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POLITICS | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Nationalism thoughts of Ahmad Hassan, M. Isa Anshary, and M. Natsir: A study of the works of Islamic thinkers in the city of Bandung, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate the nationalist perspectives of Islamic thinkers in Bandung, Indonesia, specifically A. Hassan, M. Natsir, and Isa Anshary, and analyze their monumental works. A qualitative-descriptive method with a case study methodology was used. The data were obtained through a literature review of the works of these three individuals and interviews with various sources in Bandung, including representatives from NU, Muhammadiyah, and academic circles. The eight works under examination discussed the issue of nationalism from a religious perspective, a particularly intriguing and relevant topic. Furthermore, the scholars explored nationalism based on Islamic teachings, emphasizing that ethnicity, religion, and language should not impede the development of a shared sense. These differences were seen as opportunities to implement actual Islamic teachings in everyday life.

Subjects: Government; Political Philosophy; Political Theory

Keywords: nationalism; Islamic thoughts; Islamic thinkers

1. Introduction

Nationalism in Indonesia is currently experiencing a period of decline, with various disputes arising in the community both on social media and in daily life. In addition, there is a growing awareness of the diverse and pluralistic nature of the nation (Putra et al., 2021). These disputes, whether at the individual, group, or community level, often invoked the concept of nationalism. Debates and conflicts frequently revolve around claims that one group is more nationalist than another.

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Consequently, the term “nationalism” is often used to legitimize behaviors and attitudes, frequently putting groups against each other. This situation, in turn, can erode the essential values of nationalism.

One of the indications of the fading nationalist values is the outcome of the reformation period, marked by the fall of the New Order in 1998, which gave rise to numerous conflicts and the proliferation of more than a hundred political parties. This development caused a shift from a focus on unity and integrity toward various sectoral political interests, whether religious, ethnic, ethnic, or other specific groups. The impact of these ongoing reforms, which have not found an ideal format, continues to affect the unified steps to develop a nation. As a result, the issue of nationalism remains a contentious topic of discussion in various scientific forums.

Efforts to reinforce or revitalize nationalism appear to necessitate a review of its foundational concept. The most representative source for this study was to explore the concept of nationalism as elucidated in books authored by Indonesian Figures, Kyai or Ulama, who provided comprehensive descriptions of nationalism and how it should be upheld. Moreover, the discourse on nationalism seems to be an enduring subject of discussion. One method to identify common ground is to consult reliable books and texts that can serve as authoritative references. Therefore, this study explored manuscripts, books, and publications, with a specific focus on the exploration of nationalism in city of Bandung, Indonesia.

Bandung was chosen as the object of nationalism due to its long historical struggle against the colonialists. This city had been a birthplace for several organizations that played a crucial role in the struggle for independence. For example, Syarikat Islam (SI), led by HOS Cokroaminoto, held its inaugural national congress in Bandung in 1916. Similarly, the Indonesian National Party (PNI), a nationalist organization led by Sukarno, was founded in Bandung in 1927 (Anwar & Fauzan, 2019). The Bandung Sea of Fire incident in 1946, a heroic event, was evidence of the resilience of city against colonialism. During this struggle, the people and fighters of Bandung resorted to burning city to thwart Dutch colonialists, leaving behind the scorched earth. This incident further increased the spirit of nationalism among the residents (Editor, 2016).

Beyond the reputation for resistance and activism, Bandung was renowned as a center for pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) which played a crucial role in advocating for the independence of the Indonesian nation. The spirit of nationalism was also kindled within these schools, such as the Margasari Cijawura Islamic boarding school, which served as a base and headquarters of Hezbollah defense in 1945, and various other pesantren. Unfortunately, the expressions of nationalism often remain undocumented in the writings of Kyai or Ajengan. Various books have been published to ignite the spirit of nationalism based on Islamic principles. It is important to note that Bandung has been a breeding ground for nationalist figures and thinkers, who are intimately connected with the situation and circumstances of their era.

This study uncovered comprehensive data about the works of prominent figures in Bandung who addressed the topic of nationalism. These leaders and scholars included A. Hassan, Muhammad Isa Anshary, and M. Natsir, who have several related works. A select number of these works piqued the interest for further examination due to their originality and the specialized focus of the scholars on nationalism. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the nationalist perspectives and thoughts of these scholars based on their written works.

The study adopted a qualitative-descriptive method conducted in February 2021 in Bandung City, West Java, Indonesia. Data were collected through literature review and documentation. The stages of data processing included the application of heuristics and interpretation methods (Gottschalk, 1975). Heuristics refers to the compilation and collection of various sources related to the study, specifically the works of Ahmad Hassan, M. Natsir, and Isa Ansari.

2. Conceptual framework

According to Kartodirdjo (Kartodirdjo, 1981), the socio-political opposition against colonialism in Indonesia was chiefly spearheaded by Kyai, who served as religious leaders, pilgrims, and Quran teachers. These pioneering figures initiated a social movement, often collaborating with Javanese aristocrats (Steenbrink, 1984).

The social movement found religious legitimacy (Islam) through a fatwa known as the Jihad Revolution. This revolution was initiated by one of the famous Nusantara clerics, Sheikh 'Abd al-Samad al-Jawi al-Palimbani (Al-Falimbani, 1186) through the influential works titled *Nasihat al-Mu'minin wa Tadzkirah. al-Mu'minin fi Fadha'il al-Jihad fi Sabilillah wa Karamah al-Mujahidin*, published in the early 19th century. The motivation behind this work stemmed from Dutch colonialism in Palembang, which took place between 1818 and 1821. Furthermore, the work ignited the spirit of the Palembang people to resist the colonialists, directly led by Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II and a network of students from the Shaykh 'Abd al-Samad from the Sammaniyah order. The revolution for jihad was continued by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, the founding cleric of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), one of the largest organizations in Indonesia (Moesa, 2007).

Nahdlatul Ulama is an Islamic-nationalist organization that plays a significant role in the promulgation of the Jihad Revolution. This revolution arose as a response to the uncertainties faced by Indonesian leaders in dealing with the colonialists. Moreover, it aided students and freedom fighters in defeating the Allied troops from Indonesia. The revolution was considered a strategic decision, carrying immense significance by providing moral support to the national leaders and kindling nationalism/patriotism among the santri, the common people, and the Ulama, spurring them into active physical resistance against the invaders.

The Kyai led the resistance with unwavering determination and offered guidance to the Santri. The Jihad Resolution symbolizes nationalism of the Kyai in upholding the building of Indonesian independence, established by the founding fathers. Moreover, the existence of this fatwa shows that Kyai and Santri not only understand religious matters but grasp the national issues, actively participating in providing strategic solutions to the existing problems (Saputra, 2019). This was supported by (Benda, 1972), who stated that colonial rule was often threatened by explosions of Islamic-inspired resistance, either led by Indonesian rulers who embraced the faith of the Prophet or at the local level, namely fanatical Ulama.

The jihad revolution, as a tool that motivated the Kyai, was an institution of a patriotic social movement capable of mobilizing the masses to combat colonialism. Walker (Walker, 2012) stated that the enormous mobilizing power possessed by patriotic rhetoric could be used by various groups, extending beyond ethnic and territorial boundaries. In this context, the Kyai and Ulama could be viewed as a source of this mobilizing power. Religious groups (Kyai or Ulama, pilgrims, and Quran teachers), have effectively crafted a national discourse to foster nationalism.

It is important to note that the diversity of groups making claims of nationalism discourse has expanded. Nationalism can be classified as a social and political movement, characterized by a politics of resistance. This resistance arises when ordinary individuals unite with more influential social groups to challenge elites, authorities, and other opposing parties (Giddens, 2006; Tarrow, 1998; Walker, 2012). In the context of this study, the elites holding authority and serving as the opposing force were the colonial government carrying out colonialism in Indonesia at that time. Meanwhile, the more influential community groups included the nobles ruling the empire.

A social movement, according to (Mirsal, 2004), comprises a set of beliefs and institutionalized actions taken by a group of people to either advance or hinder societal change. In this context, the resistance movement against the invaders in Indonesia, driven by the Ulama or Kyai, can be categorized as a social movement. This classification is valid because the mobilization process incorporates an ideological sentiment in the form of a set of religious beliefs, termed "jihad."

Besides the mobilization factor, a social movement can arise through framing. These two factors are intertwined because the framing factor serves to stimulate mobilization when people organize efforts and act based on a shared awareness (Tarrow, 1998). Concurrently, the potential for critical framing processes hinges on personal access to mobilization structures. Framing takes root in a robust organizational context rather than a weak one. In essence, framing processes are unlikely to transpire in the absence of organization, as the absence of a mobilization structure can impede the spread of framing to the minimal number of individuals required for the basis of collective action.

The fatwa for the Jihad Revolution, initiated by Kyai Hasyim Asy'ari, the founding figure of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest socio-religious organization, served as the catalyst for fervently opposing the invaders. The concept of jihad constitutes a religious call that obliges every Muslim not to compromise with the invaders (Latif, 2022). The determination to resist the invaders grew stronger as the concept of jihad underwent framing, which portrayed the Dutch as infidels and asserted the Indonesians could not accept the dominance of any religion other than Islam (Yuliah, 2012).

In addition to takfiri perspective, which labeled non-Muslims as kafirs, this fatwa also obligated every individual (*fardhu 'ain*) to engage in jihad as a means to secure independence from the colonialists. As a result, numerous Indonesian youths responded to this call, voluntarily preparing themselves to become martyrs in the struggle to expel the invaders. This obligation of jihad has transformed *fardhu kifayah* (social obligations) to *fardhu 'ain* (individual obligation).

The consensus frame stage shows that raising awareness against the invaders needs to be followed by coordinated action by all components of the nation. Collective action in the context of the nationalist social movement assigned specific roles and responsibilities to each individual. This stage necessitates identifying the foundation of legitimacy and unifying to reach a consensus. The works of the *Ulama*, which explored the relationship between religion and nationalism, played a crucial role in shaping this consensus. The *Ulama* framed nationalism in a manner that gained Islamic legitimacy.

Nationalism is an ideology that emphasizes loyalty, devotion, or allegiance to a nation or nation-state, prioritizing national interests over individual or group interests. It constitutes a sense of love and pride for a homeland or nation, accompanied by a resolute commitment to their welfare. Nationalism is a collective endeavor, a continuous project that transcends time and is devoid of a discernible endpoint (Anderson, 2010; Muttaqin et al., 2006). As a foundational concept, it necessitates widespread adoption within society, reflecting a profound love for the country (Musa, 2011a). Nationalism is also a unifying spirit capable of mobilizing all segments of society within the nation and state (Irfani, 2016).

The definitions provided by the experts share a common emphasis on the necessity of collective and continuous efforts in upholding nationalism, particularly for multicultural countries. This collective method is crucial to prevent discontinuity, which can result in the collapse or disintegration of a country. Several historical examples, such as North Korea-South Korea (1948), West Germany-East Germany (1949), Malaysia-Singapore (1965), and the Soviet Union (1990), have experienced disintegration. This has served as a valuable lesson for countries like Indonesia aiming to maintain their existence as a unitary state. The disintegration of East Timor into the new nation of Timor Leste at the end of 1999 (Hidayatullah, 2019), and the decision to cede the islands of Sipadan and Ligitan to Malaysia at the end of 2002 posed tests of nationalism for the Indonesian people.

Nationalism, a concept that first emerged in late 18th-century Europe and continued to spread globally into the 19th and 20th centuries, also took root in Indonesia. It emerged in Indonesia as a movement against colonialists. This spirit was awakened in freedom fighters like Soekarno,

Muhammad Hatta, Wahid Hasyim, and others, as they united in their pursuit of independence, autonomy, and freedom from colonial powers (Musa, 2011b).

The nationalistic spirit of these freedom fighters was deeply influenced by Islamic teachings. Islamic doctrines of jihad, defending the oppressed, loving the homeland (*hubb al-watan*), and eradicating injustice, played a crucial role in igniting the determination to resist the colonizers. The concept of nationalism rooted in these doctrines, can be found in the works authored by scholars in the archipelago during that era.

The concept of nationalism put forward by Bandung thinkers, as stated by Natsir (Natsir, 1955), is parsed through several theoretical concepts, including fanaticism/ta'ashub, the compatibility of Islam with nationalism, and the principle of equal rights. Fanaticism, often associated with *ta'ashub*, constitutes taking pride in certain groups, peoples, and nations. In this context, the Quran mentions that Allah created various tribes and nations, showing that Islam does not oppose the existence of nations. A devout Indonesian Muslim who joyfully sings "Indonesia Tanah Airku" (My Homeland) is genuinely expressing their faith. Therefore, Muslims can proudly identify themselves as Indonesians by embracing the unique language, culture, and heritage.

The concept of Islam not being anti-national shows that Muslims need not abandon their nationality and culture. Islam recognizes that cultural diversity is intrinsic to human nature. It acknowledges the existence of tribes, nations, and diverse skin colors as a natural order that cannot be denied. Consequently, this perspective fosters an understanding of equal rights.

Individuals with white skin should not feel superior to brown-skinned, and neither should those with brown skin feel superior to black-skinned, as diversity is inherent in human nature. Such feelings represent national arrogance and pride, which are forbidden in Islam. Islamic principle "Inna akramakum inda llahi atqakum" teaches against arrogance based on nationality or ethnicity. The value of a person in the sight of God is measured by their devotion to Allah. Therefore, racism, which persists in some countries is a grave malady.

3. The works of Islamic thinkers in city of Bandung, Indonesia

The following conclusions were drawn from the eight books published by A. Hassan, M. Natsir, and Muhammad Isa Anshary on nationalism and religion:

3.1. *Islam dan Kebangsaan (Islam and nationality)*

This book was Printed in Bangil on 1 January 1941, and published by SEGA ARSY Press. It comprises 14 chapters on the issues of Islam and nationality in daily life, accompanied by arguments from both the Qur'an and Hadith. The particular interest is Chapter 10, which discusses Love for the Nation and the Motherland.

A. Hasan advocated for a form of nationalism that differed from what was promoted by figures like Soekarno in the '20s, which meant chauvinism, neutral religion, and even anti-Islam. A. Hasan and M Natsir considered this perspective to be dangerous for religious and Islamic life. To address this, both authors published articles, specifically in the magazine "Defender of Islam".

3.2. *ABC Politik*

This pocket-sized book was written by A. Hassan, and published in Bangil on 26 April 1947, by PERSATUAN Bangil. It was aimed at assisting readers in grasping political issues and guiding those entering the world of politics, specifically people who wished to defend their homeland for independence, with religion as a foundational principle.

3.3. *Hai, Anak Cucuku! (Hi, My Grandchildren!)*

This book contains wisdom and advice from A. Hassan to children and grandchildren, thoughtfully compiled by Adnin Zahir BS and editor Artawijaya. Published in November 2020 by al-Muslimun

Pasuruan, the book addresses various aspects of life, including nationalism and the application of Islamic values in everyday life.

3.4. M. Natsir: *sumbangan dan pemikirannya untuk Indonesia* (M. Natsir: his contributions and thoughts for Indonesia)

This book is a collection of writings by Anwar Harjono et al, published in 1995 (1st edition) and 2016 (2nd edition) by LAZIS Dewan Da'wah Jakarta. It features eight articles on the thoughts and achievements of M. Natsir, both in the fields of religion, politics, and education. Similar to "ABC Politik", the book was designed as pocket-sized, hence it can be carried anywhere, even in a shirt pocket.

3.5. M. Natsir: *Sebuah Biografi* (M. Natsir: a biography)

The first volume of this book, written by Ajib Rosidi, was published in 1990 by Giri Mukti Pasaka Jakarta. It shows the thoughts of M. Natsir from youthful age until the arrival of the Japanese, and includes a polemic with Soekarno, touching on the issue of Muslim nationality.

3.6. M. Natsir: *capita selekta*

This collection of writings was compiled by D.P. Sati Alimin, and published in Bandung by N. V. and W. van Hoeve in 1954. It is divided into five chapters, addressing topics like Culture-Philosophy, Education, Religion, Constitution, and a mix of various subjects. The book provides a comprehensive discussion of the relationship between culture and philosophy, educational concepts responding to contemporary challenges, and the role of Islam in diverse aspects, including politics and state administration.

3.7. M. Isa Anshary: *revolusi Islam* (M. Isa Anshary: Islamic revolution)

This book was compiled in 1953, and published in Surabaya by Hasan Aidid. It presents the fundamental ideas regarding the role of Islam in shaping national identity and addressing political and cultural threats facing Indonesian Muslims. It also emphasizes the concept and spirit of Islam in building a national identity based on Islamic principles, particularly rejecting ideologies outside of Islam, such as Marxism, Leninism, and Stalin.

3.8. M. Isa Anshary: *Umat Islam Menghadapi Pemilihan Umum* (M. Isa Anshary: Muslims facing General election)

This book was compiled in 1953 and published by Jajajan Djaya Bandung. It explores legal decisions and fatwas related to the General Election (Pemilu) from Islamic perspective and signifies the importance of the election as a legal obligation in determining the future of the nation. The book also emphasizes that Islamic ideology regulating state affairs can be expressed through parliament, with the victory of Islam and its people being contingent on the choices made by the parliament or constituents.

4. Nationalism thoughts of Islamic thinkers in Bandung

The discourse on nationalism in the works of Islamic Unity figures commences with a discussion on "Love for the Nation and the Homeland" as presented in Ahmad Hassan book, *Islam and Kebangsaan*. Chapter 10 (Hassan, 1941), in particular, elaborates on the concept of love for the nation and homeland. The book asserts that there are no prohibitions in laws by humans, religion, or Allah against loving the homeland. However, there is a caution against introducing religion into a business where it does not have a basis.

Ahmad Hassan categorizes two ways of loving a homeland based on nationality, distinguishing this affection for Muslims. From Islamic perspective, the affection is broader and adheres to the laws and regulations contained in the Quran and Hadith. It also includes active engagement in activities that benefit and defend the homeland, solely carried out in accordance with the law of Allah.

In the context of love for the homeland, Ahmad Hassan in the book, *A.B.C Politics*, enumerates several responsibilities that every citizen should undertake. These include combating illiteracy (memerangi buta huruf), promoting the use of the Indonesian language (memperluas Bahasa Indonesia), learning foreign language (mempelajari bahasa asing), engaging in farming (Bertani), raising livestock (beternak), contributing through physical labor (bekerja dengan Tenaga), participating in trade and commerce (berdagang dan membuka Toko), and establishing factories (membuka pabrik). Ahmad further questions whether individuals who profess love for their homeland and nation, while harboring strong affections for other nations, truly deserve to be called patriots. The book emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the nation and homeland continue to progress in comparison to other nations.

The book, *Hai, Anak Cucuku! (Hi, My Children!)* (Hassan, 2020), imparts valuable wisdom, emphasizing the importance of wholeheartedly dedicating mind and energy to the betterment of the nation. In essence, defending the homeland should be coupled with efforts to safeguard the nation. Therefore, those who love their nation and homeland should actively participate in various aspects of life, including education, agriculture, economic prosperity, trade, healthcare, and more, in order to elevate their beloved homeland to equal or even superior standing compared to other nations.

Love and devotion to a homeland based on nationality, are drivers of progress in several aspects, including educational advancement, economic growth, development of various skills, and commitment to the betterment of the nation. This is aimed at ensuring that the nation is not left behind, and self-governed in accordance with its own laws, alongside adherence to a unified religion. Similarly, affection for homeland and devotion to the Muslim community serve as catalysts for educational and economic advancement, as well as the development of various skills relevant to the progress and prosperity of Muslim-majority countries. The aspiration is to ensure that the nations are not lagging behind others and are governed by adhering to the laws and regulations derived from the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

In situations where a homeland is colonized by other nations, Ahmad advocates for thoughtful action to attain freedom from colonialism. Such actions should be based on Islamic teachings, safeguarding the homeland from harmful lifestyles and adhering to the ethical principles of Islamic teachings. Ahmad Hassan contended that democracy was endorsed by the Quran and was implemented during the time of the Prophet. Muslims had established a government of unparalleled effectiveness and longevity through the laws showed to the Prophet (Federspiel, 2009).

M. Natsir expounded in the book, *Contributions and Thoughts for Indonesia* by Anwar Harjono et al (Harjono & dkk, 2016), that Islamic movements initially established Indonesian unity, transcending regional and ethnic divisions through Islamic ties. Islam constitutes nationality, and the sense of love for homeland is perpetually guided by Islamic teachings. M. Natsir further asserted that "Upholding Islam cannot be separated from upholding the community, the state, and independence". From another perspective, there is no conflict between Islam and nationality, hence Muslims can proudly sing the Indonesian anthem, *My Homeland*.

Natsir made a clear distinction between the nationalist struggle for independence, championed by Soekarno, and the quest for independence rooted in Islamic ideals. Writing under the pseudonym "Is" in *Pembela Islam*, Natsir structured arguments regarding the role of Islam in the nationalist movement around six key points: (1) Islam is more than just worshiping Allah; (2) Islam opposes colonialism, making it the responsibility of Islamic community to fight for independence; (3) Islam offers an ideological foundation for an independent state; (4) Islamic community has an obligation to establish an independent state based on Islamic principles; (5) This objective cannot be realized when Islamic community attempts to achieve independence solely within a nationalist party, particularly when that party harbors animosity toward Islam; (6) Islamic community should engage in and strengthen the struggle for independence based on Islamic ideals from the outset (Kahin, 2012).

Natsir addressed crucial issues within Indonesian Muslim society and nationalism, including the shortage of teachers in Islamic schools, significant religious tensions, disputes over differences in religious schools of thoughts (madhab), and the limited access to “modern” and Western education for students in Islamic schools (madrasah) (Latif, 2022).

Ajib Rosidi detailed the thoughts of M. Natsir, in the book “M. Natsir: A Biography” on the origin of nationalism in 1931. Islamic movement was noted as the first to instill the spirit of Indonesian unity by transcending islands and regions sharing a common fate through Islamic ties (Rosidi, 1990). According to M. Natsir, the concept of nationalism and nationality should be based on a bond capable of uniting all members of the community. This bond can serve as a starting point for independence, characterized by strength and unwavering faith. The nation itself is a spiritual principle, as quoted by M. Natsir from (Rosidi, 1990).

M. Natsir showed political acumen (tajinya) from a young age of 20, associating with prominent Indonesian national figures, including Mohammad Hatta, Prawoto Mangunsasmito, Yusuf Wibisono, Tjokroaminoto, and M. Roem. The resulting calmness and knowledge aided in occupying the position of the JIB (*Jong Islamieten Bond*) from 1928 to 1932, an experience that further refined the political skills of Natsir (Rusli, 2018).

The concept and idea of M. Natsir regarding nationalism were evident when serving as the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia from 1950 to 1951. M. Natsir transformed the government from the United States of Indonesia (RIS), which included the Republic of Indonesia and states like Pasundan and East Indonesia, into the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), known as the “Integral Motion of Natsir.” Thanks to this integral motion, Indonesia transitioned from the United States of America into a unitary state. This showed that M. Natsir was a prominent thinker and actor in Indonesian nationalism (Rusli, 2018).

The influence of M. Natsir extended beyond Indonesian borders and was even recognized internationally. The firm support for the independence of Muslim countries in the Asia-Africa region, efforts to foster cooperation among newly independent nations, and leadership of the Mu’tamar ‘Alam Islamy session in Damascus led Imamullah Khan to recognize Natsir as a prominent global figure in the 20th Century Muslim world (Rusli, 2012).

The concept of Muhammad Isa Anshary regarding nationalism revolved around the struggle against imperialism imposed by the Netherlands and Japan. Anshary further stated in the book, “Islamic Revolution,” that Islam inherently opposed imperialism in any form:

“The War of Independence, defending the absolute rights of our nation, has a clear meaning: Jihad fi sabilillah. In free Indonesia, didn’t Muslims regain their independence, and freedom of religion, which was taken away by Western imperialism for 3 centuries and Eastern (Japanese) imperialism for 3 years? The Indonesian independence declared on 17 August 1945, opened up significant possibilities for Islamic missionaries to contribute and make sacrifices during this bloody revolution”. (Anshary, 1953).

Opposing Dutch colonialism considered infidel ideology was used as the basis for the struggle to protect the homeland. The two main principles in growing the spirit of nationalism included the active purification of Islam from any interpretations not rooted in primary sources, the Quran and Sunnah, specifically in the aspects of aqidah and worship. Anshary also actively opposed anti-Islamic sects and movements that aimed to undermine the strongholds of Islamic Influence in Indonesia (Anshary, 1958).

According to Natsir, Islamic perspective of nations, as reflected in Surah Al-Hujurat [49]: 13, stating that God created mankind into nations and tribes, showed diversity as a fitrah. Loving own nation is not contradictory to Islam. Therefore, a devout Indonesian Muslim who joyfully sings “Indonesia Tanah Airku” (My Homeland) is genuinely expressing their faith. Muslims can proudly identify themselves as

Indonesians by embracing the unique language, culture, and heritage. These actions are entirely compatible with Islam, which encourages contributions to the broader global culture (Natsir, 1955). Islam does not eliminate nations but rather provides the foundation for the prosperity of nations and tribes based on respect, recognition, and cooperation. While one can be proud of the Indonesian identity, it is crucial to avoid degenerating into narrow chauvinism or, worse, fascism (Natsir, 1955).

All thinkers examined in this study were activists from the Bandung-based organization Persatuan Islam/Persis, one of the largest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia. Founded in Bandung on 12 September 1923, its members were educated and deeply engaged in Islamic thoughts reform movement. The founders of Persis were greatly influenced by Islamic reformers, including Ibn Taimiyah, Ibn Qayyim, Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Abdul Wahab, and Rashid Ridha (Wildan, 1967). This movement aimed to restore religious practices in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah.

As Indonesia moved toward independence in 1945, PERSIS activists transitioned from purely religious matters to engaging with political issues. This was driven by the recognition that the reform and puritanical movement should extend beyond creed and worship to include the struggle in national politics (Anwar & Fauzan, 2019). Consequently, these national political thoughts gained legitimacy from the Quran and Sunnah, in accordance with the beliefs of Nahdlatul Ulama scholars who regarded the national movement/nationalism as a religious order, specifically jihad. As previously discussed, the concept of jihad is a religious call that obliges every Muslim not to compromise with colonizers (Latif, 2022).

The arguments about jihad quoted from the Quran and Hadith are the basis for the legitimacy of issuing a fatwa. This study drew conclusions from several works by A. Hassan, M. Natsir, and Muhammad Isa Anshary who discussed nationalism and religion. Religious arguments were framed to mobilize the spirit of jihad in this context.

The thoughts of the three Persis scholars, originating from their works regarding nationality and religion, emphasized that affection for a homeland was an expression of love for Islam. They also argued that Islamic social movement should commence with the seeds of Indonesian unity, eliminating regionalism, and fostering bonds with Islamic ties. Mobilizing nationalist social movements should also be done within a religious framework. This was in line with (Tarrow, 1998), that framing serves to justify, glorify, and encourage collective action.

- **Aggregate Frame** refers to the process of understanding issues as social problems.
When individuals hear about the framed event, they realize that it is a shared problem and affects each person.
- **Consensus Frame** is a definition process related to social problems that can only be solved by collective action. This method fosters feelings and identification of individuals to act collectively.
- **Collective Action Frame** is a process that elucidates why collective action is necessary and outlines the specific actions to be taken.

The social movements of nationalism in Indonesia, as depicted in the works of the scholars, were in accordance with the three framing processes above. In the aggregate frame, this process was marked by the growing awareness in society to resist invaders. This growing awareness was driven by adherence to religious teachings, which emphasized the importance of loving the motherland as an integral aspect of religious duty.

5. Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from the discussion section. Firstly, the concept of nationalism by the thinkers of the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) Organization in Bandung City was defined as an ideology that emphasized loyalty, devotion, or allegiance to a nation or nation-state. This obligation was more important than the interests of individuals, groups, or other entities. Loyalty to the nation transcended differences in ethnicity, nationality, language, social class, and other primordial ties.

Therefore, these thinkers not only held the position of scholars well-versed in religious matters but also addressed national problems and actively contributed through their works.

Ahmad Hassan, M. Natsir, and M. Isa Anshary, among others not discussed in this study, had written eight books on nationalism from a religious perspective. The spirit of nationalism was legitimized by religious teachings, particularly through the doctrine of jihad. This fatwa had a significant impact on mobilizing the masses to assert Indonesian sovereignty as an independent nation, free from all forms of colonization in the Indonesian homeland, serving as an inspiration for freedom fighters.

The ideas of nationalism in these works centered around the teachings of Islam as the main foundation for implementing nationalist attitudes and actions in the general population, particularly among Muslims. According to Islamic teachings, adopting a nationalist attitude was seen as a manifestation of gratitude for the favors of Allah SWT.

Secondly, the religious framework in nationalism aimed to justify, glorify, and encourage collective action. This framing at least fostered collective awareness, emphasizing that nationalism was not merely a personal concern but a common issue. This awareness led to the emergence of a collective social movement with a defined agenda for the type of action that should be undertaken. The ideas of nationalism from these thinkers were not confined to a local scope but extended to a national and even global perspective.

Thirdly, the study subjects were structurally affiliated with the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) organization, leading to the conclusion that all Persis figures supported nationalism. This issue was not merely a conflict between Islam and nationalism, but rather a contradiction between secular and Muslim nationalism. Therefore, according to these figures, nationalism thriving in Indonesia should be based on Islamic values. The concept of A. Hassan regarding nationalism was more critical of excessive patriotism in the form of love for the homeland, while Mohamad Natsir tended to adopt a more moderate stance. Isa Anshary, on the other hand, preferred the method of A. Hassan. Natsir firmly showed commitment to the nation and state of Indonesia by encouraging Indonesian Muslims to actively engage in national political processes.

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Disclosure statement

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest. It should be emphasized that this paper does not have any conflict of interest, either personally or as an institution. This paper is purely based on research results and has been confirmed by the relevant parties from whom the research data or sources were taken. So, in the future, this article will not have any negative impact

Author contribution

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Supplementary data

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