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(KASPI 2014)

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Saya bagi pihak Urus Setia Program Pengajian Siswazah Fakulti Pengajian Islam dan Persatuan Siswazah Fakulti Pengajian Islam mengucapkan terima kasih dan tahniah kepada semua pembenteng kertas kerja dan peserta sama ada dari UKM atau luar UKM, penilai, moderator, penyelia, pengurusan Fakulti Pengajian Islam, Ketua-Ketua Jabatan, para pensyarah dan para siswazah yang terlibat dalam Kolokium ini sama ada secara langsung atau tidak langsung. Dalam kesempatan ini juga, saya mengucapkan tahniah kepada semua Urus Setia Kolokium Antarabangsa Siswazah Pengajian Islam UKM 2014 atas komitmen dan kesungguhan hingga berjaya melaksana Kolokium ini dan menerbitkan 'Prosiding Kolokium Antarabangsa Siswazah Pengajian Islam UKM 2014' pada waktu yang ditetapkan. **TAHNIAH DAN SYABAS UNTUK SEMUA.**

Sekian, Wassalam.

PROF. DR. ZAINAB ISMAIL

*Timbalan Dekan Siswazah dan Hubungan Antarabangsa
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Religious Liberalism in Indonesia: A Critical Study on the Fatwa of The Council of Indonesian Ulama

Fuad Mustafid

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

Abstract: Post-1998 reforms, among Indonesian Muslims appear and develop thought and ideas in the field of progressive-liberal religious. The progressive-liberal thinkers try to do the reform and simultaneously reconstruct the various concepts and teachings of Islam, which is already well established and is considered true. However, measures taken by Muslims progressive-liberal causes a lot of controversy and opposition at the same time, especially from conservative Muslims. Therefore, thoughts and ideas promoted by the progressive-liberal Muslims are often different or even contrary to common belief and understanding of Muslims. In addition, he is also considered to have disturbing the public. The measure taken by the progressive-liberals called by "the liberalization of religion", which is an interpretation of the texts or religious teachings by using the mind as a free. Therefore, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) which often represent themselves as representatives of Indonesian Muslims feel the need to give guidance to Muslims associated with the problem. In 2005, the MUI issued a fatwa stating that religious liberalism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam so that Muslims are forbidden to follow. MUI fatwa is of course a positive response by conservative Muslims because he is in tune with their religious views and attitudes. On the contrary, the fatwa received harsh criticism from the progressive-liberal Muslims. They even accuse MUI has stuck to the dogmatic-conservative religious ideology. This fatwa clearly reflect the differences or even contradictions among Indonesian Muslims about bagamana how to understand and live the teachings of true religion. In addition, this fatwa also showed a tendency to think dogmatically-conservative.

Keywords: MUI fatwa, religious liberalism, progressive-liberal, and dogmatic-conservative.

INTRODUCTION

Post-collapse of the Soeharto regime, Indonesia entered a new era called the Reformation era. In this era, there was a drastic and fundamental changes. Faucet democracy previously clogged—or deliberately capped by the New Order regime—also wide open immediately. This condition is characterized by given free space for every citizen, including every religious believer, to express their thoughts and ideas. In politics, for example, reform of Indonesia has provided opportunities for citizens to establish new parties with a principle or foundation of diverse, something that has never happened in the New Order¹. Freedom of expression is also indicated by the presence of groups or movements "conservative Islamic militant", who voiced the importance of applied Islamic law in Indonesia, such as Laskar Jihad Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, Ikhwanul Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Brotherhood), Hisbut Tahrir Indonesia, Jamaah Mujahidin, and Front Pembela Islam (the Front of Islamic Defenders) (Endang Turmudi & Riza Sihbudi 2005).

On the other hand, the intellectual and discussion groups that raise and carry the ideas of progressive-liberal also increasingly have the space to express their thoughts and ideas. The progressive-liberal thinkers—which has actually been around since the New Order—in addition to critique of the state, they also make corrections to religious subjects: as a critique of dogmatism and religious conservatism and religious practices imported from the Middle East². In addition, the progressive - liberal thinkers also carries the idea of the importance of reconstruction of various

aspects of Islamic thought. To realize his ideas, the progressive - liberal thinkers is also form discussion groups that actively conduct studies on various religious issues, ness, and community.

However, in 2005, the progressive - liberal thinkers was surprised by the fatwa of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (CIU / MUI) which states that pluralism, liberalism, and secularism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam (Fatwa MUI 2011). The MUI fatwa also received a positive response from conservative Muslims as assessed in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Soon after the release of the fatwa, religious pulpits were used to socialize (Husein Muhammad 2009). In contrast, the progressive - liberal Muslims rejected and opposed the fatwa as judged has hurt democracy, contrary to the human rights, and also contrary to the spirit of freedom upheld in Islam³.

This paper will review and discuss the fatwa of the Council of Indonesian Ulama / Majelis Ulama Indonesia (CIU / MUI), especially fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism⁴. This paper will begin by discussing briefly about the Council of Indonesian Ulama, the background of the rise of a fatwa prohibition of religious liberalism and its arguments. After that, this paper will also examine the possibility of motives or interests that lie behind the emergence of a fatwa prohibition of religious liberalism and its implications it may have. Related to this, Abou El-Fadl's hermeneutic theory of negotiated and discourse analysis of critical language will be used to assess and analysis the problem.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL OF INDONESIAN ULAMA

The Council of Indonesian Ulama / Majelis Ulama Indonesia (CIU / MUI) is a religious organization (Noorhaidi t.th), which is a forum for Islamic scholars, zuama, leaders of Islamic organizations and Muslim scholars for deliberation in the face and resolve the problems faced by Indonesian Muslims⁵. This religious organization formed by the scholars on July 26, 1975 M., coinciding with 7 Rajab 1395 H, in a first National Conference (MUNAS 1) whole the Indonesian Council of Ulama. The formation of this CIU/MUI done after previously standing the Council of Ulama in each region in Indonesia. Thus, the main object of the National Congress of these scholars is to form the central level of the Council of Ulama (M. Atho 1993; Wahiduddin 2004).

In National Conference which took place from March 21 through July 27, 1975, made a declaration signed by the 53 participants who announced the formation of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (CIU / MUI) central level. At that time, Prof. Dr. Hamka was elected as the first Chairman of the Council of Indonesian Ulama⁶.

The Council of Indonesian Ulama formation can not be separated from the important role of the New Order government that is meant to require an institution that can serve to bring together scholars invited to the success of the development. According Atho Mudzhar, government involvement can be seen since the establishment of the National Consultative Committee (National Conference) 1 whole of the Council of Indonesian Ulama. Government involvement in the formation of MUI is not only the encouragement and provision of easiness to the conference committee, but they are also directly involved in the conference. Committee of the National Conference I of Throughout Indonesia of the Council of Ulama was also formed directly by the government through the Minister of Religious Affairs. By Decree number 28 dated 1 July 1975 the government established the National Conference Committee I the Council of Indonesian Ulama, chaired by retired Letnan Jenderal H. Sudirman and Advisory Team consisting of Prof. Dr. Hamka, KH. Abdullah Syafei, and KH. Syukri Ghazali (M. Atho 1993). President Soeharto himself giving a lecture at the opening and closing ceremony of the conference. In addition, many state officials also gave his speech⁷. It is therefore not surprising that at the beginning of the organization of these scholars is suspected to be a mouthpiece for the interests of the government.

The purpose of the establishment of the Council of Indonesian Ulama is to create a quality community (khaira umma), and a state that is safe, peaceful, just and prosperous spiritual and blessed by the Gods (baldatun thayyibatun wa rabbun ghafur)⁸. While the function of the Council of Indonesian Ulama is: (1) As container deliberation scholars, zu'ama and Muslim scholars in protecting people and develop an Islamic life; (2) As container gathering scholars, zu'ama and Muslim scholars to develop and practice the teachings of Islam and garner Islamic brotherhood

(Ukhuwwah Islamiyah); (3) As the container representing Muslims in the relationship and consultation between inter-religious; and (4) As a fatwa giver to the Muslims and the government, whether requested or not requested⁹.

To realize the purpose and functions, the Council of Indonesian Ulama attempts to run as follows: (1) Provide counseling and guidance to the Muslims in order to create the conditions of religious life which can be a strong foundation and can promote the establishment of a quality community (Khaira umma); (2) Formulate policy for carrying the Islamic da'wah, enjoining evil to spur the establishment of religious life and community that blessed by the Allah; (3) Provide warnings, advice and fatwas on religious and social issues to the public and the government wisely (wisdom) and soothing; (4) Formulate religious relationship pattern that allows the realization of Islamic brotherhood and inter-religious harmony in strengthening national unity; (5); Being a liaison between scholars and umara' (government) and translators among the government and the people of the community in order to achieve quality (khaira umma) which blessed by Allah (baldatun thayyibatun wa rabbun ghafur); (6) Improve the relationship and cooperation between organizations, Islamic centers and Muslim scholars, as well as creating joint programs for the benefit of the umma. In addition, MUI also opens the possibility to conduct business or other activities in accordance with organizational purpose¹⁰.

Efforts undertaken by the Council of Indonesian Ulama divided and charged to some committee. Based on the National Conference (National Conference) 7th the Council of Indonesian Ulama in 2005, currently has 11 committee, namely: (1) the Fatwa Committee; (2) the Committee of Islamic brotherhood; (3) the Committee of Da'wah and Development of Islamic Community; (4) the Committee of Education (Tarbiyah) and Development of Islamic Culture Art; (5) the Committee of Assessment and Research; (6) the Committee of Law and Legislation; (7) the Committee of Economic Empowerment of umma; (8) the Committee of Women's Empowerment, Youth and Families; (9) the Committee of Information and Mass Media; (10) the Committee of Interreligious Harmony; and (11) the Committee of Foreign Relations¹¹. Based on the job descriptions, the fatwa on religious liberalism certainly be in the region of the Fatwa Committee.

MUI FATWA ON RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM

Background to The Emergence of A Fatwa

The emergence of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (CIU / MUI) fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism is motivated by the development of thoughts and ideas of the progressive-liberal thinkers of Indonesian Muslims in general have learned, either directly or indirectly, to the critical-progressive thinkers of the world, both Muslims and non-Muslims, such as Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Muhammad Arkoun, Mohammed Abed al-Jabri, Abdullahi Ahmed an-Naim, Fazlur Rahman, Muhammad Shahrur, Farid Esack, Derrida, Foucault, Habermas, and other thinkers. By studying and adopting the knowledge of this world thinkers they carry the thoughts and ideas of the progressive-liberal often different and even contrary to the mainstream Muslim thoughts.

The progressive-liberal thinkers, for example, submit ideas about the importance of the reconstruction of the theories and concepts that have been established in the Islamic tradition, such as the concept of justice, welfare, equality, the concept of qath'i-zanniy, makkiy-madaniy, and nasikh-mansukh. In addition, they are also not uncommon to use theory and critical analysis of modern Western thinkers, such as hermeneutics and critical social analysis and critical discourse analysis of language, to help understand the religious texts (Qur'an and Sunnah). In short, these liberal thinkers do not want to be stuck in the confines of the text when trying to understand the religious texts. Instead, they try to understand and interpret religious texts of Islam by making use of new theories that developed in Islamic thought and Western tradition. This is different from the mainstream Muslims in understanding religious texts still tend to limit themselves to the old theories and concepts that exist in the Islamic tradition, especially the theories and concepts were formulated by medieval scholars.

Differences theories and concepts used by Muslims progressive-liberal with theories and concepts used by mainstream Muslims is what makes the products of their thinking is often

different and even conflicting rare. Interfaith marriage and the celebration of Christmas together between Muslims and non-Muslims (Christians), for example, that is believed prohibited by conservative Muslims, it may be seen by progressive-liberal Muslims (Mun'im A Sirry 2004). Even their (progressive-liberal thinkers) assessing the prohibition against the practice of interfaith marriage and the celebration of Christmas together as contrary to the spirit of the teachings of Islam and human rights (Suhadi 2006).

It is this fact that by the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) has assessed as disturbing the public. Therefore, the MUI that has a duty to provide guidance to the Muslims feel the need to establish a fatwa on religious liberalism. Thus, in the forum of the National Assembly (National Conference) 7th the Council of Indonesian Ulama which took place on 19-22 Jumadil Akhir 1426 H / 26 - 29 on July 2005, this religious organization is issued a fatwa stating that religious liberalism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam (Fatwa MUI 1975).

The MUI fatwa on religious liberalism is intended to provide guidance and instruction to muslims to avoid being trapped in religious thought that "assessed" deviated from the teachings of Islam, as well as to create peace and tranquility in the society (Fatwa MUI 1975).

Substance and Arguments Fatwa

The MUI fatwa on religious liberalism consists of two parts, namely the general provisions and the provisions of the law. General provisions fatwa section contains an explanation of the meaning or definition of "religious liberalism" which became the object of a fatwa. While the law contains provisions concerning the legal status of religious liberalism itself.

In general terms of fatwa explained that "religious liberalism" that is referred in the MUI fatwa is: "to understand the religious texts (Qur'an and Sunnah) by using the mind free; and only accept religious doctrines in accordance with the mind alone." On the basis of this meaning, then set the MUI fatwa that "religious liberalism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam" so that "Muslims are forbidden to follow" (Fatwa MUI 1975).

Prohibition of religious liberalism is based on two verses of the Qur'an, the verse 116 of Surat al-An'am and verse 71 of Surat al-Mu'minin. The contents of the second verse is as follows:

1. And if you obey most of those on earth, they would misguide you. They are nothing but a mere conjecture to follow, and they are nothing but a lie (against Allah) QS. al-An'am [6]: 116).
2. If the truth were to obey their desires, surely the heavens and the earth shall perish, and all that is in it. Actually, We have brought them their pride but they turn away from the pride (QS. Al-Mu'minin [23]: 71) (Fatwa MUI 1975).

On the basis of the second paragraph (ayat) that the Council of Indonesian Ulama determined that religious liberalism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam.

This fatwa was signed by KH. Ma'ruf Amin as Chairman of the Committee and the Hasanuddin as the Secretary of the Committee (Fatwa MUI 1975).

The Fatwa of the Council of Indonesian Ulama on Religious Liberalism	
Background to the emergence of a fatwa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That lately has been growing liberalism and similar ideologies in society; 2. That the growing of liberalisme in the community have raised concerns that some people asked to MUI to assign fatwa on the matter; and 3. That because it was deemed necessary to decide MUI fatwa about liberalism to be used as guidelines by muslims.
The legal basis of the fatwa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. And if you obey most of those on earth, they would misguide you. They are nothing but a mere conjecture to

	follow, and they are nothing but a lie (against Allah) QS. al-An'am [6]: 116).
	2. If the truth were to obey their desires, surely the heavens and the earth shall perish, and all that is in it. Actually, We have brought them their pride but they turn away from the pride (QS. Al-Mu'minin [23]: 71).
The general provisions	Religious liberalism that is referred in the MUI fatwa is: "to understand the religious texts (Qur'an and Sunnah) by using the mind free; and only accept religious doctrines in accordance with the mind alone."
The legal provisions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious liberalism as mentioned in the first part is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam; 2. Forbidden Muslims to follow the religious liberalism.

Critics of the MUI fatwa on Religious Liberalism

The MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism is part of the product of thinking (ijtihad) produced by the scholars who are members of the Fatwa Committee of the Council of Indonesian Ulama. As a product of thought then of course he can not be believed in absolute truth, despite the fatwa based on the texts of the Qur'an which have an absolute truth. Because MUI fatwa on religious liberalism seems to store a number of issues, both related with inaccuracy interpret the term of religious liberalism itself is arguably less precise or weak arguments and legal basis tend to be forced. In addition, MUI fatwa on religious liberalism also indicated very ideological and full of interest, in addition to its effects is also not small. Therefore, to discuss these matters in greater depth to be something is very important.

Religious Liberalism: A term that is misunderstood : The term of liberalism actually refers to an understanding that trying to enlarge the area of individual freedom and encourage social progress. Thus, liberalism is an understanding of freedom, in the sense that human beings are free because humans are able to think and act according to what he wanted¹². But liberalism, as expressed by Gadis Arivia, not understanding that freedom is not without limits, and also means providing the highest cult to reason that human reason therefore is considered as a measure of truth (Rachman 2010). On the contrary, freedom of thought within liberalism still has certain limitations that should not be violated, ie, the rules of logic (Rachman 2010).

For the progressive-liberal, liberal thinking is not something that naive (bad), but rather it is something positive. This is as stated by Ulil Abshar Abdalla that liberal thinking is something positive for not falling into absolutism, which impose something to someone else thinks is right(Rachman 2010). In fact, according to Syafii Anwar, think rationally, critically, and liberal is something that can not be denied the realization of the ideals of progress, the idea of progress (Rachman 2010).

In the context of religion, liberalism is not meant to deny the religious texts in exploring the teachings of Islam. In this, Zainun Kamal asserts that liberalism means how one can understand the text to come out of prison through a contextual reading of the rational. Arabic ta'aqqul call it, and of course ta'aqqul requires fikrat al-hurriyyah, to think freely. Thus, when a person wants to understand the religious texts, he could not interpret them freely without the confined, bound, and imprisoned by the text (Rachman 2010).

In the Islamic context, Lutfi Assyaukanie view that liberalism is really just a tool in assessing the religious teachings of Islam so that it can live and dialogue with the context and reality of a productive and progressive. Islam wants to be interpreted and presented in a liberal-progressive with hermeneutic method, the method of interpretation and the interpretation of the text, context, and reality (Rachman 2010).

View of the progressive-liberal intellectuals above asserts that liberalism is not ideologies that justify a person to think freely, with no restrictions, including in understanding and interpreting

religious texts. He is also not an absolute category or understanding, as said by Charlez Kursman (Charles Kurzman 1998). However, liberalism is just a tool to assess and understand the teachings of Islam in order to critically and progressive religion can live and dialogue with the context and reality of a productive and progressive. Thus, expectations and hopes Islam will always be aligned to any time and place (*shalihun li kulli zaman wa makan*) will be realized.

The fact that religious liberalism not understand religious texts freely is also corroborated by the statement KH. Ma'ruf Amin himself as Chairman of the MUI fatwa Committee. In an interview published in the book *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam*, he stated that religious liberalism means provides an interpretation of the teachings of the religion (Islam) outside of the rules that have been agreed (*qawā'id at-tafsīr an-nuṣūṣ*) (Rachman 2010), where the mind has a very important role in the interpretive process. Excessive use of reason, according to KH. Ma'ruf Amin, due to the methods used in interpreting the texts of religious liberalism, namely hermeneutics¹³ and he said, and this is causing MUI to proscribe it, the use of hermeneutics is not uncommon in Islamic thought (Rachman 2010).

In this case, KH. Ma'ruf Amin suggests two reasons for its rejection of the use of hermeneutics as a tool for understanding the religious texts.

First, hermeneutics is in contrast to *takwil*. According to KH. Ma'ruf Amin, *takwil* trying to give the interpretation of texts (religious text) when these texts can not be interpreted exactly (*zahir*). Usually, *takwil* typically used to interpret *zany* verses (multiple interpretations), not the *qath'y* verses (clear). Therefore, *qath'y* verses should not be and can not be interpreted.

Secondly, in Islam, the interpretation of the texts must adhere to the sanctity of the texts and divinity which lowered. That is, the divinity of the Qur'an and prophetic hadiths can not be negotiable. Sanctity of each must be maintained. While hermeneutics considers the texts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as (like) a regular book, so it can be interpreted. In fact, there are many interpretations that allows the "amendments" to the texts (Rachman 2010).

KH. Ma'ruf Amin statement is certainly strengthens the assumption that religious liberalism is not using a mind freely without limits in interpreting religious texts, so does not accept religious teachings are in harmony with the mind alone. However, religious liberalism is simply to maximize the role of the mind in the interpretation process, through theory or hermeneutic approach, a model of interpretation of religious texts that are demanding the use of the mind to the fullest. Only, this hermeneutic theory or approach is not well known in the treasures of Islamic thought. Therefore many Muslims, including scholars who are members of the Council of Indonesian Ulama, which rejected the theory. Thus, the MUI rejection of religious liberalism actually originate in the theory, methods, or approaches used by progressive-liberal Muslims in understanding religious texts are judged to be appropriate because the theory, methods, and approaches it is not uncommon or even unknown in Islamic tradition.

Because of this, the verses of the Qur'an were relied upon by the Council of Indonesian Ulama to set a fatwa against religious liberalism arguably be inappropriate and looks likely to be forced. Therefore, the progressive-liberal in fact still pay attention to the instructions and guidelines in carrying out the teachings of their religious texts. While the passages relied upon by the Council of Indonesian Ulama to proscribe religious liberalism refers to the prohibition of most people follow or following the mere lust without reference to religious texts (*al-Quran al-Ancam 6:116*)¹⁴.

Up here it becomes clear that religious liberalism is not understand religious texts freely and only accept religious doctrines in harmony with the mind alone. However, religious liberalism is an attempt to understand the religious texts with theories and concepts that are considered appropriate, both derived from the Islamic tradition itself as well as from Western traditions with the aim that the teachings of Islam capable of dialogue and always in tune with the times.

Ideology and authoritarianism fatwa : In the early part of this paper has been mentioned that the purpose of the MUI fatwa on religious liberalism is to provide instructions and guidance to the Muslims (Fatwa MUI 1975), so that they are not stuck into the religious thought wrong (Fatwa MUI 1975). This is of course consistent with the function of the MUI, which provide guidance to Muslims in realizing the religious and social life as well as giving advice and fatwas on religious and social issues¹⁵.

The statement in the MUI fatwa glance shows that this religious organization has to be objective by showing Muslims about the true teachings of Islam. Thus, the interest shown in the MUI fatwa is in the interests of God, who wants his servants to undergo their religion is true, and not get lost in the wrong religion. However, the MUI statements in his fatwa it also keeps other interests behind it. It can be seen from the "political discourse" played by the MUI in vocabulary and grammar are used.

In the theory of critical analysis of language, vocabulary and grammar can be used to determine the ideological practices. Therefore, language is seen as a tool for describing how reality is seen, as well as to give the possibility to control and regulate one's experiences in social reality. Through vocabulary and grammar, language brings function and ideological effects that the use of vocabulary and grammar phrased differently in reality can be seen not only technically, but also can be seen as an ideological practice (Aksin Wijaya 2009; Erianto 2001). This is possible because the vocabulary and grammar itself has ideological functions and effects. Erianto in his book titled *Analisis Wacana (Discourse Analysis)*, for example, explained that among the functions and effects of the ideological vocabulary and grammar, namely (1) the classification, (2) limiting the view, (3) as the battle arena of discourse, and (4) marginalization and dominance (Erianto 2001).

In political discourse, language analysis can be done on two levels at once, ie, the level of vocabulary and grammar level. Level vocabulary related to: how reality, discourse and actors involved in it want reworded by using specific vocabulary; what message the user is actually trying to convey to the public regarding the realities of language, discourse and certain actors; and where the parties are benefited and which party is harmed or marginalized in the use of the vocabulary. While the level of grammar is concerned with how the words are arranged in the form of the sentence so that the message carries an ideological effect, creating a favorable position for reality, discourse, and certain actors, and can marginalize reality, discourse, and other actors (Aksin Wijaya 2009; Erianto 2001).

Based on the above, the MUI fatwa on religious liberalism using vocabulary and grammar enables certain ideology and special interests who was behind it. So who or what interests championed by MUI and what ideology defended. To know that then look at the vocabulary and grammar used by the MUI fatwa that be something very important.

In the background of the fatwa, say, the MUI declared that these religious organizations feel the need to give fatwa on religious liberalism to be used as instructions and guidelines for Muslims. While the fatwa mentioned dictum that religion is the idea that liberalism is contrary to the teachings of Islam so that Muslims are forbidden to follow.

With the statement that religious liberalism against Islamic teachings MUI actually want to assert that "Islam is not always understood and practiced by Muslims properly and one of the religious understanding that it does not understand the true teachings of Islam that is the religion of liberalism". With that statement, MUI indirectly also want to say that the understanding of the true teachings of Islam is as understood by the MUI or who disagree with the MUI. While different understanding with the MUI is wrong so forbidden to be followed.

Up here it becomes clear that the MUI has been discredited or marginalized people or groups of people who have different religious understanding with MUI, including the progressive-liberal circles. At the same time, the MUI wants to raise and defend their own religious understanding and also other parties aligned with MUI, the dogmatic-conservative religious ideology, the models or religious ideology basing his understanding of the text or teachings of Islam by relying on rules or theory that is standard in the Islamic tradition and believed the truth (Amin 2010). It is evident from the statement of KH. Ma'ruf Amin who reject the use of hermeneutics as a theory or approach to understanding texts or religious teachings (Rachman 2010).

Thus, the real interests behind the MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism is marginalizing religious models with different religious understanding MUI, including the religious liberalism. At the same time, the MUI also defend and maintain their own religious understanding and religious understanding other that is consistent with the MUI.

What was done by the MUI fatwa is of course intended that the models of dogmatic-conservatif religious maintained and running properly so that the authority of the MUI as the dogmatic-conservative leaders will remain intact. This is reasonable because if the MUI accept or

justify a model of religious understanding and religious Muslims progressive-liberals pretty much the MUI fatwa that would be questionable legitimacy, such as the fatwa on the ban on interfaith marriage, the prohibition of celebrating Christmas together, about the misguided Ahmadiyya fatwa, and others.

MUI claims against their religious understanding of his own righteousness and religious understanding that is consistent with it can also be considered as part of the intellectual arrogance, or in the language of Abou El Fadl referred to as 'authoritarianism interpretation'¹⁶. Therefore, the MUI has been claimed as the party that has authority over the truth. While everyone else is seen as a party that does not have the authority to find the truth. MUI understanding on religious texts claimed to be truly a message of God so that he valued the sacred and must be followed and implemented by all Muslims. In the language of Abou El Fadl, they have placed themselves as the legitimate representative of the holder of authenticity or objective meaning of God's message¹⁷.

This of course is arrogant and authoritarian actions as denying the many theories and different religious interpretations products with MUI theory and interpretation products. It is therefore not surprising that over time there will be more people or groups of people who will be sentenced misguided because they do not live the teachings of religion as understood and executed by the MUI.

CONCLUSION

This paper has described the role and function of the Council of Indonesian Ulama as a religious organization that has a duty and obligation to provide guidance and advice to the Muslim community associated with various religious and social issues (Wahiduddin 2004). In the context of this paper, the role and function of the Council of Indonesian Ulama is manifested in the form of a fatwa against the development of religious liberalism which is seen by the MUI as has been plaguing the society. The fatwa states clearly that religious liberalism is understood that contrary to the teachings of Islam so that Muslims are forbidden to follow (Fatwa MUI 1975).

However, the MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism has several drawbacks. It was shown in this religious organization inaccuracies in defining the term religious liberalism, which tends to be imposed legal basis, and also the weakness of the argument he had built.

In addition, MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism also indicate the presence of elements of ideology and interests that lie behind the fatwa. In other words, the MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism is not purely objective, but he was influenced by an ideology and special interests. Ideological element which is the pre-understanding and the basis for the Council of Indonesian Ulama to set a fatwa against religious liberalism.

If we look at and examine the MUIs fatwa then it would appear that ideology is the basis for MUI to establish fatwa against prohibition of religious liberalism is the ideology of dogmatic religious-conservative. Thus, the interests that lie behind a fatwa condemning religious liberalism is that supports and secures models dogmatic religious-conservative, and at the same time also reject and attack models of different religious or opposed to him, including the progressive-liberal model of diversity.

MUI ideology is ultimately gave birth to the exclusive religious attitudes and authoritarian that led to the "elimination" of the person or party that is different from the other group, while "to defend and support" model of religion understanding and religious own. This was done by providing a negative label on their differing views of the MUI, such as "haram" "misguided" or "contrary to the teachings of Islam". At the same time, they also claim the truth of their own religious understanding.

Moreover, this MUI fatwa ideology will eventually make Islamic and religious thought in Indonesia threatened will not develop properly, because every step and creative effort (ijtihad in the broad sense) is done by Indonesian Muslim thinkers and intellectuals will be threatened to eliminated or even turned off through the medium of a fatwa. This is of course a bad precedent for the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia.

END NOTE

- ¹ In the early days of the Reformation, appears no less than 48 political parties are prepared to compete in the 1999 elections. Some of the Islamic -based political party, such as Partai Keadilan / the Justice Party (PK / JP), Partai Bulan Bintang / the Crescent Star Party (PBB / CSP), and also Partai Persatuan Pembangunan / the United Development Party (PPP / UDP), even lists the principles of Islam as the foundation of struggle, something that also never happened in the New Order. See Nadirsyah Hosen, *Shari'a and Constitutional Reform in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007), p. 2.
- ² Some intellectuals who can put in the progressive - liberal thinkers, among them, is Abdurrahman Wahid, Nurcholish Madjid, Djohan Effendi, Musdah Mulia, Budy Munawar-Rachman, and Ulil Abshar Abdalla. See Greg Barton, "The Emergence of Neo-Mocernism: A Progressive, Liberal Movement of Islamic Thought in Indonesia: A Textual Study Examining the Writings of Nurcholish Madjid, Djohan Effendi, Ahmad Wahib and Abdurrahman Wahid 1968-1980" Dissertation on Department of Asian Studies and Languages, (Monash University, 1995). See also Zuly Qadir, *Islam Liberal: Variasi-Variasi Liberalisme Islam di Indonesia 1991-2002*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010) and Zuly Qadir, "Wajah Islam Liberal di Indonesia: Sebuah Penajagan Awal" in *Al-Jamiah: Journal of Islamic Studies*. Volume 40, Number 2, July-December 2002. While discussion groups are categorized as progressive - liberal, among which are : Jaringan Islam Liberal / the Liberal Islam Network (JIL / LIN) , Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial / Institute for Islamic and Social Studies (LKiS / IISS), the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP); Center for the Study of Islam and the State (PSIK), and Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat / the Institute for the Study of Religion and Philosophy (LSAF / ISRP). See Budhy Munawar-Rachman, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam: Sekularisme, Liberalisme, dan Pluralisme; Paradigma Baru Islam Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2010), and Laode Ida , *NU Muda: Kaum Progresif dan Sekularisme Baru* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2004).
- ³ See response to progressive-liberal Muslims against MUI fatwa on prohibition of religious liberalism and also their arguments about the absence of conflict between Islam and liberalism, in Munawar-Rachman Budhy, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam ...*, especially the "Islamic Arguments for Liberalism".
- ⁴ In MUI's fatwa, religious liberalism is really just one of the three religious thought that declared as ideas that are contrary with the teaching of the Islamic religion. While two other religious thought is also declared as ideas that are contrary with the teaching of the Islamic religion in the MUI's fatwa is religious pluralism and secularism. See MUI's fatwa on "Religious Pluralisme, Liberalism, and Secularism" in *Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Himpunan Fatwa MUI sejak 1975*, (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2011), p. 87-92.
- ⁵ See *Pedoman Pokok dan Pedoman Rumah Tangga Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, in <http://www.mui.or.id>. Retrieved on 15 September 2015.
- ⁶ The participants comprised the representatives of the newly established regional councils of the ulama, representatives of central committees of ten existing Islamic organizations, a number of independent ulama, and four representatives of muslim servicemen in the Armed Forces (Rohaniawan ABRI). See M. Atho Mudzahr, *Fatwas of the Council of Indonesian Ulama ...*, p. 48.
- ⁷ The officials who participated to speak at a conference of scholars it is: Minister of Religion who gave a lecture on the role of the clergy as the driving force of national and regional development, Minister of Defense gave a lecture on the scholars and resilience nasional, Minister of Education and Culture on education in Indonesia, Minister of Information about the role of information and communication in stimulating community participation in national development, the Chairman of Bappenas (National Development Planning Agency) regarding the Five-Year Development Plan (Repelita) both covering the period from 1974 - 1979, vice-chairman of BAKIN about the Islamic World and Middle East. See M. Atho Mudzhar, *Fatwa Council of Indonesian Ulama Fatwa ...*, p. 57.

- ⁸ See Pasal 5 Pedoman Dasar Majelis Ulama Indonesia (the Basic Guidelines for the Council of Indonesian Ulama) produced in the National Conference (National Conference) 7th the Council of Indonesian Ulama 2005, on "The purpose of the Council of Indonesian Ulama".
- ⁹ See Pasal 4 Pedoman Dasar Majelis Ulama Indonesia (the Basic Guidelines for the Council of Indonesian Ulama) produced in the National Conference (National Conference) 7th the Council of Indonesian Ulama 2005, on "The function of the Council of Indonesian Ulama".
- ¹⁰ See Pasal 6 Pedoman Dasar Majelis Ulama Indonesia (the Basic Guidelines for the Council of Indonesian Ulama) in 2005 about "the efforts undertaken of the Council of Indonesian Ulama".
- ¹¹ See Pasal 5 ayat 4 Pedoman Rumah Tangga Majelis Ulama Indonesia (the Guidelines for Household for the Council of Indonesian Ulama) in 2005.
- ¹² See "Liberalism" in Wikipedia; the free encyclopedia. See also "Liberalism" in Paul Edwards (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. & The Free Press, 1967), p. 548.
- ¹³ The term of hermeneutics is a derivative of the verb *hermeneuin* (from the Greek) is associated with the verb *hermenes* and also associated with the gods in ancient Greek mythology named *Hermes*. *Hermes* is the messenger god who brought the message of God by using the language of "heaven" to humans who use human language. In its development, hermeneutics then becomes a science that tries to describe how a word or an event at a time and culture can then be understood and become existentially meaningful in the present situation. See Josef Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (London: Routledge and Paul Keangan, 1980), p. 1-5; Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1996), p. 13-14; Ricard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutika: Teori Baru Mengenai Interpretasi*, trans. Masnur Hery dan Damanhuri Muhammed, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), p. 14; Aksin Wijaya, *Teori Interpretasi Al-Qur'an Ibn Rusyd: Kritik Ideologis-Hermeneutis*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2009), p. 23; E. Sumaryono, *Hermeneutik: Sebuah Metode Filsafat* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1999), p. 23-24; and Fahrudin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Qur'ani: Antara Teks, Konteks, dan Kontekstualisasi*, (Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2002), p. 20.
- ¹⁴ See QS. al-An'am [6]: 116 and QS. al-Mu'minin [23]: 71. These two verses are used as the basis for establishing the prohibition of religious liberallisme actually not addressed to Muslims who maximizes reasonable mind to understand the religious texts. However, he pointed at the people who do not admit the truth of the religion of Islam, both the Arabs and the majority of the population Jahilliyah earth at the time of the Qur'an descended they are not including people who embraced Islam. See M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Misbah: Kesan, Pesan dan Keselarasan Al-Qur'an*, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, Vol. IV, 2005 dan Vol. VIII, 2009), IV: 263-264 dan VIII: 391-394.
- ¹⁵ Pasal 4 huruf (a) Pedoman Pokok Majellis Ulama Indonesia (the Basic Guidelines for the Council of Indonesian Ulama).
- ¹⁶ Authoritarianism interpretation is menat by Abou El Fadl is a method of interpretation seize and subdue the meaning of a text search mechanism to reading is subjective and selective. As though he stated "I know what the desired initiators, and I also determines what the desired text. My knowledge of it is decisive and convincing ". So, there is no meaning other than the meaning which has been found by those who claim to have authority. See Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking In God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women* (England: Oneworld Oxford, 2003), p. 92.
- ¹⁷ Attitudes and views like this, according to Abou El Fadl, will ultimately lead to a number of implications: First, the authority of the originator of this community castrate text, when God wants all people to make an earnest effort in seeking the will of God, which is called *ijtihad* in *fiqh* termenologi. Secondly, they also have authority beyond the text. If they claim that interpretation because they represent the true position of the originator of the text, means also understanding the other to be untrue. This means, the reader has limited the authority of the text and make the text be closed. In fact, according to Abou El Fadl, the text is open, not static and passive. Instead, the text is always in dialogue and negotiate with the context, because the

text had relative autonomy and has its own objective reality that are beyond the control of the initiators or the reader. Third, it will have implications for efforts to deny the existence of an element has changed in Islam or the Koran. They put the whole into the elements that remain, are the remains is what they fatwakan. See Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking In God's Name* ..., p. 6.

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- See Endang Turmudi & Riza Sihbudi (ed.), *Islam dan Radicalisme di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: LIPI Press, 2005), p. 121-123 .