

Distinguishing Islam from Islamism: Bassam Tibi's Insights on Fundamentalism and Religious Politics

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Abstract:

This study examines Bassam Tibi's perspective on fundamentalism and critiques its limitations. Using textual and documentary study methods, this study examines fundamentalism as an important phenomenon in the modern era. Bassam Tibi, a prominent Muslim thinker and professor, distinguishes Islam as a religion and civilization from Islamism as a politicized ideology aimed at socio-political and economic goals. He critiques Islamism as a fundamentalism that abuses religious principles for political purposes. Tibi advocates the modernization of Islamic education to promote cultural progress and counter fundamentalist ideology. However, Tibi's perspective has weaknesses. He oversimplifies the diversity of fundamentalist movements, conflates fundamentalism with radicalism and terrorism, and emphasizes political solutions while ignoring cultural approaches. This study highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of fundamentalism, taking into account its socio-political roots and diverse manifestations while exploring alternative strategies to address its challenges in Muslim societies. Tibi's thinking remains valuable but needs refinement to better address the complexities of fundamentalism in the contemporary context.

Keywords: cultural heritage; fundamentalist movement; modernization; Muslim societies; politicized ideology.

INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by increasing intercultural tensions and misunderstandings, the distinction between Islam and Islamism has become increasingly critical (Sahin, 2018). This distinction is particularly significant in the context of global discussions around fundamentalism, which has emerged as a defining phenomenon of the 21st century (Sargisson, 2007). Bassam Tibi, a leading Muslim thinker and professor of international relations, provides valuable insight into this complex relationship. He argues that while Islam represents the personal faith and rich cultural heritage of nearly two billion Muslims worldwide, Islamism embodies a political ideology that seeks to impose a rigid interpretation of Islam on all aspects of society (Tibi, 2012).

Tibi's perspective is not only relevant but also necessary to understand the socio-political dynamics at play in contemporary Muslim societies. He emphasizes that fundamentalism is the politicization of religion, often in conflict with democratic values and human rights. This conflict is underscored by historical events such as the Iranian Revolution and the rise of various Islamist movements, which have shaped the political landscape around

the world. Tibi's critique highlights the need for a deeper understanding of these movements, recognizing their diversity and the socio-cultural factors that have contributed to their emergence (Tibi, 2024).

As we explore Tibi's insights into fundamentalism and religious politics, it is important to explore how his views can inform efforts to bridge the gap and foster dialogue between Islamic and non-Islamic communities. By distinguishing between the spiritual essence of Islam and the political machinations of Islamism, Tibi advocates a path toward modernization and cultural pluralism that respects individual rights while embracing the core principles of the faith. This exploration not only enriches our understanding of fundamentalism but also offers a path toward coexistence in an increasingly interconnected world.

Apart from that, Tibi's ideas about fundamentalism are also relevant in the context of globalization. In his book *Islam in Global Politics: Conflict and Cross-Civilizational Bridging*, Tibi explains how globalization affects religious and political identities. Globalization not only creates opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue but also raises new challenges, such as increasing tensions between religious groups who feel threatened by cultural homogenization. To make Tibi's thinking more implementable, it is important to pay attention to the criticisms that have been mentioned (Zhang, 2024). For example, Tibi's approach could be complemented by a deeper analysis of the local dynamics and historical context of Islamic movements. In addition, there needs to be an effort to bridge the gap between academic approaches and practice in the field. In this context, Tibi can collaborate with practitioners, such as religious leaders and community activists, to develop more concrete and applicable solutions (Haug & Roychoudhury, 2023).

Bassam Tibi's thoughts provide a very important contribution to understanding the phenomenon of fundamentalism and the challenges faced by the Islamic world in the context of modernity. By integrating an international perspective, Tibi's ideas become more relevant in efforts to create a more peaceful and harmonious world. Critiques of his thinking not only enrich the discussion but also open up opportunities to develop more inclusive and applicable solutions (Tibi, 2020). Thus, Tibi's thought remains a valuable source of inspiration in the study of religion, politics, and international relations.

METHOD

The method used in this research is text study and documentation. Text and documentation studies are one of the methodologies within the scope of qualitative research studies, which are studies that focus on the analysis or interpretation of written material based on its context (Silverman, 2015). Materials can be published notes, textbooks, newspapers, magazines, letters, films, diaries, manuscripts, articles, and the like (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). To obtain high credibility, document researchers must be sure that the manuscripts are authentic. This type of research can also explore someone's thoughts as expressed in books or published manuscripts (Suyanto, 2023). This research refers to various relevant journals and books. It is hoped that this article can further broaden the knowledge of the study of Bassam Tibi's perspective on fundamentalism, as well as some criticisms of his perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bassam Tibi as A Modernist Muslim Thinker

Bassam Tibi is included in the liberal-criticism type of self-criticism figure, namely the category of thinkers who contribute to Islam through critical reflection on Islamic cultural heritage. In this approach, Tibi attempts to sort out the elements in Islamic tradition that are relevant for application in a modern context. Tibi's distinctive methodology is his reading of Islam using the analytical knife of the philosophy of rationalism, which places rationality as the basis for understanding and reforming Islamic teachings (Tibi, 2012).

Bassam Tibi is a Muslim thinker who has made significant contributions to understanding the relationship between religion, politics and modernity. As a professor in international relations at the University of Göttingen and professor at Cornell University, Tibi is not only known in Germany but also internationally. Born on April 4, 1944 in Damascus to the noble Bani Al-Tibi family, his background provides a unique perspective on the dynamics of global religion and politics. His early education in Damascus and France, as well as his academic travels in Germany, shaped his cross-cultural perspective (Shahin, 2003).

Tibi is a prolific writer who has produced various important works, like *Islamism and Islam*, *Arab Nationalism Between Islam and Nation-State*, and *The Challenge of Fundamentalism*. His works cover a variety of themes ranging from Arab nationalism to the challenges of fundamentalism in the modern world. One of the main themes in his thinking is the distinction between Islam as a religion and Islamism as a political

movement. Tibi emphasized that Islamism is not Islam but a political ideology that uses religious symbols to achieve the goals of power. This thinking provides important insights into how religion is used in the context of global politics (Shahin, 2003).

From an international perspective, Tibi's ideas about fundamentalism have broad relevance. According to Tibi, fundamentalism, or what in the Islamic context is often called Islamism, is a response to modernity which is considered to threaten traditional identity. This phenomenon does not only occur in the Islamic world but also in other religious communities, such as Jews and Christians (Tibi, 2002). For example, Karen Armstrong, in her historical analysis, found that the roots of fundamentalism emerged at the end of the 15th century AD when King Ferdinand and Queen Isabelle forced Muslims and Jews in Spain to convert or face deportation. This movement provided an archetype for other religious fundamentalism, which continues to be a global issue today (K. Armstrong, 2011).

Religious fundamentalism is often associated with negative stereotypes, such as being irrational, immoderate, and prone to violence. These groups are considered separatist and narrow-minded and use militant means to achieve their goals. However, Bassam Tibi emphasized that this phenomenon must be understood in a broader historical and social context. As an academic, Tibi not only criticizes fundamentalism but also tries to provide solutions to deal with it through cross-cultural dialogue approaches and reforming religious thought (Tibi, 2002).

Tibi's thoughts on fundamentalism have received a lot of attention in the international arena, especially in relation to global politics and security issues. In his work *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, Tibi explains how Islamic fundamentalism has become a challenge to the modern world order. According to him, Islamism emerged as a reaction to the tension between tradition and modernity, as well as dissatisfaction with Western hegemony. This perspective provides a more holistic view of how global dynamics influence radical religious movements (Tibi, 2002).

However, Tibi's thoughts are not without criticism. One of the main criticisms is that the approach sometimes focuses too much on the political dimension and pays too little attention to the theological and spiritual aspects of fundamentalism (Peels, 2024). In addition, his ideas about Islamism are often considered too generalist and do not pay enough attention to local variations in Islamic movements. For example, Tibi's approach tends to ignore the differences between more moderate Islamist groups and truly radical groups. These criticisms do not necessarily deny the importance of Tibi's contribution to the study of fundamentalism. On the contrary, these criticisms actually help to enrich the discussion and provide new perspectives for understanding this phenomenon. For example, Tibi's ideas about reforming Islamic thought can be complemented by other approaches that are more inclusive of local traditions and Islamic spirituality (Tibi, 2024).

In a global context, it is important to understand Tibi's thinking as part of a larger effort to bridge the gap between the Islamic world and the West. Cross-cultural and inter-religious dialogue is one of the solutions offered by Tibi to overcome conflicts caused by fundamentalism. In his book *Islam Between Culture and Politics*, Tibi emphasized the importance of dialogue to create a shared understanding of universal values, such as democracy, human rights, and social justice (Shahin, 2003). The international relevance of Tibi's thinking is also seen in his efforts to develop the concept of Euro-Islam, namely a form of Islam that is compatible with the values of democracy and pluralism in Europe. This concept aims to overcome the challenges of integrating Muslim communities in Europe without sacrificing their religious identity. In this context, Tibi offers practical solutions to problems that are often a source of tension between Muslim communities and majority societies in Europe (Tibi, 2002).

One of Tibi's main works is the book "Islamism and Islam" which reviews the six main agendas of the Islamist movement, namely:

1. *Hakimiyat Allah* (God's Government). According to Tibi, the crisis of democracy in the Arab world is often caused by the belief that God's law must be the main basis of government. The Islamist movement views modern democracy as a secular product that is not in accordance with Islamic principles (Tibi, 2008).
2. *Din wa Daulah* (Unity between Religion and State). Islamism not only seeks to replace the democratic system with a sharia state but also emphasizes the unity between religion and state as a solution to overcome political problems in the Islamic world (Tibi, 2008).
3. *Nizham Islami* (Islamic System). This movement transformed Islamic universalism into political internationalism, with the aim of replacing the secular order of sovereign nation-states with a global Islamic order (Tibi, 2010).

4. *Ummah* (Community). Islamism envisions a community that is different from the traditional concept of ummah. For them, the ummah is a global political movement that supports the strict implementation of sharia law (Tibi, 2012).
5. *Siyadatul Islam* (Islamic Leadership). This movement believes that only Islamic domination can create world peace. To achieve this, *jihad* is interpreted as a comprehensive world revolution to establish the government of Allah (Tibi, 2014).
6. Islamic Authenticity (Islamic Purity). This purification is a reaction to the Westernization process, which is considered to threaten Islamic identity. This movement aims to restore the purity of Islam in accordance with classical doctrine (Tibi, 2008).

According to Bassam Tibi, religion has two main dimensions: first, as a source of meaning and belief; second, as a social reality and cultural system. In his view, there are significant differences between Islam as a religion and civilization and Islam as a political ideology. Fundamentalism, which in this context is called Islamism, cannot be considered as a spiritual belief but as a political ideology that politicizes religion to achieve socio-political and economic goals (Tibi, 2010). Tibi emphasized that terms such as "*Hukumah*" (government) or "*Daulah*" (state) are not found in the Qur'an or Hadith. According to him, the fundamentalist movement is a response to Western modernity, especially European and American progress, and is not part of Islamic theology. He considers that fundamentalism is more a manifestation of political theories than theological doctrine or social-religious practice (Tibi, 2014). The fundamentalist movement is also understood by Tibi as an imaginary community that aspires to unite all humanity under one global government based on Islamic law. This idea, according to Tibi, is more of a political utopia than an achievable reality (Tibi, 2008).

The phenomenon of fundamentalism has become one of the most interesting issues in religious traditions in this century. Karen Armstrong, a historian of religion, believes that fundamentalism did not appear suddenly, but was the result of various socio-cultural backgrounds that influenced the religion. According to him, fundamentalism is often born as a response to modernity's threat to traditional identity (Armstrong, 2004). Taylor describes fundamentalists as a group that carries out religious reform with a conservative approach. They tend to be literalists in interpreting religious doctrine and emphasize the purification of doctrine (Taylor, 2017). Sidahmed added that fundamentalists are an orthodox group that aspires to revive religious concepts from the 7th century AD (Sidahmed, 2020).

In this case, Tibi provides a stricter definition of fundamentalism. According to him, fundamentalism is a religious sect that rejects everything new outside of religious doctrine. He considers fundamentalism as a form of rejection of innovation and change which is contrary to a literal understanding of religion (Tibi, 2012). However, Tibi also admits that fundamentalism is not completely negative. In some contexts, he sees it as an effort to maintain cultural and religious identity amidst the pressures of modernity. However, he emphasized that the rigid and exclusive approach of fundamentalism is often a source of social conflict and tension (Tibi, 2014).

Tibi's critical approach to fundamentalism makes an important contribution to understanding this phenomenon in a global context. By using the analytical knife of rationalism, he offers a unique perspective to examine the dynamics between religion and politics. His criticism of fundamentalism not only helped expose the weaknesses of this movement but also opened up space for more constructive discussions about the role of religion in modern society (Tibi, 2020). Therefore, Tibi's thoughts remain relevant in efforts to create a productive dialogue between religious traditions and modernity.

According to William Shepard, there are several general characteristics inherent in fundamentalist Islam. First, they claim that Islam is a totality that includes all aspects of social and personal life (Shepard, 1987). This claim places Islam as a comprehensive framework for life, not only in spiritual but also in political, economic and social terms. This claim often forms the basis for fundamentalists to reject the separation of religion from public life. Second, fundamentalists strongly emphasize the specificity of Islam (Shepard, 1987). This specificity does not only concern religious teachings but also includes cultural and social identities which are considered unique and cannot be replaced by other systems. They see Islam as the sole solution to all human problems, from individual problems to global problems.

Third, fundamentalists tend not to want to compromise on the issues of non-Muslim minorities (Shepard, 1987). In their view, Islam should be the dominant system, and non-Muslim minorities are often seen as a threat to the purity of Islamic teachings. This approach creates tense relations between the fundamentalist Muslim community and other groups. Fourth, they encourage the strict application of Sharia in life practices (Shepard, 1987). In this case, Islamic law is considered the only valid source of law, and its implementation is seen as a

step towards the perfection of society. The application of sharia is often carried out without paying attention to the social and historical context of modern society (M. T. Rahman, 2014).

However, although they emphasize awareness of authenticity or genuineness, fundamentalists are actually modern and accept many new things that come from the West (Shepard, 1987). Examples include the use of modern technology and sophisticated political strategies to spread their ideology. This shows that fundamentalism is not a completely traditional movement but a phenomenon that combines traditional and modern elements (Peels & Kindermann, 2024). Moreover, fundamentalists, in fact, accept the idea of progress. They believe that the full implementation of Sharia will lead society to moral and spiritual progress. However, the concept of progress they adhere to often conflicts with the values of modernity, which are based on pluralism and inclusiveness (Pollack et al., 2023).

Pandele's analysis provides an additional perspective on fundamentalism as a religious movement that seeks to resist or struggle. Fundamentalism can be described through five forms of struggle:

1. Fight back against groups that threaten their identity.
2. Fight to uphold ideals that cover general life issues, such as the family and other social institutions.
3. Fight with a particular framework of values or identity taken from past legacies or new constructions.
4. Fight against certain enemies who are considered deviants.
5. Fighting in the name of (fight under) God or other lofty ideas (Pandele, 2022).

In the context of globalization, religious fundamentalism is often considered a dissident group (splinter group) from the currents of globalization and fragmentation (Tibi, 2008). Fundamentalism emerged as a response to tensions between the worldview of cultural modernity and the cosmological worldview of Islamic monotheism. This tension has long historical roots, especially in relation to the encounter between Islamic civilization and the expansion of Western civilization into the Islamic world, which brings modern technology (Ulyana, 2021).

Bassam Tibi concluded several important things about fundamentalism. First, he emphasized that the Islamic fundamentalism movement is a political movement, not an ideological movement (Tibi, 2014). Fundamentalism not only talks about religious values but also about power and social control. Second, Tibi warned that fundamentalist movements were dangerous because they could lead to global-scale conflict (Tibi, 2014). These conflicts often impact not only Muslim communities but also international political stability.

Third, Tibi criticizes Sharia reasoning as the basis for fundamentalist epistemology. He emphasized that sharia and fiqh are two different things. Sharia is divine principles that are universal, while fiqh is a human interpretation of these principles. However, fundamentalists often confuse the two, which leads to a rigid and decontextualized application of Islamic law (Tibi, 2014). Tibi also makes a clear distinction between Islam and Islamism. Islam is faith, warm spirituality, procedures for worship, inclusive ethical values, and enlightened reasoning (Tibi, 2014). Islam is a religion that embraces various humanist cultures. In contrast, Islamism is a political movement that uses religion as a tool to achieve power. Islamism is not about spirituality but about political institutionalization with its interests and agendas (Hassan, 2022).

Thus, religious fundamentalism, especially Islamism, can be understood as a complex phenomenon involving interactions between religious traditions, modernity and global politics. The thinking of Bassam Tibi and William Shepard provides important insights into how fundamentalism develops and how a more inclusive and contextual approach can be used to confront it. Criticism of fundamentalism is not only relevant in academic contexts but also in social and political practice, especially in creating a more peaceful and inclusive world (Lawal, 2021).

Religion and Reality: The Islamization of Science

Bassam Tibi rejects Islamization because he believes that the Islamization project is only a form of religious politicization (Tibi, 2008). According to him, Islamization is an emotional response to the inferiority of Muslim civilization compared to the West, which only produces temporary euphoria without substantive impact (Wojczewski, 2024). This movement, according to Tibi, is more of an outlet for "heartache" and an inferiority complex that arises as a result of the backwardness of the Islamic world compared to the progress of the West (Tibi, 2012). In other words, the Islamization of science does not offer a real solution for Islamic civilization but only consumes resources without significant results (Castrorao Barba et al., 2023).

Tibi also highlighted that many parties reject the concept of Islamization of science because they believe that all science is basically Islamic because it comes from Allah SWT (Badarussyamsi, 2023). This view questions the labeling of Islam or non-Islam in science, which, according to them, is irrelevant. They argue that science is universal and does not need to be linked exclusively to a particular religious identity (Fahmi & Soleh, 2024). In

this case, Tibi is one of the figures who does not agree with the Islamization of science movement, because he sees that this movement often fails to answer the challenges of modernity and globalization (Tibi, 2010).

In Tibi's view, Muslims often face dissonance between doctrine and reality. Although Islamic doctrine teaches that Muslims are the "best ummah" (*khayra ummah*), reality shows that they are often left behind in various aspects of civilization (Tibi, 2012). This backwardness has given rise to anxiety and efforts to find solutions, including through the Islamization of science project (Oktar, 2022). However, Tibi emphasized that this solution is not sufficient if it is not accompanied by deep and inclusive thought reform (Buben & Kouba, 2024).

One of the interesting things that Tibi conveyed was his admiration for Islam in Indonesia. According to Tibi, Indonesia has great potential to become the center of global Islamic civilization because of the moderate, tolerant and pluralist characteristics of Islam in this country (Tibi, 2014). He mentioned Indonesia as an example of how Islam can adapt to the values of democracy and pluralism without losing its identity (Schaefer, 2021). In Tibi's view, Indonesia's success in practicing inclusive and peaceful Islam can be an inspiration for the rest of the Islamic world, especially the Middle East, which is often hit by sectarian conflict and extremism (Mohammed & Jureidini, 2022).

However, Tibi also reminded us that Indonesia is not completely free from the threat of fundamentalism. Although fundamentalism in Indonesia is relatively controlled and often exists on the fringes of power, he warned that this movement could pose a serious threat if it gained access to power circles (Tibi, 2012). The absolutist and Arabocentric views held by some fundamentalists can damage the pluralism and social harmony that have long been the hallmark of Islam in Indonesia (Eller & Khazaal, 2024).

Tibi emphasized that the biggest challenge facing the Islamic world, including Indonesia, is how to manage diversity without losing religious identity. In this context, he sees that cross-cultural dialogue and reform of Islamic thought are the keys to facing the challenges of modernity (Tibi, 2010). For example, efforts to develop a concept of Islam that is inclusive and compatible with democratic values could be an important step in bridging the gap between tradition and modernity (Latif et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Tibi also criticized the exclusive views that often characterize fundamentalist movements. According to him, this view not only limits intellectual creativity but also hinders constructive dialogue between the Islamic world and the West (Tibi, 2008). In his book *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, Tibi emphasized the importance of reforming Islamic thought to face the challenges of globalization and conflict between civilizations (Tibi, 2002). This reform, according to Tibi, must involve the reinterpretation of religious texts in a modern context without sacrificing the essence of Islamic teachings (Al Haidary & Zamzami, 2022).

In the Indonesian context, Tibi sees that education plays a key role in forming an inclusive and moderate religious understanding. He suggested that the Islamic education curriculum in Indonesia place more emphasis on the values of pluralism, tolerance and social justice (Amal, 2021). In this way, the younger generation of Muslims in Indonesia can be equipped with a broader understanding of the role of Islam in the modern world (Akrim, 2022). Bassam Tibi's views on the Islamization of science and the dynamics of Islam in Indonesia provide valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities faced Islamic world. Even though he rejects the Islamization project, Tibi remains optimistic that the Islamic world, including Indonesia, has great potential to contribute to global civilization through thought reform and cross-cultural dialogue. Tibi's criticism and views not only enrich the discussion but also open up opportunities for more inclusive and applicable solutions in the future (Singamaneni et al., 2024).

Out of Crisis: Doctrine Adjusted to Reality or Rethinking?

In Tibi's works, especially in his analysis of the development of Muslim society, he sharply criticizes various conditions that caused stagnation and decline in Islamic civilization. Tibi argues that one of the main causes of this decline is the loss of place for rational thinking within the Muslim community, especially in the Middle East region (Tekurmanidze, 2022). According to him, when rational and scientific thinking no longer has sufficient space in the intellectual and social life of Muslims, this will close the way for more progressive social and cultural change (Arifin et al., 2023).

Tibi considers that in the history of Muslims, there was a period where rationality and science were given a very important place. However, along with the increasing dominance of ulama orthodoxy, the space for rational thinking is increasingly narrowing. When clerics and religious scholars strengthen conservative and traditional ideas, this directly influences intellectual and social dynamics in Muslim society (M. M. Rahman, 2024). Tibi wrote, "Rational thinking in the Islamic world is becoming marginalized, as tensions between traditional thinking

and the need to adapt to the modern world increase (Tibi, 2002)." The inability of Muslims to open up space for change has had a major impact on the stagnation of Islamic civilization, which is increasingly mired in backwardness when compared to the Western world, which continues to develop in science and technology.

In Tibi's view, the impact of this setback is not only limited to the intellectual aspect but also extends to various areas of life, including politics, economics and social (Tibi, 2002). When the Western world became more advanced thanks to the development of science and technology, Muslims were trapped in a defensive and apologetic attitude. This is reflected in the inability of most Muslim countries to keep up with progress in the West. Tibi mentioned, "Muslim communities are trapped in a defensive cycle, trying hard to maintain what they consider to be their authentic Islamic identity, without daring to open up to modernity (Tibi, 2020)." This crisis, according to him, is getting deeper and deeper and is difficult to overcome without efforts to fundamentally improve the way Muslims view education and reform in society.

In turn, this crisis created a gap that was then exploited by radical movements who offered a solution by returning to "authentic Islam" or "as-hal," which they claimed was a way out of backwardness and colonialism. Movements of this kind seek to revive Islamic values that are considered lost, in ways that tend to use violence and ideological radicalization. Tibi criticized this view, stating that this radical approach is not a productive solution, but actually makes things worse by closing the possibility of dialogue and change. "These radical movements, although they appear to offer a solution by returning Muslims to their pure Islamic roots, actually shackle Muslims to the past and prevent them from developing in an increasingly modern world (Tibi, 2002)."

As a solution to get out of this crisis, Tibi emphasized the importance of modernizing Islamic education. For Tibi, modernizing Islamic education is not only a matter of updating the existing curriculum but also a matter of expanding the scope of education itself, which is not limited only to religious knowledge but must also include the fields of science and technology. "Islamic education must be comprehensive, combining religious values and developments in science and technology, so that Muslims can catch up with the Western world (Tibi, 2020)." In this context, Tibi proposes a more open form of education, which includes modern sciences, so that Muslims can compete and develop in an increasingly global and complex world order.

Tibi not only spoke about the need to open space for general sciences in Islamic education but also invited Muslims to build what he called 'cultural modernity.' 'Cultural modernity' here refers to the ability of Muslims to maintain Islamic cultural values and spirituality, but in a way that is relevant and contextual amidst changing times (Tibi, 2011). "Islam must be able to adapt itself to the demands of the times, without losing its essence as a religion that brings peace and prosperity to its people (Tibi, 2002)." By developing education that combines science and technology, and adhering to the noble values of religion, Tibi believes that Muslims will be able to build a more advanced and dynamic civilization.

According to Tibi, if Islamic education succeeds in carrying out comprehensive modernization, then Muslims will be able to give birth to a more progressive culture, which will revive the spirit of progress that has been stalled. "Education that combines the dimensions of religion and science will produce a new generation that not only understands religion but is also able to innovate and create change in society (Tibi, 2011)." Therefore, modernizing Islamic education is not only about increasing insight or skills in the fields of science and technology but also about building a character that is able to adapt and compete in the modern world without losing its Islamic identity.

However, this educational modernization also requires deep changes in the social and political system of Muslims themselves. Tibi suggested that Muslim leaders, both in the academic world and in the political world, have the awareness to encourage this reform. "Muslim leaders must be agents of change, who dare to encourage reform in education and social life in society so that Muslims are not trapped in outdated traditions (Tibi, 2002)."

Tibi believes that to get out of the crisis faced by Muslims, a fundamental change is needed in the way they view education and cultural renewal. One path that can be taken is to integrate religious knowledge with science and technology, which is expected to give birth to a generation that is more educated, innovative and able to adapt to an increasingly developing world. If this step is taken seriously, then Muslims will not only get out of the crisis but will also be able to restore the progress they once had in the history of Islamic civilization (Tibi, 2020).

Criticism of Bassam Tibi's Perspective on Fundamentalism

Bassam Tibi provides an interesting explanation of fundamentalism, but if you look closely, it appears that his thinking has weaknesses. First, The Islamic fundamentalist movement is not single, but diverse, both in terms of

movement strategy and the thoughts and ideologies developed. These differences were formed in the socio-political conditions they faced so that there were movements that were politically pragmatic and some were revolutionary, as well as those that were ascetic and isolative (Alwi, 2014). These differences escaped Tibi's view. Tibi generalizes fundamentalism without looking carefully at its nature and character more clearly. If Bassam Tibi saw the differences in the fundamentalist movement, the solutions he offered would be more varied and right on target (Tibi, 2002).

Fundamentalism can also be divided into positive and negative fundamentalism. Positive fundamentalism, namely fundamentalism, uses religious texts and traditions as a source of morals and ethics for public benefit. Negative fundamentalism, namely fundamentalism that uses texts and traditions as the source and justification for violence (Tibi, 2009). If we read Bassam Tibi, we will not find the term positive fundamentalism. Because, from his perspective, fundamentalism is definitely negative.

Second, Islamic fundamentalism is a movement that tries to offer a recipe for treating the social, political and cultural crises faced by Muslims in this modern era, although perhaps there are perhaps even many of us who do not agree with the solutions they offer. So Islamic fundamentalism, on the one hand, is a product of *ijtihad*, which, even if it is wrong, will get a reward, namely the reward of *ijtihad* (Tibi, 2002). If it is true, then you will get two rewards, namely, the reward for *ijtihad* and the reward for following the truth. This is different from Bassam Tibi's view, which views fundamentalism as religious politics that uses religious symbols for political purposes. The sunglasses Bassam Tibi wore made him conclude that Islamic fundamentalism was something black and wrong. In fact, using another lens, it appears that Islamic fundamentalism, in some cases, is a product of *ijtihad*, which, even if it is wrong, is still given credit for at least having used the mind to answer the existing problem (Tibi, 2020).

Third, Bassam Tibi sometimes identifies fundamentalism with radicalism and terrorism. For example, Tibi believes that fundamentalists are mistaken in interpreting *jihad* as involving violence and terrorism. The problem is that Bassam Tibi does not specifically explain who the fundamentalism in question is (Tibi, 2002). Does every fundamentalism teach violence and terrorism?

We agree that Islam must be spread peacefully, not violently. But criticizing fundamentalism and linking it to terrorism seems excessive. Because fundamentalism in social action does not use violence. And if the action uses violence, it is categorized as radicalism (Alwi, 2014). There seems to be a clear difference between fundamentalism and radicalism, and it would be unfair to generalize them.

Radicalism is clearly negative. In Indonesia, there are three types of radicalism. A radical in belief, whose work is to disbelieve all. All (accused of) being infidels, all (considered) going to hell except his group. The second type of radicalism is action. A group that always allows any means, including committing murder in the name of religion. Third radical in political form. This is a group that wants to replace the legitimate state ideology, Pancasila, with the ideology of the caliphate (Group, 2013).

Fourth, Bassam Tibi views fundamentalism through political eyes. According to Tibi, Indonesia can become the heart of Islam that determines the mainstream of Islamic civilization. This is because Islam in Indonesia is an Islam that practices tolerance, pluralism and open views among its followers, a condition that is difficult to find in its brothers in the Middle East. However, Indonesia also harbors embers of fundamentalism that can burn at any time (Tibi, 2002). However, Tibi also said that these fundamentalists are not dangerous as long as they are on the fringes of power and are not included in the circle of power and as long as their absolutist-acrocentric views are the preference of the Indonesian public. Here it appears that Bassam Tibi is offering a solution so that fundamentalism does not bring social and political disaster, so it must not be given space and opportunities in circles of power (Tibi, 2020). This approach is a political approach. This is understandable if you look at the historical background of his education and his role as a professor of international relations.

CONCLUSION

Bassam Tibi distinguishes between Islam as a belief system and Islamism as a political ideology that politicizes religion for socio-political and economic purposes. He defines Islamism as a sect that rejects new ideas and arises from the tension between modern cultural views and Islamic monotheism. Islamism, for Tibi, is a fundamentalism that rejects modernization. Tibi criticizes the Islamization project as a purely political project. Therefore, he advocates the modernization of Islamic education to promote cultural progress. Criticisms of Tibi's views include his failure to recognize the diversity of Islamic fundamentalism, his mixing of fundamentalism with radicalism, and his political perspective that ignores cultural approaches to rehabilitating fundamentalists.

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