

Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah's Responses to the Religious Blasphemy in the Case of Non-Muslim Leader in Indonesia

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Abstract: *This study aims to examine how the ideological preferences of Islamic organizations such as Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah (MU) affect the understanding of the Quran. Using a descriptive analytic method, the author discusses how NU and MU respond to cases of blasphemy on the leadership of religion Indonesian non-Muslims. This article finds that understanding the Quranic text goes hand in hand with the understanding of the ideology of each organization. The performative function of the Quran will also work as it should depend on the understanding that has been established within an organization.*

Keywords: *Nahdhatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Auliyā' in al-Mā'idah:51, Non-Muslim Leadership*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana preferensi ideologi lembaga organisasi Islam seperti Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) dan Muhammadiyah (MU) berpengaruh pada pemahaman teks Alquran serta pembuatan kebijakan. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif analitik, penulis mendiskusikan bagaimana NU dan MU merespon tentang kasus penistaan agama dan kepemimpinan non-Muslim Indonesia. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa pemahaman teks Alquran berjalan seiring dengan pemahaman ideologi setiap organisasi serta fungsi performatif Alquran juga akan berjalan sebagaimana mestinya tergantung pada pemahaman yang sudah established di dalam sebuah organisasi.

Kata kunci: Nahdhatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, *Auliyā'* dalam al-Mā'idah: 51, kepemimpinan Non-Muslim

Introduction

The present paper aims to examine how ideological understanding affected to the text understanding and impacted for making a policy. The issue of ideological subjectivity has been repeatedly discussed by Modernist Muslim Scholars such as Nasr

Ḥamīd Abū Zaid,¹ Farīd Esack,² Ignaz Goldziher,³ and Andrew Rippin.⁴ They stated ideological and theological subjectivity cannot be avoided by an interpreter because he has presumption before producing a Tafsir. Thesis statement which is approved by them has established in Islamic tradition well-known as *ta'wīl*.⁵ It means that *ta'wīl* theory in Islam and subjectivity in Western have the same purpose to produce the clear meaning which is relevant to society.

Moreover, the discourse of subjectivity in understanding of text is being more developed than previous by which it began applied on social and political practice. It was taken place when general election held in Indonesia in which some politicians utilized a number of verses of the Quran as a symbol to legitimize their parties, especially Islamic parties.⁶ This trend was identified by Peter G. Ridell,⁷ Azyumardi Azra,⁸ and Ivan Ivekovick⁹ (2002) as *the abuse of the Quran text*. They argued the politicization of the Koranic verses was utilized to help them in obtaining support from the society in the election. Religious politicization is increasing recently in Indonesia when Basuki Tjahja Purnama (Ahok), as the Governor of Jakarta, returned to be a candidate of governor election in 2016.¹⁰

Ahok's decision, at the moment, became debatable because the majority of traditionalist Islam refused his leadership as non-Muslim as well as his work. Additionally, he stated to society there was no prohibition to point out non-Islamic leaders based on QS. al-Māi'dah:51, and his statement was recorded, edited, and spread out by one of citizens detected as the supporter of another Governor candidate. By the

¹Nashr Ḥamīd Abū Zayd, *Mafḥūm al-Nāṣ: Dirāsah 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Bairūt: Markāz al-Šaqafi,1994), 67.

²Farid Esack, *Quran Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression* (London: One World Oxford, 1997), 65.

³Ignaz Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology* (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1910), 121.

⁴Andrew Rippin, "Qurānic Exegesis in the Malay World: in search a profile", *Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, 1 (2016), 89.

⁵Diane Morgan, *Essential Islam: A Comprehensive Guide to Belief and Practice* (America: Green Wood Publication, 1991), 34.

⁶Johanna Pink, Tradition and Ideology in Contemporary Sunnite Qurānic Exegesis: From Arab World, Turkey and Indonesia and their interpretation of 5:51, *Die Welt des Islams* 50, March 2010, 6.

⁷Peter G. Riddell, "The Use of Arabic Commentaries on the Quran in the Early Islamic Period in South and Southeast Asia: A Report Work on Process", *Indonesia Circle Journal* 1, 2, 67.

⁸Azyumardi Azra, *The Use and Abuse of the Qurānic Verses in Contemporary Indonesian Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), 192.

⁹Ivan Ivekovick, "Nationalism and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion: the Politicization of Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam in Yugoslav Successor States", *Journal of SagePub* 1, 1 (2002), 89.

¹⁰Nuryadi, dkk, "News of Islamic Blasphemy on the Websites of Kompas and Republika: A Critical Discourse Alaysis", dalam *Jurnal KnE Social Sciences* 1, 1 (2018), 307.

contents of the video, the most conservative Muslims stated that Ahok did a religious blasphemy of QS. al-Mā'idah:51 as an untruth text. In the contrary, some modernist Muslims argued that Ahok did not do religious profanity because he only said "*Jangan mau dibohongi memakai al-Maidah*" not "*Jangan mau dibohongi al-Mā'idah*".¹¹ In this context, linguistics believed if Ahok's statement used the word "memakai", it meant its interpretation not its text.

People have taken many attentions to response it nationally both in understanding textually, contextually and politically in Ahok's case. Many expert scholars expressed their different opinions of this case individually or organizationally in which some modernist Muslim scholars stated the case was not about religious blasphemy but about morality while conservative Muslim scholars said that it was about the violation of the Quran. Consequently, traditionalist group attempted Ahok to be a suspect, and they collected massively mass to protest the Indonesian government because of their slowness in dealing with him into a prison.¹² This phenomenon was identified by Martin Van Bruinessen as the appearance of radicalism in Indonesia.¹³ Meanwhile, modernist circles believed Ahok's mistake was unintentionally, they argued his request for forgiveness necessitated to be appreciated by conservatives.¹⁴

The major question in this paper is how Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah (MU), as the biggest Islamic Organization, responded about religious blasphemy and non-Muslim leadership in Indonesia around three years ago, in 2016. These organizations have reacted which was represented by their authoritative figures. For instance, Said Aqil Siradj, as NU's chair, stated the meaning of *Auliyā'* in al-Mā'idah:51 was specifically not the leader because its meaning was not relevant to the social structure of Indonesian which is essentially multicultural. From MU organization expressed by Amien Rais, as the founder of Muhammadiyah, asserted to the publics and to their followers the meaning of *Auliyā'* in al-Mā'idah:51 was a leader, so Muslims was

¹¹Aulia Nastiti dan Sari Ratri, "Emotive Politics: Islamic Organizations and Religious Mobilization in Indonesia", dalam *Journal Islamic South East Asian Studies (ISEAS)* 40, 2 (2018), 198.

¹²Aulia Nastiti dan Sari Ratri, "Emotive Politics: Islamic Organizations and Religious Mobilization in Indonesia", 200.

¹³Martin V.B, "Contemporary Development in Indonesia", *Journal Southeast Asian Studies* 2, 3 (2013), 35.

¹⁴Lihat <https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/72619>. Apakah Ahok menista agama? Ini penjelasan ketum PBNU. diakses 12 November 2018.

forbidden to choose non-Muslim as their leader appropriately in Indonesia which was Muslim majority.

From the different perspectives above, this paper would like to specific question what are arguments used by each organizations in deciding the meaning of *Auliyā'* and what their internal ideologies influenced their thought by which Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have a main principal namely *Wasaṭiyyah* and *back to the Quran and Hadith* consecutively. In addition, this article asks about what their interpretation of *Auliyā'* was motivated by political attention and how their follower's viewpoint to this case what they agreed with their leader about non-Muslim leadership applied in Indonesia. The last question in this article is what non-Muslim leadership in Indonesia is allowed historically in which history noticed since its independence, Indonesia has always been led by a Muslim dominated by Javanese, but the writer views non-Muslim leadership in the reality occurred in the lack of district and city in Indonesia .

The outlines of this paper are to elaborate the meaning of *Auliyā'* consist of al-Mā'idah:51 generally in classic and modern Tafsir, to identify NU and MU's perspectives on it what are they influenced by ideology or not, and it will specifically examine their opinions about non-Muslim leadership. This article will discuss the organization systems both NU and MU in history, purpose, political interest and their roles creating a guideline to Indonesia. It is necessary discussed because their authoritative figures statement were extremely effect of the policy in Indonesia.

As the writer said above both NU and MU have different ideology and practical life, but they have the same interests on the social and political space, and they actively reacted to this case by writing opinion on their internal website or other newspaper. It applies descriptive-analytics method by using historical, political, and ideological approaches in which these methodologies were needed to prove their perspectives on the meaning of *Auliyā'* and non-Muslim leadership shaped by their internal ideology. Consequently, this article concludes that the understanding of the text is in line with the ideological presupposition of each organization. It means the performance of the Quran functions as it should, it lives according to the understanding established in its community.

The History, Ideology and Political Preference of Nahḍatul 'Ulama (NU) and Muḥammadiyah (MU)

Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) and Muhamadiyah (MU) are the biggest Islamic Organization and they dedicated themselves to the prosperity of Moslem majority in Indonesia.¹⁵ Based on the historical point, the rise of NU and MU has a different background. For instance, NU was born as a response for maintaining indigenous Islam¹⁶ that was believed as polytheistic Islam by modernist Moslem circles, namely MU. He argued the Islamic tradition applied by NU such as worshiping trees, offerings, pilgrimage was shirk, and irrational activities should be destroyed.¹⁷

The extinction movement of Islamic traditional practices became a trend issue to modernist including MU. It was signed by congress which was directly pioneered by Egyptian Islamic organizations in which the conference would discuss Islamic conventional problems as well as its destruction in Islamic countries.¹⁸ Consequently, Indonesian government sent the authoritative Moslem figures such as KH. Wahab Hasbullah a representation of traditionalist thinkers, H. Fachruddin from the MU community, and Suryopranoto as the representative of the Sarekat Islam to discuss Islamic condition in Indonesia. At the same time, the tragedy of expulsion of Syarif Hussein by the Wahhabi leaders occurred as the effort of enlarging Wahabi thought in Hijaz. This action was warmly welcomed by modernists, but was rejected by traditionalists.

Two years later, Ibn Saūd as the king of Saudi Arabia, was held twice Islamic Congress and Indonesia had the opportunity to attend it. To respond the meeting, Indonesian Moslem thinkers also organized the same theme congress in two cities, Bandung and Yogyakarta. KH. Wahab Hasbullah expressed traditionalist's aspirations to respect and approve Islamic traditional practices in Indonesia as well as in Mecca and Medina. The message is set aside by the modernists as the main audience of the congress, so that he walked out and initiated to re-discuss it with other conventionalist

¹⁵Zada K., Sjadzili, AF. *Nahdhatul ulama: Dinamika ideologi dan politik kenegaraan*. Dilihat dari <https://books.google.co.id/books?id>

¹⁶Barton, G., Fealy, G. *Nahdhatul ulama, traditional Islam and modernity in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Mizan, 2006), 34.

¹⁷Jurdi, S. dkk, *1 abad Muhammadiyah gagasan pembaruan sosial keagamaan* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010), 10.

¹⁸Jurdi, S. dkk, *1 abad Muhammadiyah gagasan pembaruan sosial keagamaan* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010), 15.

figure and he obtained positive feedback from them. This response became the momentum of the first time of Nahḍatul 'Ulama was born in 1926.

The meeting was initiated by KH. Wahab Hasbullah as the starting point of the establishment of NU, was attended by clerics from various regions such as KH. Hasyim Asyari, KH. Bakri Sanusi, KH. Nahrowi, and KH. Abdul Aziz. The gathering resulted several decisions that formed the basic idea for the NU's history. They agreed to meet personally Ibn Saūd as the king of Saudi Arabia, outside the congress, to make sure that the Saudi Arabian government kept respect traditional society's beliefs and respect the four schools and the understanding of *Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* becoming reference for the Indonesian Islamic community especially NU. This meeting did not produce a real answer from the king, but he would like to respect Indonesian Moslem beliefs.¹⁹

The most important agreement produced by some NU clerics was an attitude of community to sustain NU's principle of "al-Muḥāfazah 'alā qadīm al-Ṣāliḥ wa al-Akhzu bī al-Jadīd al-Aṣlah" (maintaining Islamic tradition and receiving a new better tradition). This message was clearly illustrated by Walisongo who were able spreading Islam faster and using excellent manner without denying the existing customs and cultural traditions. It was what made the traditional NU seemed more flexible than MU claiming as modernist, but MU shown harder because he did not compromise with the traditions in its preaching.²⁰

NU has existed for maintaining Islamic tradition in Indonesia, while MU appeared as a reaction of the hardships of previous Moslem majority in Indonesia. It means that for the first time of the establishment of their organization, they have a contrary purpose by which MU rejected what NU kept alive. The rejection of Islamic orthodox practice by MU became a main purpose for expanding the recent practice in Indonesia, so he called himself more modernist than NU. MU's concept of modernization was applied through the transformation of educational systems by reducing learning *classic text* (Kitab Kuning) and increasing more modern studies in the school. It means that MU made the quantity recent studies more dominant than classic,²¹

¹⁹Turmudi, E. *Ideology politics and the formation of khaira ummah* (Jakarta: LPMU, 2003), 28.

²⁰Ahmad Baso, *NU studies* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2010), 42.

²¹Fazlur Rahman, *Revival and reform in Islam: A study of Islamic fundamentalism*. (London: One World, 2002), 142.

as well as Azra argued modernity promoted by MU only ends in the quantity not to the whole system of education.²²

Moreover, he duplicated the Dutch school system, but it remained a new rule taking along changes to the education system in Indonesia. Hamka argued an educational alteration in internal MU was inspired by Muḥammad Abduh's thought who emphasized more western view.²³ Muḥammadiyah's institutions, in the past, were indeed more modern than Naḥdatul Ulama but the quantities of NU's schools are no more than MU today. Although there were differences between them in the grassroots, some scholars believed there was the convergence between the two through education. It occurred because educational system allowed the rotation of NU student to study in MU's school equally.²⁴

NU and MU have the same desires to perpetuate Islamic values to Indonesian as well as they have the same principle namely *back to the Quran and Sunnah*. It means that they have the same intentions but they also have different ideologies and the way of understanding Islam. For instance, Muḥammadiyah, has been powerfully influenced by KH. Ahmad Dahlan's ideology who interpreted every worship must be depends on the Quran and Sunnah.²⁵ This is affected to the MU's ideology that every practice which did not find in the Quran and has never been done by the prophet of Muhammad saw. was suggested as profanation, such as *qunut*, *wiridan*, and praying in the grave. Another doctrine taught by Dahlan and continued by MU is caring for and loving orphans in which he established an orphanage foundation. However, foundations and educational institutions initiated by the MU did not able to represent the modernity He embraced. The institution is argued only as a financial capital intake for the organization of Muḥammadiyah. The Internal MU viewed this is one of problem marked that MU was stagnant. The stagnation also affected of the quantity of pilgrims which did not developing in contrast to NU which was more numerous and progressive.²⁶

NU and MU, slowly over time, responded simultaneously to the Islamic problems in Indonesia both in terms of economics, education, law, social and politics.

²²Azyumardi Azra, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Tolerance and radicalism", *Centre for Study of Contemporary Islam*, (2013), 22.

²³Buya Hamka, *Tafsir al-azhar* (Jakarta: GIP.1999), 65.

²⁴A. Mu'ti, *Muhammadiyah dan politik Islam inklusif* (Jakarta: Maarif Institute,2005), 105.

²⁵M. Syamsuddin, "Gerakan Muhammadiyah dalam wacana multikulturalisme sebuah landasan normatif institusional", *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat* 1, 1 (2017), 370.

²⁶Dawam Rahardjo, *Islam dan transformasi sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1999), 125.

They are re-actualizing the principle values forgotten by their followers in which actualization carried out by them was different, NU with *Wasatīyah* values while MU with the fundamental principle.²⁷ The idea of NU and MU, from the beginning, was dissimilar, so they naturally often have different perspective and interpretations for the same cases. For example, MU spent much time for discussing Bank interest in which is still debatable by the classic and contemporary scholars, while NU was reluctant to deeply discuss on it.²⁸ in addition, legal decision-making among the MU was taken through *Majlis Tarjih* which referred to the Quran and hadith, he also never denied the rules of fiqh and its uṣūl. However, the disadvantage of MU was denying other evidence beyond the prophet. Therefore, the determination of law which is un-histories was unavoidable.

This reality was argued by MU's own internal figures as a deadlock which made the organization stagnate. Dawam Rahardjo, as an internal MU, also criticized MU's decision contaminated by Wahabi thought. He believed both MU and Wahabi were anti-Sufism and local culture lived in the community even though the prophet. It illustrated even MU proclamaide itself as modernist, but in term of legal judgment it was more fundamentalist than NU who had a traditionalist principle but practically NU took the law from some schools but dominated by Shafiī school. In other words, NU rarely refers to the opinion of Ḥanafī, Ḥambalī and Mālikī schools.²⁹

Recently, Dawam argued that MU movement is opinionated no more successful than NU. It could be seen from the regeneration of scholars, for instance, NU is assessed more comprehensive than MU in which he has many young scholars who were able to represent NU's *wasatīyah* thoughts such as KH. Mustafa Bisri, Quraish Shihab, Said Agil Siradj, Ulil Absar Abdalla, Moqsith Ghazali and others. In addition, NU also applied and believed Sufism, so he was considered more capable of breaking down reform of Islamic problem in Indonesia. Meanwhile, MU was positioned at the intersection between liberal and fundamentalist reformer Wahabi. NU observed from some sides was illustrated more advanced because the failure of MU brought transformation as the modernist organization, while NU with its orthodox principle was

²⁷Ulil Absar Abdalla, *NU: Identitas Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: elSas, 2004), 92.

²⁸Dawam Rahardjo, *Islam dan transformasi sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1999), 110.

²⁹Dawam Rahardjo, *Islam dan transformasi sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1999), 138.

able to merge into traditionalist and modern on the other side.³⁰ Azyumardi Azra described the stagnation of MU was also caused by its scriptural attitude. It means based on the theory MU has followed Muḥammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, and Jamaluddin al-Afghani's thoughts, but in term of practice he was confined to the ibn Taimiyah's ideas. Through the emphasis of ibn Taimiyah's salafism ideology, MU absolutely refused the structural innovation of Islamic modern practices which is established in Indonesia.³¹

Regardless of the problem of the two organizations, they have equally contributions to the Indonesian government. For example when determining the time of 1st Syawal, both of them were explore their argumentation on it, even the result of the decision repeatedly was differed in which MU celebrated Ied al-Fitri earlier than NU, because NU always has the same outcome with Indonesian government. Therefore, the majority of NU circles celebrated Ied al-Fitri on the same day with all of Indonesian people having no organization and obedient to the government. Furthermore, the other case which involved them was about religious blasphemy case of Basuki Tjahya Purnama (Ahok) as the former Governor of Jakarta from 2014 to 2018. They attempted to respond and legitimate the law whether Ahok was guilty or not and they also respond the problems of non-Muslim leadership in Indonesia by using their resources. Therefore, the next discussion was the response of scholars and pilgrims in the NU and MU circles. The sources used in the next sub-chapter are more dominated by internal or external magazines or online news.

The writer believed that their argumentations about non-Muslim leadership based on al-Mā'idah: 51, will be influenced by ideological and political reference. Thus, the matters related to the political preferences both NU and MU was important to be explored in this article. Since the origin of NU, he was not the part of politics. Meanwhile, publics examined whether NU was *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (PKB) party or not?, this question arose since 2004 when Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) as the chaired of NU including PKB party advanced for presidential election accompanied by Megawati Soekarno Putri who contributed to the role of clerics and NU leaders

³⁰A. Mu'ti, *Muhammadiyah dan politik Islam inklusif* (Jakarta: Maarif Institute, 2005), 109.

³¹Azyumardi Azra, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Tolerance and radicalism", *Centre for Study of Contemporary Islam*, (2013), 25.

voiced their voice to support Gus Dur in the democracy. Their participations were extremely important to NU because for them, clerics were the role model whose order deserved to be respected.

In 2004, was the best moment to prove NU's political flow and to prove that PKB was NU. The thesis that NU was PKB could be proven in 2004 when the majority of the NU Muslim community chose Gus Dur, as President of the Republic of Indonesia, by which it was unconsciously that the majority of PKB politicians came from NU. The writer viewed that since Gus Dur devoted himself as president, the voice of NU has automatically been able to be PKB's voice. In terms of politics, NU depended on the clerics order. In addition, the declaration of influential leaders and figures in NU also has an important role in gaining *Nahḍiyyīn's* vote in the democratic event. For example, when Jokowi Dodo progressed as a candidate for Presidential Candidate in 2014 and was promoted by PKB, NU's voice automatically entered to Jokowi's voice. This is occurred because the number of NU followers was the most compared to other Islamic organizations, including MU.

Moreover, NU worshipers were not all Mosleems, some are Christians, Catholics and Buddhists. Thus, PKB representing the voice of Nahdiyyin was often considered by many parties as friends of the democratic coalition. The conclusion was also verified and occurred in the presidential election in 17 April 2019. Jokowi was selected as the next president of Indonesia for two periods. This is happen because of KH. Ma'ruf Amin, as a representation of the NU traditionalists, became candidates for the Vice President to accompany Jokowi. They obtained support from NU figures and Gus Dur families, so they got voices higher than in 2014 namely increasing 2% from 52% to 54% based on the quick count of many credible polling organizations in Indonesia such as LSI, SMRC, Indikator, Charta Politika and others.

NU and MU, although self-proclaimed were not a part of politics in Indonesia, but their followers positioned themselves as the practical actors in the political sphere, so NU and MU's perspective was influenced by their political interest. NU's aspiration could be fulfilled by PKB party in the form of policies, while MU transferred the aspiration by using one of the party in Indonesia namely *Partai Amanat Nasional* (PAN) which is created by Amien Rais. Many figures suggested that Amien was the main influential figure of PAN party, so that they assumed *PAN is nothing without*

Amien Rais. It can be said that PKB is not realized as a part of PKB, while MU consciously creates itself as an organization influenced ideologically PAN party.

Additionally, the establishment of PAN party was also due to the closeness of MU leaders and its cadres and this party is indicated as the way to Amien Rais running for presidential election, and the intention was realized in 2004. He became a candidate for president against Gus Dur, but he was defeated by the sound of NU followers who voted Gus Dur, even both of the two are Islamic parties. The writer believed that recently both are equally dilemmas with its political direction whether they will transfer public's aspiration or they will only prioritize a group of elites for their political interest. The writer also noticed every Islamic party has a variety of political views and socio-political behavior which is difficult to avoid either the political elite or its supporters.

Interpretation of *Auliyā'* from Classic to Modern Interpretation

The meaning of *Auliyā'* in the Quran, especially in surah al-Māidah, recently became one of the warmest discussions in the academic communities, this reality emerged as a response to the Ahok issue which was considered to have committed blasphemy in 2016. Based on Arabic rules *Auliyā'* was the plural of words ولي which meant an alliance/friendship and relationship with the client. In addition, according to the Lisān al-'Arāb dictionary, *Auliyā'* has the meaning of friend or helper,³² while another dictionary written by Yusuf 'Ālī also explained as a friend.³³ In this surah, some group scripturalists always connected the word *auliyā'* with the word *kafīr*, so it must be explores to find a red threat to this matter with the historical review for the *asbāb al-nuzūl* this verse shall not be missed. The word of الكافرين was the plural of words كفر which meant turning away. Based on term of the word, it defined as a group of people who revolved to God, or people who were not grateful for the blessings of God.³⁴

In this case, it depicts implicitly that the meaning of *kafīr* is not personal identity whether he is a Muslim or non-Muslim, but rather emphasizes one's faith to his God. Moreover, it is possible for a non-Muslim to believe in God in the context of their

³²Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'arāb* (Bairūt: Dār Al-Ḥadīṣ,1335), 138.

³³Ali Yusuf, *The holy quran* (Britain: Wordsworth, 2001), 86.

³⁴Mohammed Arkoun, *The unthought in contemporary islamic thought* (London: Saqi Books, 2002), 122.

religion, on the contrary as a Muslim there may be those who believe in carrying out His commands and there are also only Muslims as identities but he does not carry out his duties as a Muslim. Al-Rāzī assumed that Abraham's religion was a faith religion, while Nasrani did not believe in his trinity and Jews also did not believe in his anthropomorphism.³⁵

From the classic interpretation, for example, al-Ṭabārī interpreted to the meaning of *auliyā'* in al-Mā'idah :51, was not related to leadership, but rather is aimed at hypocrites. He elucidated this meaning by using the next verse that "أن الله لا يوفق من وضع الولاية في غير موضعها فوالي اليهود والنصارى مع عداوتهم الله ورسوله والمؤمنين- على المؤمنين، وكان لهم ظهيرا ونصيرا، لأن من تولاهم فهو لله ولرسوله حرب"³⁶ Historically, the explanation of this verse implied that making Jews and Christians as allies or helpers was forbidden by Allah, because they at that time only prioritized their interests and exploiting of Muslim society. Al-Qurtubī, as the next classic commentator, by al-Jābirī classified as Mālikī schools and identical to the hadith citation of the commentary,³⁷ verified that the descent of the verse related to the story of Abū Lubābah as a hypocrite spreading the secret Muslims to Jews people. Another history quoted was about the fear of Muslims since the Uhud war which caused them to plan to elect Jews and Christians as leaders.³⁸

Al-Ṭabaṭṭabāī, in his commentary *al-Mīzan*, explained the word *Auliyā'* as relationship closeness, without any restrictions between them. In the context of piety, he described it as helper, while in the context of society he noted it as the attraction of the soul. Thus, according to him, *auliyā'* was something that is loved and attractive, and fulfilling his orders. In terms of obedience, *auliyā'* was a leader who must be adhered his policies, even though he did not come from the majority group. According to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, as the theological figure of Sunnī, the substance of the message referred to in al-Mā'idah:51, was not a leadership context, but the context of prohibition to ask helping and relying on Christians and Jews.³⁹

Meanwhile, as said by al-Zamakhsyarī, who was known as interpreter identical to Mu'tazilī theology, explicitly stated that there was the proscription of Muslims

³⁵Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsir mafātih al-ghā'ib* (Bairūt: Dār al-Ihyā,1420), 134.

³⁶Ibn al-Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsir Al-Ṭabarī* (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2002), 224.

³⁷Al-Qurtubī, *Tafsir al-Qur'ān* (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2009), 251. Lihat juga Mohammed Abīd al-Jabīrī, *Post tradisionalisme Islam*. (Yogyakarta: LKIS2010), 40.

³⁸Mohammed Arkoun, *The unthought in contemporary islamic thought* (London: Saqi Books, 2002), 89.

³⁹Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsir Mafātih al-Ghā'ib*, 155.

choosing Christians and Jews as trustees in matters of help. He also asserted that there is permission courtesy, being kind and gentle with them. In this interpretation, he referred to the historical reality in the early period of the verse relating to the convenience of Muslims persuaded by Jews and Christians.⁴⁰ The next commentator al-Biqā'ī,⁴¹ expressly interpreted the word *aulyā'* as a relative or close friend. In this case, both stated that the context was not in terms of leadership, but the context of a very close and harmonious relationship. Moreover, al-Shaukanī in his commentary, stressed that what is meant by the prohibition of making Jews and Christians as *aulyā'* is the prohibition on addressing them such as addressing loved ones in matters of mutual trust, help and social interaction.⁴²

According to Indonesian's popular exegetist, Syaikh al-Nawawi al-Bantani from the land of Java, explored the word *aulyā'* with *aḥbāb* which meant loved ones, friends, close friends and loyal friends.⁴³ In contrast, the prohibition referred to in the verse did not mean a prohibition on friendship, but the proscription to act excessively to Christians. According to Bahrun, it can be interpreted through the explanation of (QS. al-Nisā':139) which confirmed that non-Muslims should be avoided as guardians. This interpretation is used as a basis for the scriptural or textual group to avoid and voting non-Muslims circles as leaders, because they argued that it was illegal.

Hamka, one of Indonesia's most prominent interpreter in modern times, agreed with Bahrun that God prohibited Muslims for choosing non-Muslims as leaders. He added that this warning was caused by distrust of non-Muslims towards God, so that his policy was deemed not to have a direction.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, according to Quraish Shihab, as a famous generation of Indonesian mufassir right now, he has different interpretation with Hamka. He believed that the leader meaning in the word *aulyā'* was irrelevant if applied in Indonesia, because the population was multi-culture and ethnic. Moreover, he assumed that the word *kāfir* truly was not wrong if it was interpreted as a group that did not embrace Islam, but it should be remembered that the use of the *kāfir* word in the various Quran also has different meanings. For him, based

⁴⁰Al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsir al-Kasasyāf* (Bairūt: Dār al-Quṭb al-‘Arabī,1402), 642.

⁴¹Al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-ḍurar fī Tanāsub al-Āyat wa al-Suwār* (Libanon: Dār al-Quṭb al-Ilmiyah,1415), 186.

⁴²Al-Syaukānī, *Faḥ al-Qadīr al-Jāmi' bayān al-Riwāyat wa Dirāyat fī Tafsīr* (Yaman: Dār al-Quṭb, 1820), 57.

⁴³Syaikh al-Nawawi al-Bantani, *Tafsir Marah Labid* (Bairūt: Dār al-Quṭb,1897), 72.

⁴⁴Buya Hamka, *Tafsir al-Azhār* (Jakarta: GIP,1999), 412.

on (QS. Ibrahim: 7), the closest meaning of that word to the reality in Indonesia was the denial of the manifestation and oneness of Allah and not carry out His commands.⁴⁵

From the various interpretations above, it depicts that the different interpretation of the text was influenced by ideological, theological and fiqh schools of thought of each interpreter. In addition, Gadamer argued that it occurred because of the pre-understanding of the interpreter which is manifested in the freedom of the text interpretation, as well as the encouragement of socio-cultural problems happened in society.⁴⁶ For example, interpretation by Hamka, having a tendency to avoid the interpretation of the contradictory-argumentative model, indicated that he has authority over the interpretation model he produced. The commentary by Syaikh al-Nawawi as a Sunnī commentator, and Quraish Shihab's work as the subjective interpretation, examined in a previous study by Atik Wartini,⁴⁷ depicted the flexibility of interpretation equipped by arguments that were relevant to social problem faced by publics.

Moreover, the interpretation of the Sunnī school represented by al-Rāzī and the Mu'tazilī sects represented by al-Zamakhsyarī, proved that theological influences were extremely powerful in the process of interpreting the Quran. This is verified by Johanna Pink that the difference is caused by the differentiation of basic principles that are agreed and applied in the form of interpretations.⁴⁸ Meanwhile, the majority of classical interpreters who emphasized scriptural and formalistic interpretation are continuity of old interpretations type that did not insert critical and creative intellectual traits.⁴⁹ Consequently, the author assumes that modern interpreter able to improvise the meaning of the text compared to classical interpreters who only cited the history without additional arguments related to the socio-cultural conditions of the society when they wrote the commentary. Moreover, previous article written by Muḥsin Mahfūz concluded that an approachable and substantial interpretation model would implicate the attitude of diversity and understanding of a reader.

⁴⁵Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-misbah* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2005),142.

⁴⁶Hans George Gadamer, *Truth and Methode* (Germany: A&C Black, 1960), 111.

⁴⁷A. Wartini, "Corak penafsiran Muhammad Quraish Shihab dalam Tafsir al-Misbah", *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 11, 1, 112.

⁴⁸Johanna Pink, "Tradition and ideology in contemporary sunnite quranic exegesis: From Arab world, Turkey and Indonesia and their interpretation of 5:51", *Die Welt des Islams* 50, (2010), 42.

⁴⁹Muḥammad Abīd al-Jabīrī, *Post tradisionalisme Islam* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2010),10.

Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah 's Response of Ahok's Case of Religious Blasphemy and Non-Muslim Leadership in Indonesia.

As mentioned previously by the author, Batsuki Tjahja Purnama (Ahok)'s case of religious blasphemy in 2016 has raised many positive and negative responses from various parties starting from authoritative figures, Islamic organizations, Indonesian Survey Institutions also Indonesian individually responded this through online media (facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp). The reaction was massively carried out by various experts to support or reject Ahok's accusations, as the violation of Islam, through his speech in Pulau Seribu, 30 September 2016. According to Rita,⁵⁰ as a journalist one of Indonesia's local television, wrote that at that time Ahok citing the fragments of al-Mā'idah:51 to illustrate the issue of SARA which has been created by political opponents by aiming of defeating him in the election of the Governor of Jakarta. Ahok's speech were recorded and distributed by Buni Yani, one of his political opponents, and he was also reported by Habib Chaidir Novel Hasan because he was argued doing blasphemy through electronic media.

For processed by the police, according to Putu Merta Surya,⁵¹ Ahok was assessed always attending and respecting the regulations in Indonesia. Meanwile, the contradictory community thought that the police deal with it too long to produce a decision on the Ahok's case, so they held a demonstration in 2 December 2016 known as 212 actions. The action was attended by sympathizers of Forum Umat Islam (FUI), Front Pembela Islam (FPI), and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) organization. This demonstration was led directly by the chairman of the FPI namely Habib Rizieq Shihab (2017). Besides Rizieq, several influential figures and scholars in Indonesia also attended to support the action, including Bachtiar Natsir, AA gym, Arifin Ilham, and Ma'ruf Amin, and it was presented by Ahok's political opponents, Anies Baswedan and Sandiaga Uno.⁵²

The demonstration was held to ask immediately the government to bring down Ahok from his position as Governor of Jakarta and made him as a suspect. In addition,

⁵⁰<https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/3322122> Mengulik kembali perjalanan kasus Ahok. diakses pada 28 Februari 2018.

⁵¹Lihat [https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa,Golkar soal Ahok bebas: Dia manusia taat hukum dan bertanggungjawab.Merdeka Online](https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/Golkar_soal_Ahok_bebas:_Dia_manusia_taat_hukum_dan_bertanggungjawab.Merdeka_Online) diakses pada 24 Januari 2018.

⁵²Lihat <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/trensosial-42191751>, Reuni 212 dan orang-orang dalam puserannya: Dimanakah mereka?. *BBC News Indonesia*, diakses pada 1 Desember 2018.

the demonstrators requested to Jokowi, as the president of Indonesia, not to intervene the case. Otherwise, they threatened to take action continually and gathered more masses with the aim of bringing down Jokowi's position because they believed that president protected Ahok. At the end of the time, he asked to the police seriously and transparently dealing with religious blasphemy case, so the condition in Jakarta could be more conducive without any demonstration. He also appealed to the society to separate political and religious issues because in essence Indonesian citizens were diverse.

Some observers said that the action of 212 was not an action actually called by demonstrators as an act of defending Islam, but rather a political interest because FPI was claimed as one of the radical Islamic organizations which was certainly prohibited by the government. Azra examined that this phenomenon was the political action in which there were the attentiveness of political elites and Islamic organizations refused government system in Indonesia. He explained that the action occurred because the political and legal situation was unstable and the authorities were considered exhausted, so it led to the emergence of radicalism by individuals and groups.⁵³

Some outstanding figures, such as KH.Said Aqil Siradj as PBNU chairman, Yenny Wahid as the Executive Director of Wahid Institute, Abdul Mu'ti as PP Muhammadiyah General Secretary, Gatot Nurmantyo as the Former of TNI Commander, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin as the Minister of Religion, Zulkifli Hasan as the leader of MPR RI, Titto Karnavian as Police General Jokowi's presidential era, expressed their opinion when they became guest speaker on one of Indonesia's local television talk shows *Mata Najwa*. They agreed the demonstrations that were held were not demonstrations aimed for strengthening the Indonesian Islamic community, but purposed to divide Indonesia's national integrity.⁵⁴

Moreover, Said Aqil explained the issue of the religious blasphemy of Islam alleged to Ahok, he illustrated that the definition of blasphemy was not only through verbal but also actions and behavior. In detail, he gave an example of what is called blasphemy, namely an action carried out by ISIS organization that killed fellow human beings in the name of Islam. In fact, he also mentioned that blasphemy was the contrary

⁵³Azyumardi Azra, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Tolerance and radicalism" *Centre for Study of Contemporary Islam*,11.

⁵⁴Lihat <https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/72619>, Apakah Ahok menista agama? Ini penjelasan ketum PBNU. diakses pada 2 November 2018.

act to religion but on behalf of belief. For him, Ahok's performance was not an act of blasphemy, except that he has already offended a number of Muslims in Indonesia.⁵⁵

The author examines from the seven figures who were speakers on *Mata Najwa* show, only Abdul Mu'ti was clearly not close to NU's ideology. Meanwhile, the others might have the same ideology with NU because of their involvement in various activities carried out by the NU organization as well as activities related to Gus Dur. For example, Said Aqil as PBNU chairman automatically upheld the *wasatiyyah* values embraced by NU, while Yenny as Gus Dur's daughter who was well known as a person stretching the idea of pluralism and liberalism values also directly has the same ideology with NU. Lukman, Titto, Zulkifli and Gatot, they were leaders who were helping of Jokowi's presidential government by which Jokowi was known as a figure close to the NU cleric and Gus Dur's family. They also appreciated Gus Dur's thoughts and his family, which were considered to have a major influence on the harmonization of the Islamic community in Indonesia.

A few Muhammadiyah scholars who voice vocal statements and attitudes in the media, they mostly provide and discuss it within the organization. For example, former head of the PP Muhammadiyah, Din Syamsuddin, one of leader who even avoided commenting on Ahok's case to the media, even though other figures Buya Syafi'i Ma'arif who had a major influence on MU's ideology, commented that Ahok was innocent because he was someone who was external to Islam. His argument was argued controversial because the public believed MU supporting Ahok proved by Amien Rais, participated in the demonstration of 212. Syafi'i's statement was suggested by Abdul Mu'ti as a reasonable and not controversial statement. According to him, statement that was different from most was not necessarily controversial, because everyone has a different interpretation based on their preferences.⁵⁶

At the end of the time, MU held a press conference represented by Haedar Nasir as MU chairman. He explained that the Ahok's case had been properly processed by polices, MU respected the Judge's decision to set Ahok as a suspect. He also requested that every religious individual must respect other personals because everyone was

⁵⁵Lihat <http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/81486>, Pemimpin non-Muslim dalam Islam. diakses pada 3 Juni 2018.

⁵⁶Lihat <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/2651283>. Muhammadiyah: Pendapat Syafi'i Ma'arif soal Ahok tak kontroversial, diakses pada 14 November 2018.

protected by law. This statement indicated that the internal figures of the MU from the beginning have the same view with Amien Rais about the Ahok case. In the context of non-Muslim leadership in Indonesia, MU scholars were not open to the public with their opinions, in contrast with NU, although they did not explicitly declare it permissible, but Said Aqil stated in his speech that the *kafir* word contained in al-Mā'idah: 51 was not non-Muslim in the context of reality in Indonesia.

At the same time, NU and MU's followers responded to the non-Muslim leadership that occurred because of Ahok's case through their internal media. NU, for example, announced its perspective on the possibility of non-Muslim leadership taken place in Indonesia, because leaders are basically just implementing UUD 1945, so non-Muslim leaders in the Indonesian context could not produce policies as they would. They must comply with the Constitution implemented in Indonesia. In addition, although it was explained the differences of opinion among the scholars who were pro-contra of the case whether or not to choose non-Muslim leaders, but Kurniawan⁵⁷ as a writer and citizen of NU agreed with al-Mawardī that people might choose non-Muslim leaders based on al-Mā'idah: 51. He referred to the history of the verse relating to war,⁵⁸ so in the past the rule to be open and close to Christians and Jews was prohibited.

The MU follower also responded to the non-Muslim leadership on MU's internal website written by Mahfudz Murod.⁵⁹ He disagreed with NU circles. According to him, the word of *Auliyā'* in al-Mā'idah: 51 based on the Interpretation of the Ministry of Religion was a leader, but the meaning was changed by the team of ministry becoming loyal friends. He claimed that this change of meaning was intended to support Ahok in the election of Governor of Jakarta would be success and he also stated that the change was confusing and baseless. For him, this was not neutral, because he argued that the team created by the ministry was majority NU scholars, thus it was extremely subjective.

⁵⁷Lihat <http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/81486>. Pemimpin non-Muslim dalam Islam, diakses pada 3 Juni 2018.

⁵⁸Al-Mawardī, *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah wa al-Wilāyatu al-Dīniyyah* (Bairūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1960), 123.

⁵⁹Mahfudz Murod, "Implikasi pemahaman tafsir alquran terhadap sikap keberagaman. *Jurnal tafseer*" 4, 2 (2016), 125.

Conclusion

The writer views that NU and MU have carried out their duties, as the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia. However, MU tends to be more closed in public to address the problems faced by society, while NU is more courageous and open to express its perspective. Moreover, the initial conclusions put forward by the author prove that NU and MU have a different perspective on the problem of Ahok's case and the leadership of non-Muslims in Indonesia. This difference arises because of the ideological differences in which NU is more open to *wasathiyah* ideology while the MU is more closed to its fundamental values. The other conclusions proposed earlier also proved that the interpretation of the text was incredibly subjective depending on the ideology and theology of the reader. In addition, this research also examines that authoritative internal scholars in an organization are influential to form a perspective on their followers. This can be verified through the similarity of NU leaders' perspectives with their followers, in contrast to the similarity of views of MU figures and their followers.

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