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The Concept of Elite (Thoughts of Antonio Gramsci and the Study in Islamic Studies)

Efa Ida Amaliyah

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Kudus, Indonesia

efa@iainkudus.ac.id

Agus Nurhadi

Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

agusnurhadi@uinwalisongo.ac.id

Abstrak

Studi ini mencoba untuk mengungkap tentang konsep elite dari pemikiran Antonio Gramsci yang menunjang kajian elite dalam perspektif Islam, dengan menggunakan metode atau cara pustaka (*library research*). Kaum elite menurut Gramsci merupakan kategori sosial yang tidak berhubungan dengan kelas tetapi berhubungan dengan hegemoni. Hegemoni merupakan kekuasaan kemenangan yang didapat melalui mekanisme konsensus ketimbang melalui kekerasan atau penindasan terhadap kelas sosial lainnya. Rezim menyebarkan kekuasaan pengaruh yang hegemonik karena didukung oleh organisasi infrastruktur terkait, yaitu yang di dalamnya diandaikan terjadi kepatuhan para intelektual karena faktor kultural dan politis. Dari sinilah muncul elite yang dikategorikan menjadi dua menurut Gramsci, yaitu elite organik (politisi, birokrat, akademisi) dan elite tradisional (yang tunduk terhadap penguasa). Elit dalam agama Islam membawa konsekuensi atau dampak dengan menunjukkan pentingnya posisi elit pada keteraturan peradaban, urgensinya adanya kaderisasi elit dalam rangka menguatkan akidah dan keyakinan juga keimanan. Hal ini penting dilakukan karena vitalnya peran yang dimiliki oleh kaum elite untuk kemajuan masyarakat di sekitar mereka. Oleh karena itu, elit agama elit agama sekarang memiliki kewajiban dalam berpartisipasi dalam mewujudkan kesatuan bangsa dan bertanggungjawab dalam menjaga ketahanan nasional dalam berbagai aspeknya (ideologi, politik, ekonomi, dan sosial budaya).

Keywords: Elite, Antonio Gramsci, Studi Islam

Abstract

This study attempts to reveal the elite concept from Antonio Gramsci's thought which supports elite studies in an Islamic perspective, by using library research methods. The elite according to Gramsci is a social category that is not related to class but related to hegemony. Hegemony is a winning power that is obtained through a consensus mechanism rather than through violence or oppression of other social classes. The regime spreads hegemonic power of influence because it is supported by related infrastructure organizations, namely in which intellectual obedience is supposed to occur due to cultural and political factors. This is where elites emerge which are categorized into two according to Gramsci, namely organic elites (politicians, bureaucrats, academics) and traditional elites (subject to authorities). Elites in Islam bring consequences or impacts by showing the importance of elite positions in the orderliness of civilization, the urgency of elite cadre formation in order to strengthen faith and belief as well as faith. This is important to do because of the vital role played by the elite for the advancement of society around them. Therefore, the religious elite, the religious elite, now have an obligation to participate in realizing national unity and are responsible for maintaining national resilience in its various aspects (ideological, political, economic, and socio-cultural).

Keywords: Elite, Antonio Gramsci, Islamic Studies

Introduction

When talking about one society (community), we talk about a connection between local elite (religious elite) and society socially (social interaction)(Ernas et al., 2014; Karyanti, 2018; Nur, 2011). Gramsci said that elite had an intellectual function: *“All men are intellectuals, but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals... (Gramsci, 1987b)”*.

Gramsci divided elite typology (intellectual) into two types, there are a traditional intellectual and an organic intellectual (Gramsci, 1987a). One of elite as Gramsci said is traditional elite having its own dynamic in society. They have massive portion as a mediator in society. Those elite have a role in sectors of government, religious, economic, social, politic, and culture. It is because their proximity into grass root, so that they have abundance of time and space of discussion to nearby community (Shihab, 2007). Elite shall engage all the social elements to keep conflict off that happen in grass root level. Nevertheless, elite role in society experiences a transformation conformable to social dynamics changing. Elite in social viewpoint has excess as social capital to that exhibit elite's own existence. This capital highly effect of society's perspective towards those elite (Jannah, 2016).

The studies about elite had been done a lot by scientists and researchers, both Indonesian or foreign by variously perspective. On the point of Tom Bottormore who considering the elite theory and ideology build upon

study which is recent, he examined the role and significance of elite in class relationship and class structure either in industrial country or developing country. Bottomore also elaborated critic of elite and elitism that was defined by movement and thinker of democratize and socialize. Bottomore considered the prospect, when humankind approving millennium, for new progress toward society form that is more qualify, in which all citizen will participate more effectively in shaping their social world (Bottomore, 1993). The reason the author uses elite from Antonio Gramsci is because Gramsci argues that power, political and economic factors were the determining factors in the socio-cultural transformation or change of society, it is a form of hegemony. Hegemony is power that occurs which a chain of wins is obtained through a consensus mechanism rather than through violence or oppression of other social classes. The regime spreads hegemonic power of influence because it is supported by related infrastructure organizations, namely in which the obedience of intellectuals is supposed to occur due to cultural and political factors. According to Gramsci in society (either civil society or political society), the process of hegemony continues and has interconnections according to their respective interests which refer to capitalists and government/rulers. Even capitalism develops itself through hegemony (through the media, the state, or positions in companies). And to realize socialism, or save the oppressed and create a system that no longer has radical one-sided support for capitalists, so elite is needed in this process.

Reading the studies above, this paper tries to complement the existing studies by trying to find out the common threads about elites put forward by Antonio Gramsci in the study of Islamic studies. This is expected to be a reference in analyzing phenomena that exist in society regarding religious elites in social, cultural, and political dynamics, so that it is hoped that these religious elites are able to reproduce or change situations in their environment, and become a synergy that religious elites really deserve to be reckoned with in social life.

Theoretical Framework

The terminology of elite is well-known in Social Science study (Social Politics). Nonetheless, that terminology is also found in Al-Qur'an either express or implied (Asrul, 2013). A word in which describes is *al-mala*, even though this word refers to prophets. *Al-Mala* has significance which is "leaders and prominent figure in one community". That meaning intimately

relates to core meaning that is “fulfilling” and “full” physically and mentally (Asrul, 2013).

C. Wright Mills, in his book *The Power Elite* by his analysis that be sharp and critical to power organization in The United State of America, attracted attention in three classification of authority that was interrelated, there is: military elite, corporate, and political. This research as an accurate notes regarding that happened in The USA at that time, afterwards it came a question up that underlying that did The USA practically and democratically on the point of theoretical as important as culture nowadays (Mills, 1956). According to Abdul Cholik by seeing on *Pilkada and Pilkades* (kind of region and local election) in some regions of East Java proved an existence of anomaly and local elite shift role. In New Order (Orde Baru), political of local elite was manipulated by some figure of mass organization (ORMAS) and youth organization (OKP) that affiliated into regime, meanwhile this is roled by Islamic boarding elite, in particular Kyai and Santri. Using Powercube theory to see local elite function when the region election moment is one of meaning to reveal the roles and activities of elite in formulating policy and affecting mass (Chalik, 2017a), Haryanto who restricted a discussion regarding to an authority of elite models, categorized into two type of society, those are society in a small group but having massive power (elite), and society in a huge group but having no power. Elitist mode produced a stratification in society in which was depicted as pyramid where less individual was in the peak of pyramid and massive power, getting down, total of individual was more increasingly, even so less an authority (Haryanto, 2017). Conforming to Asrul Muslim’s book about elite’s behavior was minority in social life.

Nevertheless, the position of elite was in important position in social structure. The journey of *Tarikh* depicted the ups and downs of civilization with elite’s duty which was told in Al-Qur’an, in particular in story of prophets (Asrul, 2013). Antonio Gramsci explained concerning an emergence of intellectuality besides a power in social life. Gramsci refused a view about an emergence of intellectuality which contained with philosophers, artists, and literary experts (Siswati, 2018). Gramsci indicated that elite function (intellectual) in public were his topic in writing. The book defined about historical of elite in Italy. It was because at that time (1870) there were no united countries, so that the position of the elite, literature, language, and culture was more important. According to Gramsci, elite is social actor whom

be positioned socially and historically, every social identity, action, comprehension was shaped by social connection in living their life. They dealt with social practices in which be produced by previous generation and must be faced as a historical heritage (Gramsci, 1987a).

Method

To respond an underlying line about elite concept by Antonio Gramsci's perspective in that Islamic Studies, author uses method and library research that is a research which utilizing library resources to get data. These research data resources are" Antonio Gramsci, *Selection From The Prison Notebooks* Roger Simon, *Gagasan-gagasan Politik Gramsi* Femia, Joseph V, *Gramsci's Political thought: Hegemony, Conscience, and the Revolutionary Progres*, While for the seconder sources is taken from book, article, and website or internet which connecting to elite as Antonio Gramsci said.

Author adopts Miles and Huberman model data analysis techniques. Miles and Huberman data analysis techniques is implemented interactively, there are data reduction, data display, and making conclusion and verification (Moleong, 2017).

Hegemony By Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) came from small city in Ales Sardinia. Gramsci's intellectual formation was started when he studied at Turin University, that was when Gramsci was introduce by "practical philosophy". This thought was applicated for his interest and becoming neutralizer his sequence words , "practical philosophy" (comes from Italian) as anti-materialism (Gramsci, 1987b).

Antonio Gramsci by way of his phenomenal work *Prison Notebooks* (1929-1933) tried breaking Marxism primary theory about domination and power which power would not only focus on economic aspect, but also it would focus on culture can politic. This theory was designed basing on premise of the importance of idea (superstructure) beside physical strength (infrastructure) in social politic control. Gramsci was one of people whom refusing the orthodox of Marxism which was positivistic and deterministic-economic, then he pioneered neo-Marxism, in which there were hegemony and domination that happened to social community against other social community, where it was not only an economy based (infrastructure), but also

an asymmetric dependencies in economic, cultural, and power-political relations (Kumbara, 2018). In accord with Gramsci which politic having a philosophy value, that was a hub of human activities which was means to generate contact with the social world and the universe with all its consequences (Gramsci, 1987b).

Even though, Gramsci was opposite from Marx, however Gramsci was considered by Marx's successor. Whereas, before an appearance of Marx, there were big figures acquainting concept of hegemony, like Sigmund Freud and Sigmund Simmel. Things that differentiate hegemony of Gramsci and the previous figure were: first, Gramsci's concept is broader to other groups in social relations; second, the hegemonic nature of "cultural influence" is not only on political leadership in the system of alienation as understood in the previous generation of Marxists (Ali, 2017; Ari Sapto, 2012; Femia, 1981).

The term "hegemony" of Gramsci has two sides. In one side, hegemony is contrasted with "domination" (bound to the opposition of the State or civil society), in other hand, "hegemonic" is used as contradiction between "corporation" and "economical-cooperation", that referred to historical phase of existence of a particular group that transcends the position of existence of the company and maintains its economic position and aspires to gain leadership positions in political and social aspect (Simon, 2004). The hegemony concept of Gramsci can be elaborated with class supreme base explanation:

'the supremacy of a social group manifest itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership". A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which is tends to "liquidate", or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups. A social group can, indeed must, already exercise "leadership" before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power); its subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to "lead" as well'

Hegemony is relations between classes and other social forces. The concept of hegemony of Gramsci is started that there are violence and persuasion in exercise his power to classes group below. Hegemony of Gramsci is not only dominating but also passing or manner about agreement in carrying out ideology and political leadership. Therefore, according to Gramsci, hegemony is a consensus organization in which to get other group's confession, it must through an ideology authorization which comes from

classes group who are hegemony (Simon, 2004; Siswati, 2018). That consensus associated with sociopolitics or other aspect acceptance psychological. Consensus occurring are because several things, among others; *first*, the fear that surrounds the consequence of not being able to adjust; *second*, accustomed to following certain ways and goals; *third*, awareness or approval of certain elements. Consensus is created because of approval. Consensus that received by workers is passive, that means when workers perceive social structures as mere desires and also less conceptual when they understand social reality (Siswati, 2018).

There are three phases of hegemony; economic, politic, and hegemonic. First, economic phase (materialistic) is an unavoidable phase and becoming an inevitability in human social life. Second, political phase in which political power has a connection that allows identification at various levels of homogeneity and also there has been political awareness that has been obtained by potentially hegemonic groups. Third, hegemonic phase (positive phase) is a phase where a purely political. There is already freedom in appearing freedom of world view which complements the behavior and thoughts. In this phase, there are competing ideologies and can unite political, economic, intellectual and moral aim, so that is able to deal with all problems that are corporate but highly universal. This is what ultimately creates hegemony in strong social groups against weak social groups (Simon, 2004).

Elite Concept According to Antonio Gramsci's Perspective

Elite word "*elite*" -dictionary.cambridge.org- means wealthy person or group, most powerful, best educated, or best trained in a society(<https://Dictionary.Cambridge.Org/Dictionary/English/Elite>, n.d.). The word "elite" was used in the XVII century to describe a certain concept which was having high value, and was used to refer to the superiority of social groups (Bottomore, 1993). Elite is not in the form of physical material, elite is a scientific concept that emerged through the history, as a poor society turns into a prosperous society, from authoritarian into democratic. The values and economic interests which becomes one of the factors of the change (Klinken, 2018).

Elite power is who has the advantages of the environment, both male and female. They have a strategic position that is a decision maker who has big consequences. Furthermore, coming from social structure, elites occupy strategic leadership positions, such as religious leaders and political party

leaders, they enjoy wealth, power and fame. As the expression “*In so far as national events are decided, the power elite are those who decide them*” (Mills, 1956). Mills said that a group of government officials, military leaders, and corporate executives whom are interrelated and occupy the “pyramid” of power, effectively control key political and social decision-making (Mills, 1956; Wedel, 2017). Three characteristic, in accord with Mills, will help to understand the power elite; first, social homogeneity of common background; second, the structure and breadth of the elite 'institutional hierarchy' which can help define the elite's sphere of influence; third, coordination among elites, formal and informal (Mills, 1956).

Elite is an individual or group in society who has power, superiority, status, wealthy and high prestige from other people. The existence of the elite has benefits in several ways, such as the number of elites, the relationship between one another, their political power which is used as an important fact that must be considered in different societies for changes in the social structure (Bottomore, 1993). The elite (intellectuals) in Gramsci's view is very simple, that the elite is a social category that is not related to class. All of humans have the potential to become intellectuals as long as they have and use their intelligence. Nevertheless, not all intellectuals are based on their social function. Gramsci divides the typology of the elite (intellectuals) into two types, namely traditional intellectuals and organic intellectuals. First, they are traditional intellectual who becomes a mediator between the community and the upper elite (cleric, administrator, civil servant, teacher). Traditional intellectual is a social group which dominates, autonomous, and also independent. They are also a circles who has inter-class circle of society. Second, they are an organic intellectual who are thinkers and organizers. They can be distinguished in the profession of work, and not in their social function (Gramsci, 1987b). In the 20th century, they were categorized into three classes, Production field: managers, technicians, engineers and others; Civil society: academics, journalists, broadcasters, writers, and; politician State apparatus: soldiers, civil servants, prosecutors, and judges (Simon, 2004).

The one of Elite as said by Gramsci is traditional elite whom has its own dynamic in society. They have a huge portion as a mediator in society. Those elite play a role in governance, religious, economic, social, politics, and culture aspect. This is because their proximity into grass-root community, so that they have much time and space in discussing with local communities. As elites, they should embrace all elements of society to avoid conflict that

happens in grass root level. Nonetheless, the role of the elite in society certainly changes in a row with the currents of change in the dynamics of society. Elite by society views have an excess as social capital to show to show the existence of the elite self. This capital greatly affects the public's perspective on the elite (Gramsci, 1987a).

Antonio Gramsci in seeing elite's role or intellectual is part of his aim to understand of base and superstructure. An idealistic view of Gramsci, elites are perceived as distinct and emerge outside the relations of production. This is resistance to the socialist movement which always sees it based on an economic interpretation of the socio-political role of the elite or intellectuals (Patria & Arief, 2015). Intellectuals are "deputies" from the dominant group who carry out the special functions of social hegemony and social governance. There are two scopes: Consensus is given by the masses or society to the dominant leadership which is historical because of the belief (prestige), and they savor their function and position in the world of production. There is "legal" coercion carried out by state officials against people who do not agree (active or passive). The apparatus is used when there is a weak leadership crisis (Gramsci, 1987b; Patria & Arief, 2015). The Elites refer to an elite who governs by carrying out social functions and represent some of the values of society. In Indonesia, it is the government that is able to carry out social functions as a social force, whereas social power coming from government has no power to take a position as "strategic or elite" to compensate "the ruling class" (Keller, 1995; Putra & Ahmad, 2011; Yusron, 2009).

Table 1 concept of elite

Figure	Theory
Tom Bottomore	Elite is an individual or group in society who has a power, superiority, status, wealthy and highly prestige from other people. The existence of elite has benefits in some ways, such as a number of elite, relationship among each other, political power that should be used as an important fact that must be considered in different societies for changes in the social structure
C. Wright Mills	a group of government officials, military leaders, and corporate executives whom are interrelated and occupy the "pyramid" of power, effectively control key political

	and social decision-making
Suzanne Keller	The elite refer to an elite who governs by carrying out social functions, and represents some of the values of society
Antonio Gramsci	All of humans have the potential to become intellectuals as long as they have and use their intelligence. All of humans have the potential to become intellectuals as long as they have and use their intelligence. Nevertheless, not all intellectuals are based on their social function. Elite is all of people who has an organizer function in all elements of society, both in the areas of production, politics, and culture.
Quraish Shihab	The elite must have an obligation to participate in realizing national unity and are responsible for maintaining national security in various aspects. Elite is who has these characteristic: always remember (dhikr) Allah in any condition; always remember and think that Allah always has a purpose and benefit for his creatures, in creating the universe and the elite must understand that this is all the meaning of life; the form of understanding the meaning of life, the elite must be able to be creative to produce results in a tangible form.

Elite Studies in Indonesia

According to Tarter and Young, the formation of the class or middle class in Indonesia is a central political actor. This is because it gains support on issues such as democracy, environmental protection, the rule of law, as well as the bourgeois attention to property rights and business, diverting energy to the emancipatory stream of Islam seeking social and cultural influence abroad. Indonesian middle class is headed in four directions and its urban locus, namely; “**upward**”, it is towards a global economy through changes at the level of the military-lender-leaning State; “**downward**”, it is through the provisional government and market networks to cities/districts, and rural areas; “**sideward**”, it is entering into a variety of regionally different

modes of production; and the last is “**inside**”, it is in the formation of male and female identities in middle-class households (Young, 2018).

Elite in Indonesia refers to several middle class group that is far from the metropolitan city of Jakarta with a small number and not so wealthy. Even so, their existence is politically highly calculated. This is because they become “ways” about the flow of information, the flow of funds, and others that flow from Jakarta to remote villages. Elite have the potential to become agents of change because they are able to commit to social change. In Indonesia itself, elite has succeed in Reformation by supporting political policies, especially in the field of government, namely by decentralization. These elites exist in areas, such as Kupang, Manado, Aceh, and so on (Klinken, 2018). The development of the elite in Indonesia occurred around 1950 which is the elite began to be discussed. This year was the first year of Indonesia's independence, so the question arises, which direction will the Indonesian state be taken? One of the agenda was to bring about dynamic economic development. The roles that take up the agenda were the agents of reform (the elite), this was because they had a massive influence based on modernization theory and theorists (Klinken, 2018).

According to Lev, in the 1970s, the economy experienced highly rapid development along with the rise of a new status. This had resulted in the emergence of a new wave of work carried out by professionals, such as civil servants and private office employees. This professional class is growing bigger and they want to shape Indonesian society according to what is imaged in their heads. They become professionals who become prominent parties. Their number is increasing which has an impact on the pressure of change that is even greater (Lev, 2018). Lev's explanation contains several keys, namely 1) that the middle class in the New Order era (Orde Baru) had emerged massively and significantly as a result of the government's economic policies and other side effects; 2) the middle class is highly concerned with creating distance between the State and society or in the term “liberal”; 3) The middle class is of course involved in politics (Liddle, 2018).

Elite is able to push the resistance as happened in Kediri, local elite resistance is affected by a number of aspects, first, media impressions (print and electronics). Media impressions is accessible into reform issues in the region; second, political aspect, it is the change of ruler from the Old Order to the New Order; third, culture, this aspect is development effect, means educated society, then society becomes intelligent and rational. Great

rationality affects the rise of autonomous public discourse; fourth, economic aspect, society who works in non-government sector, then it will be more independent (Yusron, 2009). It also happened among Magelang people in the period 1967-1988, when there was a prolonged conflict, the role of local elites was an important factor in overcoming the conflict. These elites become the unifier of the realization of conflicting social integration as a result of different political understandings, religious conflicts, and also because of internal family conflicts. The cultural and religious approach carried out by the elite is by showing good leadership and exemplary (Karyanti, 2018). Elite care for society occurred in Bengkulu society in the nineteenth century, namely the occurrence of several events such as the Bukit Palik incident (1807), the Tabat Mono incident (1835), the Seluma incident (1835), the Tanjung Terdana incident (1873), and the Bintunan incident (1873). Religious elites and political elites participating in social movements are influenced by political and economic factors. This is because the elites see that there is an imbalance, arbitrariness, injustice, tyranny, and oppression carried out by the colonials against indigenous peoples (Setiyanto, 2016).

There are differences between urban elites and rural elites according to the developments that occur in their communities [Gus Dur was of the opinion that the Islamic elite in rural areas, namely they were wealthy farmers and traders, while in urban areas were entrepreneurs of batik, kretek cigarettes, leather crafts, silver and gold. However, they have a different character from the traditional ruling class, even from the elite of the descendants (Chinese)]. As revealed by Gramsci that the urban elite develops in accordance with an industrial development and is related to benefits. Urban elites have easily identifiable standards as an industrial workers. Urban elites do not carry out political functions to their citizens (Gramsci, 1987b). Meanwhile, the rural elite is a type of "traditional" elite who directly relates or interacts directly with the community, namely farmers. According to Gramsci, the rural elite consisting of priests, notaries, lawyers, teachers, and doctors, as a whole has higher and different standards than the community. The community (farmers) highly respect the role of the elite, although at other times they also underestimate it. The other language is admiration mixed with jealousy and anger (Gramsci, 1987b).

The character and nature of elites differ greatly in one country to another. Elites in developed countries are very different from elites in developing countries, the difference lies in the attitude or type of society and

also the type of culture. The elites in developing countries still adhere to the old traditional values as in the culture of developing societies. Elites in developing countries must be given a central role in the process towards modern society. Modernization applies in every sector of life that aims to catch up. This is because society is in an “intermediary position”, namely the process of leaving old values for new values (Haryanto, 2017). Indonesia is developing countries, so it is going through the modernization process.

There are several elite typologies in developing countries based on political orientation and social background; among others (Haryanto, 2017):

The elite that emerges from the merchants and craftsmen who are the elite of minority groups (in terms of religion and ethnicity), they do not have a solid ideology with a pragmatic attitude that prioritize egalitarian economics and politics (López, 2013). Elites who come from the aristocrats who are in an agrarian or merchant society. Military caste elite, chieftain. They seek to maintain the status quo with a tradition orientation. This tradition is used to maintain his power. This elite consists of two groups, namely the realists who realize that modernity is unavoidable, the other group is the traditionalists, namely those who want the order to persist in its traditions. Elite originating from colonial officials who served as representatives in the effort to be responsible for the colonial state. These elite supports modernization through industrialization by adopting effective administrative policies. This type prioritizes physical strength with persuasion and compromise.

The revolutionary elite are the intellectuals. They argue that the existing society is no longer compatible with modern society. Modernization is inevitable. They want power for theirs. Social unrest can no longer be resolved administratively, but in ideological development. This ideology has led them to absolute power so that in leading they use an iron fist by ignoring the aspirations of the people. The last elite are elites who in their leadership have diverse backgrounds. They are united because they have the same agenda, namely against the invaders. The charisma that stands out greatly affects his personality.

Elite from Islamic Perspective

Elite in the Islamic concept contained in the Qur'an is a derivation of the word *al mala'* which means "leaders and figures in society". This word is mentioned thirty times in the Qur'an [QS. Al-A,,raf (7): 60, 66, 75, 88, 90, 103,

109,127; QS. Hud (11): 27, 38, 97; QS. Yusuf (12): 43; QS. Al-Mu‘minun (23): 24, 33, 46; QS. AlSyu„ara“ (26): 34; QS. Al-Naml (27): 29,32, 38; QS. Al-Qasas (28): 20, 32, 38; QS. Al-Saffat (37): 8; QS. Sad (38): 6, 69; QS. Al-Zukhruf (43): 46. (Arul, n.d; Kamal, 2016)]. The mention of elites in the Qur'an brings consequences or impacts, among others, shows the importance of the elite position in the order of civilization, the urgency of elite regeneration is strengthen faith and belief as well as faith. This is important because of the vital role played by the elite for the betterment of the community around them (Asrul, 2013). For the Indonesian, particularly Muslims, *ulama* or *kyai* has a significant role or in other words, *ulama* is individuals who have a deep understanding of religion and intellectuals who become role models for the surrounding community (Buylaert & Ramandt, 2015; Hiroko, 1987). The religious elite in the Muslim community are homogeneous entities, groups or individuals who differ in some respects according to their religious orientation, theological interpretation and religious opinions or opinions. However, the religious elite is characterized by certain general factors. Basically, the religious elite spreads religious knowledge such as theology, law, metaphysics, and history, which is done continuously. This is done in the customary institutions they attend (Rahman, 2008).

The role of religion for humans, is to relieve from the insecurity of life. This is because human nature and condition are free from levels of uncertainty and anxiety about existence. According to Champion in this newer approach, which is referred to as the “ideological variant approach”, that elites do not always stand outside the “false consciousness” of religion. Religious elites (probably) become part of an ideological belief system. In contrast to the previous approach, the elite of religious practitioners consciously, deliberately, and cynically manipulate religious charades only to dominate the non-elite (Champion, 2017). According to Quraish Shihab, Ali Imron's letter: 190-195, must be understood to find out who the religious elite are:

190. Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.

191. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

192. *Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.*

193. *Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller calling to faith, [saying], 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die with the righteous.*

194. *Our Lord and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, you do not fail in [Your] promise."*

195. *And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another. So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed - I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward."*

Those verses show a description of the religious elite (It is called by Muslim Intellectual according to Quraish Shihab's term) who have characteristics or characteristics' (such as a) always remember (*dhikr*) Allah in any condition; b) always remember and think that Allah always has a purpose and benefit for his creatures, in creating the universe and the elite must understand that this is all the meaning of life; c) the form of understanding the meaning of life, the elite must be able to be creative to produce results in a tangible form (Shihab, 2007). Therefore, the religious elite should always (*istiqomah*) study the Qur'an, practice, and also describe the values contained therein to be used as guidelines or instructions in society, the state, and the nation. In addition, religious elites are also required to pay attention to the verses of Allah contained in nature to be revealed in the form of behavior and always be used as role models (Shihab, 2007).

Islamic history has shown that the elite has existed since the time of the Prophet and his people. This is because the Prophet was an elite of people who were considered to have privileges over others. Those privileges and virtues are mainly knowledge about religion, good morals, and also protecting the people. All stories or Prophet stories are contained in the Qur'an which are then made into history for modern society (now) and are used as provisions and lessons to live a better life or history (Asrul, 2013). Abdurahman Wahid (Gus Dur) sees the elite (middle class) by looking at it from the perspective of Muslims and connected with the colonial period (history). According to Gus

Dur, the middle class (elite) in Indonesia is not an economic elite (traders), but is found among professionals, civil servants, officials, and academics (Wahid, 2018).

The Islamic elite in Indonesia occurred because of the response of the *ulama* to join the colonial because the initial goal was not successful, namely to declare an Islamic state. These elites took two paths, first, participating in the political struggle for independence led by nationalist leaders, while at the same time keeping their distance from their group of origin. Second, the identity of Muslim culture is always maintained (as a response to the first way). The consequence was that Islam was used as a political and cultural resistance against colonialism. As maintaining the identity or culture of Islamic, the elite group independently provides knowledge or readings from Muslims, such as Buya Hamka, calligraphy, and schools with modern Islamic bases (Wahid, 2018). After Independence Day, the religious elite continued to support political leaders who shared their vision, such as Wahid Hasyim, Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, and M. Natsir. At the same time, Muslim business groups ceased to exist, and were replaced by the emergence of civil servants, intellectuals, professional groups, as well as military officials who were considered elite (Wahid, 2018).

Indonesia's history shows that the political elite and the religious elite have an equally vital role. Religious elites are involved in establishing and even joining political parties with both national and religious ideologies. Political parties with a national ideology are always identified with the term nationalist. Religion is the religious legitimacy of the political party it stands for. This can be seen by several nationalist political parties that set up political wings in the form of tactical organizations to accommodate Islamic interests. Golkar has an Islamic Da'wah Council (DI), PDI-P has Baitul Muslimin Indonesia, and the same thing is found in other political parties (Chalik, 2017b). As a consequence, religious elites now have an obligation to participate in realizing national unity and are responsible for maintaining national security in various aspects. Such as (Shihab, 2007):

In the ideological aspect, the elite is tasked by safeguarding and safeguarding the nation's culture, as well as being a filter against the entry of foreign cultures. The ideological aspect is in accordance with what was taught by the Prophet Muhammad SAW., fostering his people, and it is the first step for fixing the personality and identity of his people. Political aspects, to maintain political stability this aspect must be owned. This is because

religious teachings are also related to life (state life). Through their scientific abilities, religious elites must be able to maintain and solve problems that can disrupt the stability of the country (Ainillah, 2016; Al-Hamdi, 2013; Arifin, 2008; Faizin, 2017; Kosim, 2012; Mukhlis, 2015; Rohmah & Rohmah, 2018).

The economic aspect, the economy is one of the pillars of development that is fair and equitable for all parties. Religious literacy must be able to formulate forms or patterns in an *amaliyah* observant (zakat, infaq, shodaqoh, and waqf) which are a means of economic resilience. The verses of the Qur'an itself describe and explain many aspects of the economy, this is because the existence of religion will be threatened if the economy experiences chaos, which will result in social disaster. The economic sector is also a concern for elites to be directly involved in maintaining the welfare of the surrounding community as a form of responsibility for changing society. The role of the religious elite or *kyai* is close to economic policy (Abidin, 2018; Andriyani et al., 2018; Muttaqin, 2016; Rimbawan, 2012; Rozuli, 2012). Socio-cultural aspects. If human values are glorified and upheld, then there will be a harmonious condition. The religious elite must also be able to participate in the socio-cultural field, this is because the religious elite have cultural capital through values that are often said in society, it is to always maintain harmony and concord in religious life (HM et al., 2018; Nasikin, 2017).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, the elite thinking introduced by Antonio Gramsci is in line with or in accordance with the elite concept in Islamic studies. The elite introduced by Antonio Gramsci provide space in the dynamics of society. Elites must be able to provide solutions and responsible for the problems that exist in their environment. In Islam, the existence of elites must also be related to the characteristics of people who are pious, it is always seeing the phenomena that are around them as a form of the existence of Allah, and therefore, elite must always remember by *dzikir* to Allah in any condition. In consequence the elites always have the wisdom to study the Qur'an, practice it, and also describe the values contained in it to be used as guidelines or instructions in society, country and nation. All humans have a potential to become an elite as long as they have and use their intelligence which is not based on any social function.

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