan dengan topik tersebut. Analisis ini mengungkapkan bahwa prinsip-prinsip inti demokrasi—seperti hak warga negara untuk memilih pemimpin mereka secara bebas—sesuai dengan nilai-nilai Islam. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi penyimpangan penting dari cita-cita demokrasi ini dalam praktik. Dalam konteks Indonesia, di mana nilai-nilai Islam telah dimasukkan ke dalam kerangka demokrasi, perbedaan antara prinsip-prinsip teoritis dan praktik politik aktual tetap signifikan. Makalah ini tidak hanya menyoroti keselarasan antara prinsip-prinsip Islam dan nilai-nilai demokrasi, tetapi juga menilai secara kritis tantangan dan inkonsistensi yang dihadapi dalam penerapannya.



## INTRODUCTION

The emergence of secular Western thoughts began with the voyages made by the West to all corners of the Earth. Their voyages were not just for trade but carried a secret mission known as 3G (Gold, Glory, Gospel). In order for the mission to run smoothly without any obstacles, the Westerners practiced Colonialism and Imperialism against the areas they visited, including the territories of Islamic countries, starting from controlling the economy, education, and politics. In education, the West spread its secular teachings and thoughts. This can threaten the civilization of Muslims, which has implications for all sectors of life, one of which is in the political field. The current political reality, which is controlled by secular politics, is very contrary to Islamic values. The contradiction is in the way to achieve goals by justifying all means. Therefore, Yusuf Qaradhawi argues that Muslims must change political conditions not by Islamic rules (Qaradhawi, 1999). According to Yusuf Qaradhawi, efforts to change these conditions are included in jihad.

Yusuf Qaradhawi calls Muslims to use the democratic system to run the state. This is because the principles of democracy align with Islamic values, such as the people having the right to elect leaders who will govern and manage their affairs (Qaradhawi, 1990). They should not be forced to accept a ruler they dislike or a regime they despise. They also have the right to correct their leaders if they make mistakes and to remove and replace them if they deviate. They should not be forced to follow economic, social, and political systems they do not recognize or like. If any of them refuse, they should not be tortured, persecuted, or even killed.

Yusuf Qaradhawi's view of democracy in line with Islamic values was rejected by his senior, Abul A'la al-Maududi. According to al-Maududi, democracy is considered a shirk because it assumes sovereignty and power only comes from the people (Darmawati, 2013). This statement identifies that democracy has denied God's sovereignty and power. Madjid Khaddurri and Muhammad Tahir Azhary, on the other hand, prefer to use the term nomocracy rather than democracy. Nomocracy refers to state power that must be based on the laws of Allah (Azhary, 1992).

Taqiuddin al-Nabhani is more inclined to use the term share sovereignty, which means managing and controlling individuals' aspirations with sharia's provisions, not individuals at will (Azhary, 1992). Therefore, a free democracy without sharia law as a control must be rejected. According to Al-Hasjimy, the concept of shura in Islam is identical to democracy. However, the concept of shura is not necessarily the same as democracy (Darmawati, 2013). Although many scholars reject the view that democracy is identical to Islamic values, Yusuf Qaradhawi remains firm and continues his thoughts on democracy. Because the starting point of Yusuf Qaradhawi's thinking starts from the secular danger threatening Islamic civilization, it needs an offer from the Islamic world. Therefore, this article explains Yusuf Qaradhawi's thoughts on democracy and its relevance to Indonesia.

This article uses qualitative research methods, and the type of research is literature (Library research). The data collection method or technique used is document study. The data in this study are primary data and secondary data. Secondary data comes from Yusuf Qaradhawi's direct works, "Guidelines for the State in Islamic Perspective, Contemporary Fatwas, Fiqh Daulah in the Qur'an and Hadith, Fighting in the Way of Allah, Secular Esktreem, and Fiqh State" while secondary data, which is obtained from sources or data in the form of books related to Yusuf Qaradhawi's thoughts and other data which include books, journals, bulletins and encyclopedias related to the problems of this article. The data obtained is then analyzed using the descriptive analysis method, which describes and analyzes the data obtained.

## THE ESSENCE OF JIHAD

Al-Qardhawi does not have a specific definition for the term jihad. Instead, he prefers to adopt the concept of *ijtihad* formulated by two prominent scholars. First, he refers to the definition put forward by Imam al-Syaukani (d. 1255 AH) in his work "Irsyad al-Fuhul." according to al-Syaukani, *ijtihad* is defined as the exertion of all intellectual capacity to formulate applicable sharia law through the process of legal deduction. Secondly, he compares it with the definition proposed by al-Amidi (d. 631 AH) in his book "al-Ihkam fi Ushul al-Ahkam." al-Amidi defines *ijtihad* as an outpouring of all abilities to find Sharia laws that are *zhanni* until someone feels that he has reached the maximum limit of his capacity (Al-Qardhawi, 1985).

Al-Qardhawi emphasizes the importance of a mujtahid's maximum effort based on these two definitions. According to him, when someone performs *ijtihad*, they must reach a point where it is no longer possible to think of a better solution than the one that has been produced. This emphasis has several purposes: First, it avoids hasty *ijtihad*, which can lead to errors in ruling. Second, it prevents making arbitrary decisions without first optimizing all intellectual abilities. Third, it ensures that the process of *ijtihad* involves in-depth research into relevant arguments. Fourth, it encourages a comprehensive understanding of the arguments. Fifth, careful inference from the existing arguments must be ensured. Sixth, requiring comparisons between arguments that may appear contradictory at first glance.

The concept of *ijtihad* offered by al-Qardhawi emphasizes two critical aspects. First, convenience: al-Qardhawi encourages a more accessible *ijtihad* process for those who have the necessary competencies. Second, prudence: At the same time, he emphasizes the importance of a careful and considerate approach (Sulaiman, 2023). This approach is aimed at individuals who are qualified in Islamic law. They are encouraged to optimize their intellectual capacity in extracting Islamic law and formulating Islamic law based on revelation as the main source and using certain methodologies or approaches that are appropriate in the process of *ijtihad*. Thus, al-Qardhawi seeks to balance flexibility in *ijtihad* and rigor in the process in order to produce a relevant and accountable formulation of Islamic law.

According to al-Qardhawi, *ijtihad* has strong legitimacy in Islam. He argues that in today's global and dynamic context, the opportunity for scholars to perform *ijtihad* is not just an option but a necessity (Ramadan, 2022). Al-Qardhawi categorizes *ijtihad* as *fardu kifayah* and a collective obligation the Muslim community must fulfill to determine laws by contemporary conditions (Ramadan, 2022). Al-Qardhawi proposes three methodological approaches to *ijtihad*: First, *Ijtihad intiqā'i* (selective *ijtihad*); this method involves selecting and evaluating existing legal opinions to select the most relevant and influential in the current context. Second, *Ijtihad insyā'i* (creative *ijtihad*), this approach encourages the formulation of new laws that previous scholars have never discussed, especially for contemporary issues for which there is no precedent. Third, the integrative *ijtihad* method combines *intiqā'i* and *insyā'i ijtihad*, where the mujtahid chooses from existing opinions but adds new elements or adjusts to the current context (Al-Qardhawi, 1985).

In doing *ijtihad*, al-Qardhawi emphasizes several essential points for a mujtahid;

1. Avoiding *Jumud* and unlimited freedom in understanding the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

Al-Qardhawi is a Muslim scholar whose thoughts have contributed significantly to the development of Muslims. His opinions tend to be accepted by most Muslims because of some distinctive characteristics. First, focus on the benefit; Al-Qardhawi

always prioritizes the good and benefits for the people in his thoughts. Second, to avoid stagnation, he tried to avoid rigidity or stagnation in thinking. Third, sticking to the primary source, his thoughts are always based on the Koran and hadith. Fourth, in the search for a middle ground, Al-Qardhawi seeks to find a balance in understanding the text of the Quran and hadith. Fifth, he showed moderation in interpretation; he did not stick rigidly to the text like conservative scholars but was also not too free in contextual interpretation like liberal thinkers.

Al-Qardhawi's approach is often described as "at-tayyar al-washatiah" or the middle flow. This approach positions his thought between two extremes, not too bound to rigid textual interpretation and not too free in contextual interpretation that can obscure the text's original meaning (Qaradhawi, 1995). With this moderate approach, Al-Qardhawi offered an understanding of Islam that is relevant to modern times while still adhering to the religion's basic principles, making it widely accepted among Muslims.

## 2. Adhering to previous scholars

Al-Qardhawi is known for his approach to prioritizing *maslahat* (goodness and benefit) in his *fatwa*, even when this is at odds with the opinion of most scholars (*Jumhur*). Nevertheless, he can still justify his opinions scientifically and tries to refer to the opinions of previous scholars. A concrete example of this approach can be seen in the case of punishment for a Muslim who kills a disbeliever. First, the opinion of the majority of scholars is that Muslims who kill disbelievers (whether *harbi* or *dzhimmi*) may not be *qishas* (punished by death), and the perpetrator is only required to pay *diat* (financial compensation). Second, the opinion of al-Qardhawi, distinguishes between *Kafir Harbi* and *Kafir Dzimmi*, Muslims who kill *kafir harbi* should not be punished with death, and Muslims who kill *kafir dzimmi* are allowed to be punished with death (Qaradhawi, 1997).

Although his opinion differs from that of the majority of scholars, Al-Qardhawi emphasized that his view is not without precedent. He points out that Imam Abu Hanifah, one of the most prominent scholars in Islamic history, once expressed a similar opinion (Muzakkir, 2020). Al-Qardhawi's approach illustrates courage in taking a position that differs from the majority for the sake of benefit, caution in still basing his opinion on precedents from previous scholars, and nuance in understanding the context, as seen from the distinction between *kafir harbi* and *dzimmi*. This reflects Al-Qardhawi's methodology, which seeks to balance legal innovation and respect for Islamic scholarly tradition (Qaradhawi, 1995).

## 3. Avoiding Western thinking

According to Al-Qardhawi, secularism is not a concept that comes from Islam but a product of Western thought that is trying to be applied to the Islamic world, such as the efforts made by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in Turkey. Al-Qardhawi argues that secularism is very contrary to the teachings of Islam for several reasons; first, the separation of religion and the state, secularism requires separation between religion and the state, while in Islam, the two can not be separated. Second, the unity of religion and the state, in Islam, religion and the state must go hand in hand and are an inseparable unity. Third, the essence of Islam, if religion and the state are forced to be separated, the essence of Islam will be lost (Syam, 2017).

Al-Qardhawi also explained the differences in the background of the emergence of secularism in the West and its incompatibility with Islam. First, Sharia law, Islam has a Sharia law that has been established, while the West (Christianity) does not have

similar Sharia values. Second, religious institutions, secularism arises because of religious institutions in the West, while Islam does not have equivalent religious institutions. Third, historical trauma, secularism in the West emerged as a response to historical trauma, while Islam did not experience similar historical trauma (Qaradhawi, 2000)

Thus, Al – Qardhawi asserts that secularism is neither suitable nor necessary in the Islamic context due to the fundamental differences in history, structure, and basic principles between Islam and Western religions.

#### 4. Focus on the priority fiqh

Al – Qardhawi emphasizes the importance of the *fiqh* of priorities in determining the order of action or charity that should take precedence. The main principles of this concept include: First, prioritization is based on importance; essential things take precedence over less important things, and more important things take precedence over essential things. Second, prioritization is based on the strength of the evidence; the strong (*rajih*) takes precedence over the less intense (*marjuh*). Thirdly, prioritization is based on virtue; the most essential thing takes precedence over the ordinary, and the most crucial thing takes precedence over the main thing. Fourth, the correct order is that what should come first should come first, and what should be last should be last. Fifth, proportionality: small things should not be exaggerated, and important things should not be neglected. Sixth is balance; every matter must be placed in proportion and not excessive and not less. (Qaradhawi, 1997).

This concept aims to ensure that Muslims can make decisions and act wisely, considering various options' priority and relative importance. As such, the fiqh of priorities helps optimize the use of time, energy, and resources in practicing religious teachings and daily life.

#### 5. The benefit is more important than the *Jumhur Ulama*

Al – Qardhawi is an active scholar who responds to contemporary issues facing Muslims. His main approaches include, first, the priority of benefit, and al – Qardhawi emphasizes that the benefit in the present is more important than just following the opinion of the majority of previous scholars. Second, contemporary relevance: if an issue that in the past received consensus of scholars is no longer relevant to the current context, Al – Qardhawi did not hesitate to take a minority opinion that he thinks is more in line with today's times. Third, flexibility in choosing opinions, al – Qardhawi is willing to adopt the opinion of one scholar who is different from the majority as long as the opinion is considered more appropriate for the contemporary context. Fourth, concrete examples, this approach is seen in the case of punishment for the killing of kafir dzimmi, where al – Qardhawi chose to follow the opinion of some Hanafiah scholars who differ with the majority of scholars. Fifth, by reality, al – Qardhawi is ready to override the opinion of the majority of scholars if he thinks it is not by the existing reality. Sixth, the approach to hadith, one example of applying this principle, is how al – Qardhawi understands and applies hadith in a modern context (Syarifuddin, 2019).

Al – Qardhawi's approach reflects his attempt to balance faithfulness to Islamic scholarly tradition and the need to respond effectively to contemporary challenges and realities. This method allows him to provide relevant and applicable solutions to Muslims' problems in the modern era while remaining grounded in Islam's solid scientific foundations (Qaradhawi, 1995).



From this statement, the author agrees with Qaradhawi in interpreting Islamic values that emphasize the people's problems and avoid the monotony of thinking based on the texts of the Qur'an and al-Hadith as the basis. The reason is that the author feels that the mindset used by Yusuf al-Qaradhawi in the openness of his thinking is felt to be able to accommodate the problems of the people who are always dynamic without leaving the values of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* as the basis. However, different geopolitical differences that apply in Indonesia present challenges in implementation due to the dominance of Muslim society.

## THE POLITICAL JIHAD

In Arabic, politics is known as *siyasah*, which comes from the word *Sbsa Yasysu*. Its basic meaning refers to the management of human affairs; the person who does this management is called a politician (Sais). In Arabic, the term describes how the leader (*Ulil Amri*) takes care (*Yasysu*) of his people. This includes organizing the people's affairs, managing them, and looking after them. An Arabic proverb says, "How can the people be preserved (*Masysah*)?" This means that the condition of the people will be good if the leader is corrupted (Qaradhawi, 1999). Thus, *As-Siyasah* (Politics) can be defined as the regulation of the people, the handling of the people's affairs, and the endeavor to benefit the people.

The concept of *Siyasah Shar'iyah*, according to Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, is the use of Sharia as a benchmark and source for *as-siyasah* (politics), as well as making *Sharia* as the purpose of *As-siyasah* itself. This definition emphasizes several vital points; first, *Sharia*, as the basis of politics, must be based on Islamic law and principles. Second, *Sharia* is a source of policy and political decisions that must be made concerning Islamic teachings. Third, *Sharia*, as the ultimate goal of politics, is to uphold and implement Islamic law. Thus, Al-Qardhawi sees politics in Islam as a tool to regulate society and as a means to implement and enforce Islamic values in society and the state (Qaradhawi, 1995).

Al-Qardhawi criticized the current political conditions dominated by secular politics. According to him, secular politics has two main problematic characteristics. First, far from Islamic values, secular politics tends to ignore or even contradict the principles and teachings of Islam. Second, legalising all means, secular politics tends to use various means to achieve political goals, including ways that are unethical or contrary to morals (Qaradhawi, 1995).

Based on this criticism, al-Qardhawi calls for change; first, the necessity of change. Al-Qardhawi argues that Muslims must change political conditions, not by Islamic rules. Second, change as jihad, according to al-Qardhawi, efforts to change un-Islamic political conditions are included in the category of *jihad* (Rohman, 2019). Based on this criticism, al-Qardhawi calls for change; first, the necessity of change. Al-Qardhawi argues that Muslims must change political conditions, not by Islamic rules. Second, change as jihad, according to al-Qardhawi, efforts to change un-Islamic political conditions are included in the category of *jihad*.

In its implementation Qaradhawi divides Jihad in the political field into three conditions according to the aspect of the state or government:

### 1. Islamic State

According to Al-Qardhawi, an ideal Islamic state has the following characteristics: has a constitution based on Islamic sharia, is led by Muslims who are

committed to the teachings of the religion, has a staff consisting of people who are loyal to Islam, and applies Islamic *sharia* in various aspects, including *aqidah*, worship, morals, as well as domestic and international affairs (Qaradhawi, 1997). So, according to al-Qaradhawi, Muslims have an obligation towards that state to provide full support, build and maintain strong relationships, protect and strengthen the state, fight relentlessly to maintain its existence, and be willing to sacrifice both body and soul in order to preserve the Islamic state (Qaradhawi, 1997a). This view emphasises the importance of Muslim solidarity and dedication to a state that fully implements Islamic principles in its system of government.

According to this view, an Islamic state committed to Sharia law has the legitimacy to govern its people, gain the support of the people, and gain the people's obedience in all situations, whether difficult or easy, good or bad. However, this legitimacy comes with conditions the state must adhere to; if the state deviates from *sharia*, its legitimacy is lost, its right to rule is forfeited, and the people are no longer obliged to obey it. This principle is based on two concepts: obedience only to what is right and no obedience to man in disobeying Allah. A historical example of this principle is Abu Bakr as-Siddiq's statement when he was appointed caliph: "Obey me as long as I obey Allah. If I disobey Him, then do not obey me" (Qaradhawi, 1997a). Pandangan ini menekankan bahwa legitimasi pemerintahan dalam Islam bergantung pada kepatuhan terhadap syariat. Ini memberi rakyat hak untuk menolak kepatuhan jika pemerintah menyimpang dari prinsip-prinsip Islam, sambil tetap menekankan pentingnya ketaatan selama pemerintah mengikuti syariat.

So, according to Qaradhawi, jihad in an Islamic state depends on the leader. If the leader is obedient and implements Islamic law, Muslims must support and obey him. However, if the leader in the Islamic state is unjust, then Muslims are obliged to advise him as long as the leader is still praying. However, if the leader does not pray, then Muslims are allowed to rebel and try to remove him from power (Qaradhawi, 1992).

## 2. The Secular State

Yusuf Qaradhawi profoundly regrets the current state of Muslim-majority countries that prefer secularism (separating religion from the state) rather than forming an Islamic state. One clear example is the establishment of a secular state by Kemal Ataturk in Turkey, which was carried out through violence and oppression against the Muslim Turks. This happened after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the last bastion of political Islam, after centuries of conflict with the Crusaders. (Qaradhawi, 1997).

Various governments in Islamic countries copied the new system of government implemented in Turkey, although with varying degrees of adoption. Islamic law and *sharia* are only applied to individual laws, while the application of Islamic *sharia* in the educational, social, political, and legal fields is still minimal. In addition, Western civilization and traditions were adopted without a filter to determine whether they were compatible with Islamic law and values.

According to Qaradhawi, Muslims should not unthinkingly follow Western secularism. Western secular systems tend to ignore Islamic systems and values and offer unlimited freedom. Western democracy, in the name of people's representation, may erase noble values, legalize injustice, and legalize the haram (Qaradhawi, 1999). For example, liquor is allowed to be consumed, produced, and traded, even though

it has been proven that liquor causes moral and material damage to individuals, families, and communities, adversely affecting the economy and morals.

According to Qaradhawi, Muslims should not simply follow Western secularism. Because the Western secular system usually tends to ignore the Islamic system and values and offers unlimited freedom. In the name of the people's representatives of Western democracy that can abolish nobleness, legalize injustice, legalize the haram. Allowing liquor to be drunk, produced, and traded even though it has been proven that alcohol causes moral and material damage to individuals, families, communities, and even to the economy and morals (Qaradhawi, 2000).

According to Qaradhawi, Muslims must follow pure Islamic laws and rules to the fullest. A mixture of Islamic law and non – Islamic law is unacceptable in the Islamic view. The secular system must be rejected and changed. As a consequence of their faith, Muslims must actively oppose evil in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

According to Yusuf Qaradhawi, Islam obliges every Muslim to do *amar ma'ruf* and *nahyu anil munkar* (Qaradhawi, 1995). A Muslim should endeavor to address evil and change it with action if he can. If he cannot, he should change it with words and explanation. If he cannot, the least he can do is with his heart.

Comparing Western democracy with the Islamic concept, there is a significant difference in how freedom of expression is viewed; from a Western democratic perspective, expressing opinions, criticizing, and opposing are considered human rights. This is reflected in modern philosophy and legislation. From an Islamic perspective, expressing opinions, criticizing, and opposing are considered sacred obligations. Ignoring this obligation is seen as a sin, and neglecting this obligation is believed to result in punishment from Allah (Qaradhawi, 1991).

In the Islamic context, the struggle to uphold these principles can be carried out through two methods: the operative method, which established parties, and the participating parliamentary system. Second is the non – cooperative method, which establishes Non – Governmental Organisations (NGOs), forms community organizations, and uses other channels outside the formal government system.

### 3. Non – Muslim Country

According to Yusuf Al – Qardhawi, a believer has a moral obligation when dealing with rules contrary to Islamic law in non – Muslim countries by rejecting them and trying to change them if they can. In situations where Muslims are oppressed, al – Qardhawi suggests hijrah and seeking refuge in other countries, such as the ethnic Rohingya who are oppressed in their native Myanmar. Al – Qardhawi also emphasizes the influence of Quranic narratives on the attitudes of Muslims. Repeatedly, the stories of unjust rulers such as Pharaoh, Haman, and Qarun, along with their followers and soldiers, are described; the aim is to instill hatred of injustice, rejection of their behavior, anger against unjust actions, and hope for victory for victims of oppression.

These narratives shape the moral consciousness of Muslims to oppose injustice, sympathize with victims of oppression, and work to uphold justice according to Islamic teachings. This view emphasizes the active role of Muslims in confronting injustice, whether through resistance, change, or the search for alternatives that align with Islamic principles. Therefore, the Prophet said: "The best jihad is to speak the right word against the unjust ruler." Moreover, suppose he dies to uphold the truth in the face of an unjust ruler. In that case, his death is considered a type of martyrdom in the way of Allah: "The chief of the martyrs is Hamzah, then the one who appears



before an unjust ruler and enjoins him to do what is right and prevents him from doing what is wrong, he is killed.

However, Yusuf Qaradhawi, on the issue of jihad in Kafir countries, provides provisions in several conditions that allow using the principle of flexibility to relax the basic principles based on specific considerations. Cooperating with oppressors or infidels is forbidden, and rejecting an oppressive state is obligatory then under certain conditions, the basic principle experiences the principle of flexibility with the following considerations (Qaradhawi, 1997a):

a. Reducing Injustice: According to Ability

Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi argues that a Muslim who can reduce injustice and turn a non-Muslim country into a Sharia-compliant state should do so. However, if he cannot make the ideal change, it is permissible not to do so. Al-Qaradhawi used the historical example of King Negus of Habsyah (Ethiopia), who converted to Islam at the time of the Prophet. Despite having embraced Islam, King Negus was unable to implement Islamic law in his kingdom for fear that his people would resist, which might threaten his position and the stability of the kingdom. In this situation, the Prophet did not blame King Negus for his inability to apply Islamic law. Al-Qaradhawi's view reflects an understanding of the political and social complexities of applying Islamic law in a non-Muslim environment, suggesting a more flexible and realistic approach to dealing with the challenges of living as a Muslim in an environment that may not fully support the application of Islamic law (Qaradhawi, 1997).

b. Choosing the Lesser Danger

According to Al-Qaradhawi, the consideration of flexibility in applying Islamic law in non-Muslim countries is based on the principle of sharia, which allows choosing lesser harm or damage to avoid greater harm or giving up a smaller benefit to achieve a greater benefit (Saputra, 2021). Scholars apply this principle in preventing evils, where it is sometimes permissible to tolerate evil for a certain period if it is feared that preventing it will lead to greater evils. This view reflects a pragmatic approach to the application of Islamic law, which takes into account the context and long-term consequences of an action, with the ultimate aim of minimizing harm and maximizing benefit for Muslims, especially in situations where they are a minority or live under a non-Islamic system of government.

Al-Qaradhawi uses a story from the Quran about the people of Prophet Moses, when Moses went to seek Allah for thirty nights, then completed ten more nights, his people were led astray by Samiri. Samiri made a statue of a calf out of gold and declared that it was their God and the God of Moses. Many of Moses' people believed and followed Samiri's words. Meanwhile, Aaron, who was left as the temporary leader, tried to warn them. He said, "O people, indeed you have only been tempted with the calf and indeed your Lord is the Most Gracious God, so follow me and obey my commands." (Malikah, 2000). They replied, "*We will continue to worship the statue of this soft child until Musa returns to us*" (Thaha 92–93). Al-Qaradhawi may have intended this story to show how, in a difficult situation, a leader must act wisely and try to guide his people back to the right path despite facing great challenges.

a. Sunnah Tadarruj

Al-Qardhawi added that one of the *Sunnah* of Allah that is essential to remember is the principle of stages (*Sunnah Taddaruj*). This principle states that everything in the universe develops gradually, from small to large, weak to vigorous. We can see this principle apply to plants, animals, and humans. In the context of humans, we are not born directly as adults but rather go through stages of growth from infants, children, adolescents, and adults to old age. Even before birth, humans develop in their mother's womb, starting from a blood clot, then given bones wrapped in flesh, until finally becoming a complete creature. Al-Qardhawi uses this principle to remind the majesty of Allah as the Most Perfect Creator. This understanding of *Sunnah Taddaruj* may be intended to emphasize the importance of patience and understanding of gradual processes in various aspects of life, including in the application of Islamic teachings and social change. According to Al-Qardhawi, if we are unable to change the existing system in non-Muslim countries, then the primary focus should be directed at changing its people through da'wah and education (Saputra, 2021). He analogizes this approach to the method used by the Prophet in building early Muslim societies. The Prophet started by freeing people from the idolatry and lusts of the jahiliyyah, focusing on character building and correct religious understanding. Al-Qardhawi emphasizes that fundamental change must begin with individuals, forming a solid Islamic understanding and awareness within them. This approach recognizes that significant system changes may not always be flexible or wise in specific contexts, especially in countries where Muslims are a minority. By focusing on da'wah and education, it is hoped that a generation of Muslims who understand and live the values of Islam can be formed, which in turn can bring about positive changes in society more broadly and gradually.

The Messenger of Allah, in building the ummah, endeavored to free them from the idolatry and lusts of the jahiliyyah. He instilled aqidah tauhid in them, faith in their hearts, moral excellence in their lives, and purified their minds from misguided thoughts. In this way, the Prophet was able to educate the first exemplary generation, the generation that established the State of Islam (Malikah, 2000). Therefore, establishing an Islamic government in a pagan country is a great aspiration that requires serious attention and faces severe challenges. The principle of flexibility can be used in cases of emergency and for the benefit of the ummah. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with those who can realize some of these ideals, namely in individual laws and da'wah.

## DEMOCRACY AS A RESULT OF POLITICAL JIHAD ACCORDING TO YUSUF QARADHAWI

The substance (essence) of democracy is in line with Islamic teachings and values. Yusuf Qaradhawi explains that the essence of democracy in Islam is when people have the freedom to choose their leaders. People should not be forced to accept rulers or governments that they do not want. They have the right to criticize the government if it makes mistakes and the authority to replace deviant leaders. People should also not be forced to follow a foreign or unfavorable economic, social, or political system. If some refuse, they should not be persecuted, tortured, or killed (Qaradhawi, 1990).

Qaradhawi asserts that true democracy is realized through various concrete practices in the life of the nation and state. This includes holding elections and referendums, respecting the majority's will, and implementing a multiparty system. Democracy also

guarantees the right of minorities to be in opposition, maintains freedom of the press, and ensures the independence of the judiciary. Within this democratic framework, people are given complete freedom to choose their leaders and criticize the actions of those leaders. Furthermore, the people have the right to reject orders from the authorities that contradict the constitution, thus ensuring a balance of power and the protection of citizens' rights.

Yusuf Qardhawi argues that this concept of democracy aligns with Islamic teachings. From the Islamic perspective, people have the right to oppose the instructions of leaders who encourage or force them to commit acts contrary to religious teachings. Furthermore, the people are also authorized to dismiss or replace their leaders if they are proven to deviate from the truth, act arbitrarily, and ignore their advice and warnings. These principles reflect the harmony between democratic values and Islamic teachings regarding the accountability of leaders and the rights of the people (Zamakhshary, n.d.).

Yusuf Qardhawi supports the view of democratic sympathizers who emphasize the importance of the majority vote as the basis for decision – making (Qardhawi, 1999). He refutes the misconception among some Muslim thinkers that Islam cannot accept this concept. According to Qardhawi, the majority principle is in line with the logic of sharia and practical reality, especially when differences of opinion require resolution. In such a situation, Qardhawi argues that supporting the majority vote is wise. The reason is that opinions supported by more people tend to be closer to the truth than individual opinions. In this way, Qardhawi bridges the principles of democracy with Islamic understanding, showing that the two can work in harmony in collective decision – making.

Absolute truth comes from God, who sends messengers and revelations to them to convey this truth to humanity. After the death of Prophet Muhammad, the last prophet, there was no longer a prophetic figure who could be used as a direct role model in the search for truth. However, Prophet Muhammad left behind two main Muslim guidelines: The Quran and Hadith. These two sacred sources are the main guidelines for Muslims in living their lives. When problems arise that are not explicitly addressed in the Quran and Hadith, Muslims are expected to use their intellect and wisdom to find solutions while still being guided by the basic principles of these two holy sources.

In Islam, when facing issues that are not directly explained in the Quran and Hadith, people are directed to perform *ijtihad*. However, *ijtihad* is not everyone is right. Specific criteria must be met before someone is allowed to perform *ijtihad*, one of which is a deep understanding of the Quran and Hadith. The group that qualifies for *ijtihad* mainly comes from among the scholars who have in – depth knowledge of the Quran and Hadith and have mastered the science of interpretation. In solving the ummah's problems, these scholars must deliberate and reach a joint agreement, resulting in *ijma'* or consensus. This process ensured that decisions were based on a collective and deep understanding of Islamic teachings.

The concept of *ijma'* in Islam is similar to the principle of consensus in democracy. Scholars who cannot reach a unanimous agreement use the voting method to determine the majority. This approach is based on the understanding that an opinion supported by more people is likely closer to the truth than an opinion supported by only a few. In other words, a majority vote is more likely to reflect the truth than a minority vote. This voting method shows the harmony between the decision – making process in Islam and the democratic principle that prioritizes the majority vote. Both systems recognize the value of consensus and the importance of considering the majority's opinion in solving everyday problems.

## THE RELEVANCE OF YUSUF QARADHAWI'S DEMOCRACY IN INDONESIA

Historically, the roots of the problem between religion and politics (the state) can be traced to the Jawi Hisworo incident. This incident led to the formation of the Committee for Javanese Nationalism. This committee criticized the Sarekat Islam group for mixing religion with politics (Darmawati, 2013). Alimin P., a radical Marxist figure, took up this issue. As a radical and anti-religious Marxist adherent, Alimin urged Sarekat Islam members to separate religion from their organization. He even proposed changing the name of Sarekat Islam to Sarekat Hindia (Noer, 1982).

Based on the events mentioned above, there is an opinion that Indonesia should become an Islamic state that is guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah in state affairs. However, realizing an Islamic state is a complex thing, given the religious diversity in Indonesia. Nonetheless, Indonesia can implement Islamic principles in the state by placing the president as the head of state, not as a religious authority. As the state's leader, the president must consider the entire community's aspirations, both from the majority and minority groups. This kind of openness allows minority groups to understand the direction of leadership and adjust to government policies. The hope is that minority groups, initially marginalized, can change their perceptions and feel more involved in the state's life. This approach is similar to that adopted by Prophet Muhammad when he led Medina, as recorded in the Aqabah agreement.

Democracy in Indonesia has come a long way since 1945. Initially, its implementation could have been better during the revolutionary period because there was still a physical revolutionary movement and centralization of power (Agustam, 2011). Entering 1950–1959, Indonesia experienced a phase of liberal democracy characterized by the dominance of one political party, although other parties began to emerge. Furthermore, the New Order era (1966–1998) began with the issuance of Supersemar. This period was characterized by executive leadership stagnation, closed political processes, undemocratic elections, corrupt practices, and restrictions on human rights. The reformasi phase began in 1998, marked by Soeharto's stepping down due to a loss of public trust (Agustam, 2011). The development of democracy continued, with significant changes occurring during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono era. For the first time, presidential elections were conducted through direct elections, replacing the previous system of election by the MPR (Selma, 2009).

Based on the historical record of democracy in Indonesia, Indonesia has implemented the principles of Islamic democracy as described by Yusuf Qaradhawi. These principles emphasize the right of the people to choose their leaders without coercion, as well as the authority to remove leaders who deviate or act unjustly. Indonesia has practiced this principle, as evidenced by the ouster of President Soeharto. When public confidence in the government plummeted, people organized a series of demonstrations demanding Soeharto's resignation. In addition, Indonesia also applies other democratic principles, such as the multiparty system, giving minority groups the right to be in opposition, guaranteeing freedom of the press, and upholding the independence of the judiciary. This was evident after Soeharto's resignation when public figures responded immediately by forming new political parties and expressing the freedom of speech and association with democratic values.

Although Indonesia has implemented democratic principles, there is still a view that the country is not yet fully democratic (Abdul Razak, 2004). This criticism arises due to irregularities that are contrary to democratic values. The slow development of democracy in Indonesia can be understood as part of the natural process of democracy itself. Building a democratic system requires commitment, patience, and sufficient time to function

correctly. Although the democracy proposed by Qaradhawi has Islamic nuances, this should not be a source of conflict in Indonesia's diverse society. Qaradhawi's concept of Islamic democracy has a historical precedent, namely the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. This example shows that the principles of Islamic democracy can be applied in a plural society without causing division. Thus, although Indonesia still faces challenges in implementing democracy, the Islamic democracy proposed by Qaradhawi can be a valuable reference in developing a democratic system in this country.

## CONCLUSION

Yusuf Qaradhawi's thoughts on political jihad were born as a criticism of the current political reality dominated by secular politics, which is far from Islamic values and tends to justify all means to achieve its goals. Therefore, Yusuf Qaradhawi believes Muslims must change political conditions, not by Islamic rules. According to Yusuf, Qaradhawi is included in jihad to change these conditions.

Indonesia has implemented the principles of Islamic democracy as described by Yusuf Qaradhawi. These principles emphasize the right of the people to choose their leaders without coercion, as well as the authority to remove leaders who deviate or act unjustly. Indonesia has practiced this principle, as evidenced by the ouster of President Soeharto. When public confidence in the government plummeted, people organized a series of demonstrations demanding Soeharto's resignation. In addition, Indonesia also applies other democratic principles, such as a multiparty system, giving minority groups the right to be in opposition, guaranteeing freedom of the press, and upholding the independence of the judiciary.

This article is far from excellent or comprehensive in describing Yusuf Qaradhawi's thoughts. However, it can tell readers what Yusuf Qaradhawi thinks about political jihad. Furthermore, input for readers interested in reading Yusuf Qaradhawi's democratic thoughts would be excellent to see in the realm of Indonesia. Because Indonesia, which is said to have been a democracy, has turned out to be defective in carrying out its democracy.

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