

Social Construction of the Al-Kahfi Reading Tradition on Friday

Nasrulloh¹

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang, Indonesia

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Abstract: Reading Quran especially Al-Kahfi on Friday is the Sunnah recommended by the Prophet. The reading technique is not set in detail, anyone who reads it, whenever and wherever must get the reward, as long as it is read on Friday or Thursday night. Interestingly, the reading of Al-Kahfi in the academic community at the State University of Malang Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang has been institutionalized and become a fixed tradition, combining the values of local wisdom. This tradition indicates that the hadith is not merely a sacred text as the basis of the law, more than that the hadith becomes a living tradition or referred to as 'living hadis' and blends with the culture of a particular society. This research tries to answer the question of how the tradition occurred in the middle of the academic community in UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The phenomenon will be analyzed using the social construction theory initiated by Berger. This research includes the type of qualitative-empirical research with the approach of sociology. Data collection method used in this research are in-depth interview and documentation. Before the interview was conducted, the researcher selects the informant by using the purposive sampling technique. Researchers use a new approach model of Hadith research, ie *living hadith*. The tradition is formed through three dialectical moments. First: externalization, there are hadiths explaining the importance of reading Al-Kahfi on Friday. Second: Objectivation, Tranquility when reading al-Kahfi. Third: Internalisation, the academic community has different subjective meanings about the practice of that tradition.

1 INTRODUCTION

The study of Living Sunnah is an interesting discourse in the academic world, since the sacred texts sourced from the Holy Prophet are actualized in the diversity of practices in societies that have a diversity of scientific stratum and social order, in terms of written tradition, oral or practice. The contraversion about hadis or sunnah as a source of islamic law was happened between ulama, but sahabat and majority tabi'in keep up that hadis is one of source in islamic law (Darmalaksana, 2017). All of Imam Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'I and Hanbali decided that sunnah is source of Islamic law, without sunnah most of ayat al-Qur'an can not be realized (Hamang, 2011).

The emergence of the theory of evolution of the sunnah into the hadith (Nasrulloh, 2014), requires one to reevaluate, reinterpret, and ritualize in viewing and addressing the hadith as sacred texts which are often regarded as jumud and static. Farida on her research assigned that sunnah is important

thing as the source of law in Islam according to Ushuliyyun and Muhaddithun (Farida, 2015). Although sunnah or hadis as a source of law, there are some little group argue that sunnah is not a source of law in islam (Relit, 2014). Sunnah has a dynamic and progressive nature, therefore hadith must be interpreted situationally and adapted into current situation. Therefore, hadith will always be salih li kulli zaman wa makan, as Prophet's companions understand Prophet's behaviors as living Sunnah (Suryadi and Syamsuddin, 2007). According to Rahman what is needed today is a historical interpretation of the hadith in order to restore the hadith into the context of the living Sunnah, as what he was stated, "What we want now to do is to recast Hadith into living Sunnah terms by historical interpretation so that we may be able to derive norms from it for ourselves through an adequate ethical theory and its legal reembodyment" (Rahman, 1965).

On another occasion, Rahman explains a little more detail about how the historical interpretation of

the hadith is done. The following quotation is Rahman's statement on how the historical interpretation is done: "It must, of course, be emphatically pointed out that a reevaluation of different elements in Hadith and their thorough reinterpretation under the changed moral and social conditions of today must be carried out. This can be done only by a historical study of the Hadith –by reducing it to the “living Sunnah” and by clearly distinguishing from the situational background the real value embodied in it. We shall find thereby that some of the major emphases of our traditional Orthodoxy will have to be modified and re-state (Rahman, 1965).

The study of living sunnah attracted the intellectual scholars of Islam to examine the practice of religious society in implementing it in everyday behavior which has hadith references as its foundation and basic. The studies can be reviewed from the researches initiated by Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsi on Living Hadith: Geneology, Theory and Application (Qudsy, 2016), Yeni Angelia and In'amul Hasan on Wander in Gaining Knowledge Study on Living Hadith of The Minangkabau People (Angelia and Hasan, 2017). Adrika Fitrotul Aini who also researched on Living Hadith in Thursday Night Tradition of Majelis Shalawat Ad-Diba' Bilmushtofa (Aini, 2015), and many other researches of living hadith studies which can not be mentioned in this study. Those studies are closely related to Living Hadis discourse practiced by the community, that also combining existing local wisdom. While this study became a reinforcement and complementary study about Living Hadith that occurred in the academic group at a college, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

The Prophet in one of his hadith had advised his ummah to read Al-Kahfi on Friday night or Friday, just as the following hadith:

مَنْ قَرَأَ سُورَةَ الْكَهْفِ فِي يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ أَضَاءَ لَهُ مِنَ النُّورِ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجُمُعَتَيْنِ. (al-Baihaqi, 1926)

The Hadith clearly indicate the suggestion to read Al-Kahfi on Friday. Prophet in the text announces that only by simply reading it, Allah will give the reader light between the two Friday, the Prophet did not explain neither technically nor how to read it. Interestingly, the tradition of reading Al-Kahfi in State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim has been institutionalized and done formally and the congregation led by a ustadz who memorized al-Qur'an. This activity is routine and always done every Friday before Friday prayers,

precisely in the faculty of Sharia UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Not only that, after reading Al-Kahfi, there was a meal together, whether it be with rice or traditional snacks. The activity is followed not only by employees but also by lecturers and leaders of sharia faculties. The tradition has been institutionalized and has for many years lived in the midst of an academic community.

From the fact that there is a special attraction of the tradition, that tradition is not only understood as a sacred text as a source of law, but has become a cultural practice that lives in a particular community, in this case the intellectual community at the college. The hadith has become part of a tradition that has been innovated and melded, mingled and mixed with the culture in which the tradition is practiced. The practice of reading Al-Kahfi is not just reading, but also there are elements of togetherness with read together and there are elements of sharing and caring after reading Al-Kahfi.

From this fact, it becomes very important to do a research on how institutionalization of the tradition can occur and live in the middle of the academic community in college. This study also reveals how many kinds of living hadith phenomenon in the tradition. To answer that question the researcher uses the social construction theory initiated by Berger. In Berger's (1973; 1990) perspective, between the religion and the reality of the living world in the midst of society there is a significant relationship. The reality of diversity is acquired and transmitted knowledge that is influenced by the social environment (Berger, 1973). From this it can be seen that indeed social reality is the result of a social construction, because it is created by the human self.

2 METHOD

This research is one type of qualitative-empirical research with the approach of sociology, using social construction theory. According to Bogdan and Biklen (Berger, 2011), qualitative research has a number of characters that allow a researcher to obtain information from within, in other words: first, emphasizes the natural setting and the researcher act as the key instrument; second, this research is more concerned with the process than the product; third, this research tries to uncover the meaning behind one's actions.

Researcher used a new approach model of Hadith research, ie living hadith. Living hadith is a new form of understanding about sunnah or hadith

which is then interpreted in accordance with new situations and conditions and aims to face and provide practical solutions to new problems also moral, spiritual, social and political so that this interpretation is more dynamic (Suryadilaga, 2007). In this development, the study of living Sunnah is in the field of practical level, and to apply the result of living sunnah study need sufficient methodological understanding in accordance to the object of the study, the community (Suryadilaga, 2009).

The fact that developed in the community indicate a wide variety of shapes and with a tradition of community interaction. There are at least three variations in the study of living sunnah still circulating in the community, namely the written tradition, oral and practical. In this study, the variation being studied is a tradition of practice.

Data collection methods used in this study are in-depth interviews and documentation. Before the interview was conducted, the researcher chose the informant by using purposive sampling technique (Sumanto, 1997). There are two main techniques of interviews, namely structured interviews and unstructured interviews. Structured interviews are interviews prepared by the author and have focused on research focus, while unstructured interviews are free and unplanned interviews but the authors are required to have knowledge of the way or rules of the interview (Vredenburg, 1983). In this study, researchers used a structured interview techniques and unstructured, adapted to the conditions and circumstances at the time of the interview.

Method of Data Analysis

The analytical technique used in this study is an interactive model Huberman and Miles using three steps, namely: data reduction, data display and conclusion (Miles et al., 2014).

There are many kind of analysis can be used in this research, like phenomenology approach, Suryadilaga used this approach on his research under topic Mafhum Salawat inda Majmu'at Joget Shalawat Mataram (Suryadilaga, 2014). Theory analysis used in this research is the theory of social construction belonging to Berger. The theory of social construction is a follow-up or development of the theory of phenomenology, social initiated by Emile Durkheim (Syam, 2005). Berger says that social construction theory is shaped through three fundamental dialectical moments of a society.

First; externalization (self-adaptation). This moment of externalization, conceptually, can be described as a form of adaptation to the texts of the Qur'an and the hadith as well as the interpretation of both by experts in their field. Various textual

statements contained in the Qur'an and hadith, can be used as a buffer in claiming a 'right' or 'wrong' phrase of a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation. Each tradition prevailing in a community must have the basic legitimacy of each. Could be from the history of the book, oral history, or also derived from the books considered as an important reference, although the book does not include standards in the academic or boarding schools.

Second; objectivity (self-identification with the socio-cultural world). In the objective process, the key word lies in the presence of agents that play the role of individuals or groups of individuals for the process of awareness, institutionalization or habitualisation. In this context, objectivity is an attempt to give new meaning to the reality constructed by activists of religious organizations about misogynist traditions. Thus, in this moment, the efforts of researcher in providing a reinterpretation of the social construction that have been externalized by the activists of religious organizations, referred to as a process or objectivity moment (Sumbulah, 2011). Third; internalization (self-identification in the socio-cultural world). This moment is an individual process of self-identification in the cultural societies that surround it. This moment can be understood as the moment of withdrawal of social reality into the individual (Berger, 2011).

3 FINDINGS AND RESULT

Reading Al-Kahfi on Friday is a recommendation of the Prophet to his ummah. By reading it Allah will give the reader a light between two Friday, as the hadith of the Prophet has been mentioned above. Not only that reading Al-Kahfi has some other virtues, which is as follows;

مَنْ حَفِظَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ سُورَةِ الْكَهْفِ عُصِمَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدَّجَالِ.
(al-Azdi, 1998)

Whoever memorize ten verses of Al-Kahfi he (she) will be guarded from Dajjal's slanders.

مَنْ قَرَأَ أَوَّلَ سُورَةِ الْكَهْفِ وَأَخْرَجَهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا مِنْ قَدَمَيْهِ إِلَى رَأْسِهِ وَمَنْ قَرَأَهَا كُلَّهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا مَا بَيْنَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ.
(al-Haithami, 1992)

who reads the beginning and end verses of Al-Kahfi, he (she) will be endowed with light from head to toe, and whoever reads the entire letter of Al-Kahfi then he (she) will be given the light between the earth and the sky.

مَنْ قَرَأَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ... الآية كَانَ لَهُ نُورٌ مِنْ عَدْنٍ إِلَى مَكَّةَ حَشْوُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ُ

whoever read verse ... on night, he (she) will be blessed with light from Adn to Makkah and will be surrounded by angels (al-Haithami, 1992).

Some of these traditions clearly provide the motivation and passion to read Al-Kahfi especially on Friday or Thursday night. Therefore, scholars think that reading Al-Kahfi letter on Friday or Thursday night is very recommended based on the hadith (Az-Zuhaili, 1985). In that tradition there are several phenomena of traditions of hadith that live or living hadith, first; the practice of reciting Al-Kahfi on Friday before the Friday prayer ritual, based on the hadith mentioned. Second; strengthening the relationship between lecturers and employees or their peers and eliminating hostility among them. Thus it is in accordance with the Prophet's hadith about the importance of strengthening good relations with others, and the danger of hostility.

عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِأَفْضَلِ مِنْ دَرَجَةِ الصَّيَامِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالصَّدَقَةِ»، قَالُوا: بَلَى، قَالَ: «صَلَاةُ ذَاتِ النَّيْتِ، فَإِنَّ فَسَادَ ذَاتِ النَّيْتِ هِيَ الْحَالِقَةُ»، «هِيَ الْحَالِقَةُ لَا أَقُولُ تَخْلُقُ الشَّعْرَ، وَلَكِنْ تَخْلُقُ الدِّينَ»، (al-Tirmidzi, 1975)

The Prophet asked his companions. "Will I tell something better than the degree of fasting, prayer, and shadaqah?" they answered; "Of course", Then the Prophet said, which is to improve the relationship among others, the actual breakdown of relationships would slash goodness in religion."

Third, the practice of charity performed after after the reading of Al-Kahfi. The practice is one of the forms of the practice of hadith that live in the midst of the academic community. The Hadith of the Prophet, which contains the suggestions and virtues of charity, can be read in the following text.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، يُبَلِّغُ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: " قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ أَنْفِقْ أَنْفِقْ عَلَيْكَ " (al-Naisabury, n.d.)

Fourth; the practice of dhikr and reading al-Qur'an together, this is according to the following hadith of the Prophet;

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَيَتَذَكَّرُونَ بِسُنَنِهِ بَيْنَهُمْ، إِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ، وَغَشِيَتْهُمْ الرَّحْمَةُ، وَحَقَّقَتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ» (al-Azdi, 1998)

Of the four phenomena of living hadith, this study focused on the first living hadith. From the

results of interviews on a number of informants who numbered six people, three from the elements of employees and three other the elements of lecturers. All informants mentioned that the activity is a good and positive tradition, all informants know the hadith about the sunnah recommendation in reading Al-Kahfi on Friday. Which distinguishes between them is their motivation to follow the reading of al-Kahf, Mu'tashim Billah said that the first impulse to follow the tradition because of environmental factors, which the average colleagues follow the reading, so he was encouraged to join with other employees (Mu'tashim Billah, 2018).

Abdul Kadir as a lecturer in the field of law, explained that the motivation that moved him to follow the tradition besides the hadith from the Prophet, is the documentary he once witnessed about Ashabul Kahfi's struggle in fighting for his faith. Following the tradition of reading Al-Kahfi collectively, as if to grow the spirit of life, as well as to know the source and path of the story about Ashabul Kahf. Not only that, he also felt a positive impact by following the Al-Kahfi, one of which can memorize the verse and accidentally memorized it (Abdul Kadir, 2018).

Miski, as a young lecturer, was encouraged to follow the tradition because seeing the phenomenon of the tradition has become a routine majority of lecturers and employees in the faculty of Sharia UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, especially those who have empty time. After following the recitation of the letter al-Kahfi he felt the calm and fulfilled the empty space of the heart that is considered empty (Miski, 2018). The other three informants had the same judgment in addressing the tradition, which was to positively assess the activity and feel calm by reading Al-Kahfi, and the supportive environment to follow the activity.

From these data, obtained a result, that the environment and tradition of a society greatly affect the pattern of religious person. Tradition is necessary to make the hadith able to live in their midst. If so far many of the da'I make hadith as justification of tradition in society, then with the concept of 'living hadis', hadith not only as a rigid and tentative text but rather functioning the hadith as an elastic text and living with the wisdom of certain community traditions. Positioning the hadith as something that lives in the midst of society is one form of understanding that had been applied by the companions of the Prophet in his time. Thus, the study of 'living hadith' needs to be developed, not only as an attempt to practice the hadith in everyday life, more than that in an attempt to synergize

between text and context while maintaining the values of local wisdom of society.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The tradition of reading Al-Kahfi on UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang especially in the Faculty of Sharia is a religious reality which influenced and created by all the academic community both lecturers and employees. The tradition is formed through three dialectical moments. First; externalization, the existence of traditions that explain about the primacy of reading the letter al-Kahf on Friday is one factor the emergence of the tradition. In addition, friends and the support of the leaders of faculty in the form of verbal commands and guidance of those involved to contribute to the realization of these traditions. Second; Objectivity: The tranquility while reading Al-Kahfi together is an important factor occurrence that tradition. The content and messages are presented in the Al-Kahfi is the main attraction to stay afloat follow and preserve the tradition.

Third; Internalisation; The academic community has different subjective meanings about the practice of that tradition. the diversity of meaning in the intersubjektif realized by them as inevitability, so that in general raises the belief that by reading the letter of al-Kahfi will get the blessing and ease in carrying out daily life. The existence of the tradition of reading Al-Kahfi collectively raises other living hadiths, namely as the realization of the suggestion of charity, the recommendation of reading al-Qur'an in congregation, and establishing an emotionally good relationship to fellow colleagues.

The attempt to live the hadith in certain societal traditions, is a form of dialectic between the text and the context, so that the texts of the hadith can remain relevant throughout the time, wherever and whenever. Hadiths should not only be treated as texts as religious dogmas, more than that the hadith has been transformed and lived in the midst of society as an institutionalized practice. Thus the universal value of religion as rahmatan lil alamin can be realized.

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