

The Islamic Symbols in Indonesian Anti-Corruption Poetry

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Abstract. This study aimed to describe and explained the Islamic symbols in the anti-corruption poetry as the irony of the behavior of corrupt politicians in Indonesia. The method used in this research was the content analysis with the object of the study in terms of the anti-corruption poetry. The results of this study showed that the poet uses symbols impress as media for criticizing the behavior of corrupt politicians in Indonesia. Islam in Indonesia, in the politicians view, is the mask to hide corrupt behavior. Representation of the islamic symbols appear in the poetries with the title “*Tuan Berpeci Tuhan*”, “*Tuan Haji Tujuh Kali*”, “*Caleg Silakan Masuk Masjid*”, “*Tuhan Ke Dua*”, and “*Tawaf Sang Koruptor*”. The poetries depict that Islam is only a tool to perpetuate power and maintain their position in the political arena. The irony of this is conveyed by the poet to show how bad behavior of corruptors Indonesia in hide his wickedness is. Moreover, the Lord of Islam is fooled to pave the way of politics they choose.

Keywords: *Islamic Symbols, Anti-Corruption Poetry, Politicians Indonesia*

1 INTRODUCTION

Corruption becomes a big problem for Indonesia. The huge number of corruption comitted by the politicians, in terms of executive, legislative and yudicative, from the highest level to the lowest, becomes an evidence that Indonesia is in a dangerous situation on corruption. Up to this point, there is no power to stop this problem, including religion. Instead of becoming a power to stop corruption, religion exactly becomes a medium for ”smoothing” corrupt action by a group of state officials.

One of the evidences to support that argument is that there are still many corruption cases committed by polititions affilliated with religion-based parties, like Islam. These cases include a case of Lutfi Hasan Ishak, the former president of Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (*PKS*), and Ahmad Fathanah, on impor scandal of meat; a case of Waode Nurhayati, a politician of Partai Amanat Nasional (*PAN*) on bribery case scandal in Nangro Aceh Darussalam Province; Artalita Suryani from Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (*PKB*) on bribing a judge, Urip Tri Gunawan, to win corruption allegation case of Syamsul Nursalim; etc [1]. These phenomena show that Islamic parties do not fully practice Islamic values in their polical activity.

Besides, politicians from Islamic parties who participates in corrupt practice, utilizes religion symbols and devotions as a way to get into corruption. This is reflected by the case of pilgrimage, involving a former Minister of Religious Affairs, Suryadharma Ali, from Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (*PPP*). From the huge number of corruption cases involved by

Moslems, the great destruction of Islam reputation probably is the Quran stock case. The Minister of Religious Affairs are found to commit corruption in stocking the Quran. How could the Quran, which contains verses about noble lessons for human, possibly be used for committing corrupt actions. A religion pillar, like Quran that should be used for maintaining the balance state of life system, is exactly destroyed by some people in the name of Islam.

Consequently, there is a question on how to stop corruption if religion cannot stop it. Poetries, or generally literary works, are usually used for combatting corruption. This is in line with the President John F. Kennedy who stated that if politics is in a wrong way, poetry will make it right. Besides, Seno Gumira Adjidarma also stated that if journalism is blocked, literature is openly expressed. This spirit probably inspires the poets to campaign the rejection and eradication of corruption through poetries. The movement of Rejecting Corruption Poetry has been demonstrated by collecting hundreds of anticorruption poetries written by Indonesian poets.

From those anticorruption poetries, the writer is interested in poetries satirizing Indonesian politicians' corrupt behavior with using Islamic symbols. Hence, this study is conducted to describe and explain the representation of Islamic symbols in anticorruption poetries used as an irony on Indonesian politicians' corrupt behavior. This study will expectantly give a new knowledge to the readers that (1) poetries are media to campaign the rejection of corruption, (2) how shameful and terrible corruption committed by Indonesia politition is, especially those who commit it in the name of religion.

This study is important to do because there has no study on Islamic symbols in anticorruption poetry. The relevant studies were only related to the relationship between Islam with corruption and poetry with corruption. Additionally, the study conducted by Arifin reveals that the corruption is an action that violate Islamic rules, so it gets a sentence of *jarimah takzir* [2]. It is revelant to the present study, especially in treating corruption law with reference to Islam.

The study on corruption with bringing Islamic perspective has been done by Rabain. It is suggested that in Islam, a corruption is reflected in three terms, namely *akhdul anwal bil bathil* (eating others' wealth by a wrong way), *al-suhtu* (prohibition/bribery), and *al-ghulul* (unfaithfulness) [3]. This is similar to Umam who investiagated Islamic view on corruption. He claims that by the spirit of Islamic norms and good cooperation with formal law norm, Indonesian Moslems must become the main actors in coping with corruption [4].

Meanwhile, some studies on the relationship between poetry and corruption have been accounted by Ulya, Wardani and Mujiyanto in which one of those discussed about metaphor in anticorruption poetry [5]. In another study, they investigated the content of anticorruption education in a lecture of the poetry study and appreciation [6]. Besides, Inayati and Nuryatin's study is also reflected a poetry relationship with corruption, particularly on symbolic meaning in poetry of rejecting anticorruption. These studies indicate that the phenomena of using poetry as a tool for facing against (or at least rejecting) corruption is not gibberish. These poetries have become a collective spirit, an alternative in the effort to stop corruption, considering that other efforts have no good results [7].

1.1 Research Method

This study deployed content analysis approach, a research approach that focuses on a deep investigation about an object. The object of this study is the poetry written in a book of *Puisi Menolak Korupsi*. The data were obtained by purposive sampling technique to focus on poetry with certain content related to purpose of the study. The obtained data were, then, analyzed

with using interactive analysis model. This model consists of four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion [8].

1.2 Results and Discussion

This section will describe the analysis result of anticorruption poetries obtained from *Puisi Menolak Korupsi* book. From the lists of poetries, there are obtained five poetries about criticism on Indonesian politicians' corrupt behavior with using Islamic symbols. These poetries are "Tuhan Kedua" by Joko Wahono, "Tuan Haji Tujuh Kali" by Sulis Bambang, "Tuan Berpeci Tuhan" by Rivai Adi, "Caleg Silahkan Masuk Masjid" by Samsuni Sarman, and "Tawaf Sang Koruptor" by Wijaya Heru Santoso. These poetries infer Islamic symbols, which are used as media for criticizing Indonesian politicians' corrupt behavior.

The first poetry is entitled "Tuhan Kedua" by Joko Wahono. It criticizes politicians who take their wealth and power as God. The name of God has not been mentioned in their pray, but is replaced by power, position, and money. The following quotation of poetry describes that situation.

This quotation is a play on *lafadz basmallah* which is used by Moslems to start everything. Religious scholars have agreed that when we will start devotions, we should begin it with basmallah [9]. Basmallah becomes a manifestation of our commitment and dedication to Allah. All human activities must be based on the awareness of Allah's existence.

However, in this context, Allah is not served as a source of wish and pray. His position is replaced by power, position and money. The corruptors use all of those as their protector from law, fugitive from justice and final pray. This become the reflection of corruptors' behavior which usually uses these material aspects to make the wish come true, such as lasting power and maintaining their wealth.

Similarly, the poetry entitled "Tuan Haji Tujuh Kali" by Sulis Bambang also contains criticism on corrupt behavior of certain politicians who take position, power and wealth as the main purpose of their lives. In a consequence, all types of their devotions are on behalf of maintaining their temporal wishes (materialism), rather than of increasing their quality for the hereafter (spiritualism). Their pilgrimage is only a guise, giving alms is only for getting support and temporal investment in a wish that God will double their wealth. The quotation is the following.

*di Madinah / tanganmu menengadah / di Makah / mulutmu mendo'a tak pernah
lelah / seraya kau cium Hajar Aswat / kau usap Ka'bah penuh mesra / setiapnya
sampai di bawah talang emas / pintamu cuma satu / lestarikan jabatanmu*

The quotation *pintamu cuma satu, lestarikan jabatanmu* is a strong criticism for corruptors who eliminate the existence of Allah. The devotion that should be interpreted as a realization of worshipping Him and surrendering His destiny and desire (spiritual dimension) shifts to materialism (materialistic dimension). For Allah, it is something with poor quality, as recorded in Surah Al-An'am verse 32 that means "And what is the life of this world but play and amusement? But the best is the home in the hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand?" This verse implicates that how low the level of corruptors' belief are so that their devotions are only for getting materials. In the Fawaid view, materialistic mentality results in a massive number of corrupt actions in Indonesia [10].

The third poetry is entitled "Tuan Berpeci Tuhan" by Rivai Adi. This poetry is particularly criticize the efforts of branding corruptors with using Islamic symbols as guises to cover their actions. They will physically appear like holly figures almost without sins. In their speech,

they frequently campaign on combatting corruption. However, they themselves utilize their position and power to commit corruption.

Cap is an Islamic symbol, although it doesn't symbolize one's Islam. A cap is used in that poetry to symbolize corrupt politicians and officials under Islamic parties and to brand themselves the obedient Moslems with Islamic attributes used. They appear with the characteristics of well manner, gentle, and religious. The phrase of "*Tuan berpeci Tuhan*" is a criticism for politicians. In one hand, they brand themselves as the true Moeslems. In another hand, they are definitely trapped in serial case of corruptions, like cow import case. It is shown in the following quotation.

tuan-tuan berpeci tuhan / di balik jeruji kasus korupsi / peristiwa sapi menjadi-jadi / pupus sudah pesan murabbi

The criticism to corruptors who use religion as a guise also appear in "*Caleg Silahkan Masuk Masjid*" poetry by Samsuni Sarman. In that poetry, corruptors are described to be always welcomed in mosques because of their power and wealth for alms and their clean and neat appearance as the holly guys. It is reflected in the following quotation.

tidak ada yang melarang / subuh, siang, hingga malam menjelang sahur / karena kau pakai kopiah dan sarung / berbaju koko dengan sorban di bahu / serta santun mencium tangan kyai

tidak ada yang marah / karena kau bawa takjil yang berlimpah / dana politik yang kau sebut sedekah / agar dapat berkah dan rahmah

However, how good people hide bad things, one day it will appear. Moreover, these things are related to a lot of people lives, importance and interests.

tidak satu pun kami berkata / karena di ujung masjid ada jamaah yang terlelap / setelah menyantap takjil penuh lalap / muazin terjaga dan menutup pintu, persis di hadapan orang / yang terlelap hingga jatuh tersungkur, heboh

bisik-bisik pun bersahutan / takjil berisi nasi penuh racun – sisa korupsi limatahunan / dan ingin mengulang kembali agar tetap bertahan / mewarisi gedung yang bernilai milyaran / hasil peluh dan derita rakyat, / dalam keputusan...

Campaign for the general election becomes a contest for legislator candidates in squandering money for getting support. Mosques or other religious symbols becomes a necessary part of that political situation. Many legislator candidates immediately become greatly empathy on social and religious activities. In fact, the main purpose is absolutely to look for support so they will win the positions.

The fifth poetry containing an irony aspect toward corrupt behavior of Indonesian politicians is entitled "*Tawaf Sang Koruptor*" by Wijaya Heru Santoso. This poetry more focuses on the realization of corruptors on sins and mistakes. In this poetry, the corruptors said "*Dengan tawaf ini ya Allah / Kurindukan diriMu dari pojok Hajar Aswad / Hija Ismail sampai Rukun Yamani*".

Additionally, this poetry contains criticism for corruptors. It is stated in "*Dengan dana pembangunan jalan / Yang kuisihkan / Aku tidak peduli halal atau haram / Yang penting aku ingin mengintipMu*". This quotation is an irony for corruptors' behavior who use devotions to bribe God. Santoso expresses that they do not feel ashamed for going pilgrimage while the money is resulted from corruption. The worst is that they face God to beg forgiveness. It is

shown in *Yang penting aku ingin mengintipMu / Tentang takdir yang kausisipkan di gundukan jiwaku / Mudah-mudahan engkau mengampuniku / Karena aku tidak menyekutukanMu*".

From discussion above, it is concluded that the practice in using religion as a political vehicle to get wealthy and power frequently occurs in Indonesia. This phenomenon cannot be recorded in a poetry if it doesn't really happen because a poetry is not born from the void of the soul. Hence, poetries expressed Islamic politicization practice is not fiddlestick, but real. It indicates that the practice of using Islamic symbols and religious branding truly exists in Indonesia.

Religion must become a defence tool to avoid various pattern of badness inside human that potentially destroy the system of life. Religion should be able to improve value system in all aspect of human life [11]. Islam provides the good example for the believers to follow because Islam is *rahmatan lil alamin*. Quoted Emha Ainun Nadjib, Islam warrants the safety of soul, wealthy, and level of each human. In fact, some politicians utilize Islam for their needs and interests and gradually destroy Islam reputation.

Islamic parties have no a clear direction and consistency in ideology. They are generally considered as parties of exploiting Islamic symbols for political interests [1]. Indonesian people majorly do not perceive much differences between Islamic and nationalist party members in terms of the violation on Islamic moral codes. They identified as Islamic politicians seem to be vulnerable to be involved in corruption cases and sex scandals.

Many people assume that corrupt behavior of state officials is resulted from political system. Some fraudulence practice in the general election make the elected officials use their power for their own needs [12]. Nevertheless, Indonesia must be freed from corruption traps because the majority of Indonesian people are Moslems. In general, Indonesian Moslems should become the real strength to combat the corruption. Moslems should become the strength to increase state prestige, not to, in contrary, become hystorical burden and source of state problem [4]. This responsibility become harder for Indonesian Moslem politicians, even those who are affiliated to Islamic parties. Although Islam is still served as a guise to cover bad things, one day, when the spirit of Islam has been sticked on, these corruption behavior will disappear.

2 CONCLUSIONS

Poetries are not born from the void of the soul. They are created by poets from dialectic relationship between thought, feeling management and creative process with reality. Consequently, it is impossible that anticorruption poetries exoposing Islamic symbol exist without the emergence of the similar phenomena. This implies that politicians who serve Islam as a media to get sympathy and support, as well as power absolutely exist. Some of them are involved in corruption case and get jailed. Moreover, some corruption cases lead to some rituals.

Five poetries analyzed are criticism and irony toward Indonesian politicians' corrupt behavior. These criticism and irony are expressed by exploring Islamic symbols as the fact are found in reality.

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