

Arguing Islamophobia during COVID-19 Outbreaks: A Consideration Using *Khusūş Al-Balwā*

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Abstract: The threat of Islamophobia continues to surface. The latest is related to COVID-19. Islam considered as the source of the virus suddenly went viral, even with the hashtag #coronajihad. The implementation of religious rituals by ignoring social distance by certain groups can be one of the triggers besides propaganda and conspiracy from anti-Islam. This article aims to provide an argument against Islamophobia with consideration of *Khusus Al Balwa*. The approach used is a combination of normative and empirical facts amid the heterogeneity of Muslims during the pandemic. An interesting finding from this research shows that *khusus al-balwa* is a concept that Muslims need amid co-19 hegemony, especially in terms of providing a complex understanding to present a calming Islam rather than a threat. In reality, *khusus al-balwa* happened a lot amid the pluralism of Muslims to prevent the outbreak of Islamophobia amid co-19 issues. Consideration of *khusus al balwa* contribute to prevent the negative stigma that could harass verbally and physically to the muslim. In fact, the special concept of *al-balwa* has not been much studied by observers of Islamic law which is covered because of the 'fame' of 'umum al-balwa'. *Khusus al-balwa* has not been fully taken into consideration by the Mufti, both individuals, and institutions in bringing forth fatwa products.

Keywords: Khusus al-balwa, Islamophobia, COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 outbreaks require various activities that cannot be carried out as normally including religious rituals. Distance rules result in the prohibition of congregational prayers in the mosque. This course raises the pros and cons of Muslims is no exception in Indonesia. Many still insist on holding worship by ignoring health protocols. The International Ulama meeting by a religious sect in Gowa eventually became one of the transmission clusters of the spread of COVID-19. Criticism from various parties also arrived. True Muslim adherents may only blame unscrupulous individuals, but for adherents of Islam, this is the new ammunition to attack Muslims.

A consequence that inevitably has to be accepted. The media of islamophobia also keeps spreading propaganda and false news. The goal is one, blaming Muslims for spreading viruses.

In England, by its right-wing, Islam has long been regarded as a parasitic society, even treated as a disease. Certainly, with the existence of a pandemic, Muslims were claimed as the spread of the virus. They are scoffed at Islamic rituals that are considered violated by social restrictions and distance. Islam is considered to destroy countries.

India, which has long desired an entirely Hindu configuration of India, has also often popularized anti-Islam and Islamophobic policies, especially by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Hindu, an English-language Indian daily, made an insult by printing caricatures depicting the COVID-shaped virus wearing Muslim clothing, *Jalabiyah*. Social media also does not miss being a source of their propaganda. On Twitter, the hashtag #coronaJihad was viral as a reflection of insults to Muslims who did not obey social rules to keep their distance¹.

America is not left behind. Discriminatory efforts seem to continue through restrictions on immigrants specifically intended for African and Muslim Citizens. A racist nuanced action that links the disease to certain groups. The narrative of Islamophobia certainly threatens cohesion and social harmony. False and exaggerated arguments can be used as weapons to carry out attacks that are no longer verbal but through massacres

In the West, Muslims are demanded to fight Islamophobia and discrimination against other Muslims as an integral part of preventing the outbreak of co-19.²

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¹Lizzie Dearden, 'Coronavirus: "Dangerous" Conspiracy Theories Could Spark Wave of Islamophobic Attacks When Lockdown Lifts, Report Warns', *Independent*, 2020, p. 1 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/coronavirus-muslim-lockdown-conspiracy-theories-tommy-robinson-katie-hopkins-a9471516.html>> [accessed 10 June 2020].

²Turan Kayaoglu, 'السِّيَاسَاتُ بِشَأْنِ الْجَائِحَةِ: أَرْزَمَةُ صَحَّةِ عَامَّةٍ وَأَرْزَمَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ وَرَهَابِ الْإِسْلَامِ بِفَرَاهِيَةِ: فِي رُؤْيَا لِكُورُونَا الْمَسْتَجِدِّ وَرَهَابِ الْإِسْلَامِ', *Brookings.Edu*, June 2020.

Certain groups take advantage of people's fears of the co-19 pandemic by conspiracy and disinformation by denouncing Muslims and spreading Islamophobic propaganda.³ Before blaming them, we as Muslims should act for self-introspection. They can't spread a conspiracy if their basis and references do not exist. Is it true that Islamic teachings contradict the concept of disease prevention? Is it true that the teachings of Islam know no compromise?

Mukalaf sometimes faces trials that make him heavy and do not feel unable to bear or may not fulfill them because of difficult conditions (*masyaqqah*) in carrying out the teachings of Islamic law. The Shari'a provides a dispensation in the form of relief to leave an act that is required if the act contains extraordinary difficulties.⁴

The Shari'a was revealed to provide convenience and ease the legal burdens for *mukalaf*. The main principle of Islamic law is to bring convenience and eliminate difficulties. Many verses of the Koran that inform about these difficult conditions, including QS al-Maidah/5: 6:

Meaning:

...Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you⁵

The verse shows that Allah desires ease and away from difficulties in imposing the law of a Muslim. *Mukalaf* felt no difficulty in carrying out God's commands. The teachings of Islam provide convenience compared to giving distress to the *mukalaf*. Islamic Sharia is present in the middle of life.⁶ The existence of a combination of ideality and reality is seen in the legal structure which is divided into *zim azimah* and *rukhsah* laws. The Islamic Sharia does not force its adherents to continue to obey the *zim azimah*, but if their people are not able to implement the full legal provisions, Islam relaxes its adherents to follow the rule of *rukhsah* law.⁷

This difficult condition is now felt by Muslims amid of the co-19 pandemic. The co-19 pandemic teaches and

demands Muslims not to be afraid of practicing religious teachings in *kaffah*. The term is familiar with Islamophobia from the people themselves⁸. Allah SWT. reduce Islamic sharia to face the exam including the plague covid-19 which is now sweeping Muslims

Fukaha, came up with a very monumental fiqh rule namely *al-Masyaqqah* Tajlib Al-Taysir (difficulties can bring ease)⁹. This principle becomes the main principle in gathering other thoughts, namely *'ulum al-balwa*. Covid-19 pandemic is a *'ulum al-balwa* because it can make it difficult for Muslims to perform religious rituals that are obligatory not as usual. However, *'ulum al-balwa* was already very close among Muslim scholars¹⁰.

Covid-19 pandemic provides valuable lessons by guaranteeing a more calm atmosphere amid the spread of Islamophobia in the Muslim community itself¹¹. For this reason, one alternative can be used as a solution to eliminating the negative stigma of Muslims themselves against the teachings of their religion by learning more about the special term *al-balwa*. Specifically, *al-balwa* can be used in depth by people who are experts to give a comprehensive understanding to Muslims in living religious life amid the co-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

This research is library research. It begins with the process of collecting materials and data sources in the form of books, papers, articles and writings related to the research topic. Furthermore, the authors read the data and recorded them.

After that, the author categorizes the data and selects these data to identify 'Khusus Balwa in the perspective of Islamic law. Then, this theory is used as the main argument for Islamophobes during the occurrence of COVID-19. The technique of collecting data through documents related to the research topic. The data sources used in this study are the works of other authors related to research themes in the form of books, articles, magazines and other writings.

³Rossi Handayani, 'Kelompok Islamofobia Manfaatkan Isu Corona Sudutkan Muslim', *REPUBLIKA.CO.ID* (Jakarta, April 2020).

⁴Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *'Ilm Ushul Al-Fiqh* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi), h. 50-51.

⁵Kementerian Agama RI, *Alquran Dan Terjemahnya*, 1st edn (Bandung: J-ART, 2004), h. 29.

⁶A Malthuf Siroj, 'Konsep Kemudahan Dalam Hukum Perspektif Al Quran Dan Hadist', *AT-TURAS: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 6.2 (2019), 160.

⁷Yusuf al-Qardhawi, *Al-Khashaish Al-'Aamiyah Al-Islam*, (Beirut, Dar al-Fikr, 1993), h. 182.

⁸Dewi Rahayu Cahyaningrum, 'Islamophobia Di Tengah Wabah Covid-19', *TintaSiyasi.Com*, April 2020.

⁹Abdul Aziz Muhammad 'Azzam, *Al-Qawa'id Al-Fiqhiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Hadis, 2005), h. 119.

¹⁰SITI ARFAH BINTI ZAINI AZLAN and others, 'APLIKASI UMUM AL-BALWA DALAM KONTAMINASI MAKANAN SEMASA'. hlm.3

¹¹Niki Alma Febriana Fauzi and Ayub, 'Fikih Informasi: Muhammadiyah's Perspective on Guidance in Using Social Media1', *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 9.2 (2019), 267-93 <<https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v9i2.267-293>>.

Data analysis in this study was carried out by using the content analysis technique, namely analyzing the data according to its content. While the data analysis method uses the deductive method..

LITERATUR REVIEW

The Essence of *Khusus Al-Balwa*

In classical jurisprudence especially concerning *mahdah*, unavoidable circumstances, can be tolerated or given dispensation. For example, when Abu Qatadah did not consider drinking water from animals like cats, animals that are always in the human environment, it is difficult to avoid. Cats are animals that often eat unclean and disgusting like rats¹²

Likewise with the phenomenon, when fish seller performs salat with the clothes attached by scales. Such circumstances can be used as a reason for *rukhsah* or given legal dispensation because of the difficulty to evade the case. Likewise with rat drop to the water used to purify is certainly difficult to avoid and naturally given dispensation and relief. Such a situation is termed in classical fiqh with the terms *'umum al balwa*.

The general concept of *al balwa* based on the history of Abu Qatadah shows that the concept counters the issue of worship on the pretext of being difficult to avoid so that dispensation needs to be given. Rukhs} or legal dispensation in religion is not only limited to the field of worship but can be included in the field of *muamalah*, private, *dauliyyah*, public law, politics, and financial. The application of dispensation is accommodated with the foundation of the Qur'anic text and hadith tolerating some problems in the dynamics of life difficult to avoid¹³.

'Umum al balwa is combined with two words namely *'umum* and *al-balwa*. Etymologically the word *'umum* means *al-tuul* (something long), *al-kasirah* (something a lot), *al-'uluwwu* (something high), *asy-syumul* (something that includes). In other expressions such as those which include collective matters. Etymologically, the word *al-balwa* means tests, trials or disasters. In terms of terminology, the jurist tends to term *'umum al balwa* with the expression *fi> ma'ammāt baliyyatuhu* or

ma ta'ummu bihi 'umum al-balwa. The terminology definition is not much different from its etymology. The terminology substance is an event that is based on the burden and is carried out by a *mukallaf* but difficult to avoid. Definition from classical view from Salaf is still rare to find separately. The majority defined it when discussing the relation of *'umum al-balwa* to *khobar wahid*, as defined in the book of the proposal of al-fi qhi that *khobar wahid* in which there is an element of *'umum al-balwa* is needed by *mukallaf* because these events often occur.

As the definition of al-Tufi when juxtaposing it with *khobar wahid* with other expressions that *Khobar wahid* in which there is *'umum al balwa* is *khobar wahid* which gives a lot of burden.

Whereas al-San'ani in his book *Ijabatul al-Sa'il Syarhu Bagiyyati al-Amil* defines' *'umum al balwa* by expressing the totality of burden to all *mukallaf* or the majority done by the *mukallaf*. One of the khalaf clerics, Abdul Karim Zaidan, defines' *umum al-balwa* by expressing the spread of conditions which are confronted by humans which humans find difficult to escape from

Whereas 'Abdul Majid Salahin defines' *'umum al balwa* with the existence of a comprehensive condition of the majority of mukallaf at a certain time or often occurs in a mukallaf in many times and causes difficulties so that it requires relief in the implementation of Shari'a¹⁴.

From these definitions, *'Umum al-balwa* is closely related to universal *mashaqqah* (difficulty) because disasters are equitable and difficult to avoid¹⁵. The legal consequence of this condition is that Muslims can perform *rukhsah syari'iyah* more specifically in matters of worship and *taharah*¹⁶. This condition does not concern individual Muslims¹⁷. Difficulties faced by individual Muslims into special conditions do not spread and pass to other Muslims. That is called *khusus al-balwa*. Specifically, *al-balwa* becomes a difficulty that infects a person who is following changes with privacy and not found in others.

¹²Firman Muhammad Arif, 'Dialektika Nalar Idealitas Dan Nalar Realitas: Aplikasi Konsep Umum Al-Balwa Dalam Dinamika Hukum Islam', *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan*, 18.1 (2018), 99–118.

¹³Arif.

¹⁴Harwis Alimuddin, 'Metode Penerapan 'Umum Al-Balwa Dalam Fikih Kontemporer' (Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, 2014).

¹⁵Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, *Nazhariyat Al-Dharuriyat Fi Al-Syari'ah Al-Islamiyah* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah), h. 91.

¹⁶Abdul Syatar, "Konsep Masyaqqah Perspektif Hukum Islam; Implementasi Terhadap Isu-Isu Fikih Kontemporer" (UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2012), h. 103. <http://repositori.uin-alauddin.ac.id/id/eprint/6009>.

¹⁷Lajnah Ifta Dar al-Ifta, *Dhawabith Al-Ikhtiyar Al-Fiqh 'Inda Al-Nawazil* (Kairo: Dar al-Ifta al-Misriyah, 2013), h. 180.

Thus, *khusus al-balwa* is very urgent that occurs specifically for a Muslim convert to get relief from a phenomenon difficult to do or leave the teachings of religion. If the *mukalaf* insists on continuing to implement *taklif* (imposition of law), an extraordinary *masyaqqah* will occur¹⁸. Difficulties faced by Muslims vary. Individual or institutional Mufti should pay attention to the condition of Muslims in each of the recent events and then issue a fatwa that is specific to the level of the case.

The only thing that needs to be considered in applying *khusus al balwa* is clear boundaries and can be formulated concretely so that the liberalization and marginalization of the textual typology of Islamic law can be minimized as early as possible. The next formulation is by preventing and preventing various attempts to distort facts, rules, and deviations. Usually, the excuse that always arises is Islam by providing convenience rather than distorting so that what is seen on the surface is *tasahul*.

Fatwas issued should reflect analytical and critical traditions as an effort to respond to the law of new problems no longer seem *tasahul* because it is only based on individual interests and passions even though the benefit must always be oriented to the benefit of the people not the benefit of the human ego whose impact leads to destructive things. Elaboration '*khusu al balwa* from the linguistic aspects and the terminology of the salaf and Khalaf scholars must always rest on cases that have occurred and are recorded in classical fiqh literature. The cases in classical fiqh not only show the textual and outward but also show *maqashid* the text. Ulama also does not compare much between *umum al balwa* with *khusus al balwa* because they have a similar result, bringing ease or dispensation. Nevertheless, the similarity in the final results leads to merging the factors that influence and fuse the differences¹⁹.

Therefore, we must examine further where the similarities and differences lie between the two. The special limitation of *al-balwa* essentially contains several elements.

First, the special area of *al-balwa* does not include the entire Muslim community who live but only belongs to a handful of people with different conditions in the

same case. This provision intends that *al-balwa* special events require an in-depth search of the condition of each Muslim and take into account the factors that revolve around that particular incident. The difference occurs with 'general *al-balwa* who does not see the personal nature of an issue, but sees it in general. Second, the incident was repeated and continued for some time. The element of recurring events is the main element to find out the essence of a case (*al-balwa*), both specific and general. Third, it is difficult to avoid and leave the incident. Fourth, there is extraordinary *masyaqqah* at the event and it is difficult to avoid it for those affected

DISCUSSION

Islamophobia during COVID-19 Outbreaks: A Mere Conspiracy?

At the beginning of the outbreak of the co-19 pandemic, many media, members of the council, and certain elements made Islamophobia trigger panic and division by linking the Muslim co-19. The media is busy preaching about photos of Muslims in prayer and Muslim women wearing hijab doing daily routines²⁰. The photos on the news convey indirect and subtle messages connecting Muslims and Muslim religiosity with panic related to transmission and covid-19 infections. There is concern from anti-Islamic parties to fire the co-19 issue to Muslims as the ringleader of the spread of co-19.

Fake news and hatred are spreading increasingly alarming. This is triggered by activities carried out from home. Information is obtained from news and online socialization²¹. Islamophobia is an old issue that has been brought back. The issue must be above because it impacts not only Muslims but for non-Muslims²². Muslims must believe that the teachings of Islam spread love for humanity (*rahmatan lil alamin*).

Muslims must face and eradicate the stigma of Islamic phobia, both from outside and within the Muslim community itself. Muslims are required to return to the main source, the Koran²³. Islam requires its adherents to have a gentle, loving, polite attitude and noble heart. If we are harsh, then surely, not only non-Muslims, our

²⁰Kayaoglu.

²¹Handayani.

²²Abdul Aziz, 'Menangkal Islamofobia Melalui Re-Interpretasi Alqur'an', *Al-Araf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat*, 13.1 (2016), 65 <<https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v13i1.22>>.

²³Muhamad Zain Aziz, 'Menghadapi Islamophobia', *Madani*, April 2018.

¹⁸Lajnah Ifta Dar al-Ifta, *Dhawabith Al-Ikhtiyar Al-Fiqh 'Inda Al-Nawazil*, h. 182.

¹⁹Alimuddin.

brother in Islam will run away, even if we shout the truth. This is where the seeds of phobia begin to take the show.

As for dealing with extreme religious groups amid the co-19 pandemic which has been making phobias against Muslims and non-Muslims around the world. The Islamic circles that spread Islamophobia amid the co-19 pandemic must be confronted with ideas and thoughts based on *nas* and rationality.

Non-Muslims who barely recognize Islam from the beginning and neutral non-Muslims probably will hate and even act violently towards Muslims both verbally and physically. The launched conspiracy could result in the massacre of a Muslim minority. On the other side, we as Muslim, must face realities that the religious understanding of some Muslims is still shallow. Some Muslims do not fully understand the characteristics of Islamic Jurisprudence that is always dynamic with time and place. They lack the understanding that *fiqh* is not burdensome (*'adam al-haraj*). If Muslims fully understand Islam (*kaffah*) there will not be a phobia under any circumstances, whether during the co-19 outbreak or not. Muslims must learn more because the teachings of Islam are very comprehensive that govern small and large things.

Da'wah and fatwas that are not supposed to be made public. There is no doubt that a great deal of da'wah is calling for continued worship in the mosque during the 19th period, there are still those who find it difficult to adapt to the atmosphere of worship during the pandemic. For this reason, da'wah and fatwa are demanded to always enlighten rather than frighten the Muslims themselves. Such Phobia, either caused by fake news or some Muslim behavior, will continue to spread if the Muslim do not take serious action.

How *Khusus Al-Balwa* Deals with COVID-19

The covid-19 pandemic not only claimed the lives of people but also affected human life throughout the world, from social interactions, declining economies, and the process of worshipping God²⁴. The religious life of the community in particular Muslims has a huge impact. Friday prayer some time ago most Muslims did not perform it for a while. Muslims have confined themselves in their respective homes to avoid the

crowds that could bring harm more than the co-19 pandemic.

The fact that the delay or cancellation of the implementation of the Hajj in 1441 H. is of particular concern to the governments of each country. The Government through the Indonesian Minister of Religion officially announced the cancellation of the departure of pilgrims on Tuesday, June 2, 2020²⁵. Safety of the souls of Muslims themselves is the main concern. The unrest and confusion of Indonesian Muslims regarding the implementation of the Hajj this year (1441 H) have been answered with a cancellation. The answer was given by the government through the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia with the Decree of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 494 of 2020 concerning Cancellation of the Departure of Hajj Pilgrims in the Hajj Pilgrimage Year 1441 H / 2020 M.

These facts make co-19 a difficult condition (*masyaqqah*), which can have an impact as a general disaster (*'umum al-balwa*) or is special (*khusus al-balwa*). Specifically, *al-balwa* in the co-19 pandemic that some mosques continued to perform Friday prayers because the area was far and safe from the pandemic. However, areas that fall into the category of the red zone are forbidden to perform Jumaah in Mosque. co-19 is considered as a special *al-balwa* because individual Muslims vary in feeling the difficult conditions due to co-19.

Failing to perform Friday prayers includes standardizing the special application of *al-balwa*. Muslims who do not pray Friday are difficult to avoid because the mosque is closed temporarily even though they intend to continue to carry out Friday prayers. If the *mukalaf* continues to insist on Friday prayers there will be the possibility of other difficult conditions such as the transmission of the covid-19 outbreak.

The way Muslim medical officers in charge of handling co-19 patients deserves special attention. The goal is not to create a phobia of religion from Muslim medical personnel. It is undeniable that they need an understanding that can support their activities while on duty. Likewise with Muslim patients who died because of the 19th plague that incidentally the funeral was different from other patients. As a result, those who

²⁴Lebo Diseko, 'Virus Corona: Apa Dampak Covid-19 Terhadap Tata Cara Ibadah Agama?', *BBC News Indonesia*, March 2020.

²⁵CNN Indonesia, 'Kemenag Ungkap Kronologi Ibadah Haji 2020 Dibatalkan', *CNN Indonesia*, June 2020.

died from co-19 were treated with special care under the provisions of the health protocol. The victim's family cannot bathe, disbelieve, bind, and bury the 19th patient. That can trigger a negative stigma, both on the appropriateness of the procedure for the management of the remains and the government as the responsible authority.

Muslims as a whole should not be phobic about their religious teachings during this pandemic. Previously, before co-19 we infected we witnessed veiled women considered foreign even denounced and considered extreme. When covid-19 took place the Muslims were instead required to wear a "veil" (mask) in each of their activities not to mention the ritual activities that were foreign before the plague of covid 19. Those were evidences of the symptoms of Islamic phobias from the Muslims themselves

The Government of Saudi Arabia officially announces that the implementation of the Hajj amid of the covid-19 pandemic continues with eight (8) policies, among others, only implemented by residents of Saudi Arabia and a maximum age limit of 65 years and independent isolation after adjusting the rituals of worship²⁶. Hajj was normally attended by more than two million people, but co-19 forced several countries to cancel the pilgrimage this year. Cancellation and restrictions on the departure of the pilgrimage were due to co-19, including *khusus al-balwa*. The policy of the Saudi Arabian government to loosen the implementation of the Hajj during the 19th plague for those under 65 years of age. The age limitation becomes *khusus al-balwa* for Muslims who pass the stressed age limit. Health protocols that apply to pilgrims will also be implemented physical distancing (distance) that forces pilgrims to experience difficulties (*masyaqqah*). The intended *masyaqqah* is the consistency of keeping a distance between pilgrims considering the harmonious rituals and the obligatory hajj carried out with crowd and togetherness.

Policies in some countries emphasize independent isolation using social distancing in the form a lockdown or large-scale social restrictions. Independent isolation can be said to be *khusu al-balwa*. Therefore, not all Muslims are emphasized to do that, but only for people who have carried out activities with distances and places that enter the danger zone. Health workers who have completed their duties are included in the

category of *mukalaf* who can make special use of *al-balwa*. As a consequence, the *mukalafs* get concessions (*rukhsah*) when they want to carry out ritual worship.

Arguing Islamophobia during COVID-19 using *Khusus Al-Balwa* Consideration

Changes in society can not be avoided because it always presents new developments that require Islamic legal intervention in playing an important role in the development of people's lives. The law is not only seen from one side only, but the law is also considered sociologically capable of accommodating the changes that occur. The problems that surfaced without being able to anticipate and find a solution by Muslims properly and of course certainly make Islamic law as if not ready to face the challenges of the times and may even be considered irrelevant to be applied in the modern world. Some circles say that Islamic legal thinking is still dominated by ideological thinking because it tends to perpetuate the status quo. As a result, Islamic legal thinking has difficulty when dealing with current realities. It must be admitted that initially, Islamic law grew flexibly and dynamically according to the demands of the times. Consistency in maintaining basic principles that do not change from Muhammad's apostolic treatise. Dynamism and solidity are the main characteristics of Islamic law throughout the ages. This dynamic aspect makes Islamic law not static and flexibility always follows the changes and developments of the times. The solidity of Islamic law is not completely eroded by the demands of the age so that it does not lose its identity. The existence of the concept *khusus al balwa* leads the *mukallaf* to improvise or provides a flexible mental attitude based on modest material so that it feels comfortable in behaving and carrying out *taklif*. The application of *'khusus al balwa* is possible as long as the criteria are met and can be known through the causes and conditions that are inferred through examples of cases and events that occurred during the Prophet and *sahabah*. Its application in actual cases requires approaches such as causal relationship (correlation) with the dynamics of community development throughout the ages²⁷.

Multi approaches used in applying the concept of *khusus al balwa* can be understood and affect the perception that confirms that in fact Islamic law is built

²⁶Saudi Arabia Government, #Hajj1441 Plans (Riyadh, 2020).

²⁷Alimuddin.

in tandem with the revelation of God and the power of human reasoning so that its products are in accordance with the level of community progress and are able to overcome the problems encountered but within the frame of enthusiasm, soul and purpose of Islamic law. The strength of this reasoning is the process of thinking in drawing conclusions in the form of knowledge about *khusus al-balwa* because it is associated with thinking and not with curiosity which has certain characteristics in finding the truth and not justifying human statements and actions that are clearly contradictory to the provisions of the passage. Legal dispensation is identified in *khusus al-balwa* by knowing the cause of the occurrence in various ways, such as the difficulties that are difficult to avoid, events or actions that are often repeated, the prevalence of these events in the community, the factor of the least level of an event's actions in general conditions experienced by the Muslim psychopath, elderly conditions or certain diseases that are difficult to cure, and the presence of an emergency condition. The various causes cited as a result of the emergence of legal dispensation are linked to the mindset that leads to individual habits, psychological and unexpected incidents. The problem of Muslims is inseparable from changes in space, time and habits that seem overly simplified by the legitimacy of the systematic problem that difficult to avoid²⁸.

The hustle and bustle of covid-19 have a tremendous shock effect on all lines of Muslim life. Some Muslim individuals legitimized themselves that there were difficulties in carrying out worship rituals during the epidemic COVID-19. Covid-19 forced some Muslims to set religious strategies and perspectives following reality²⁹. Fatwas are needed to unify the analytical-critical traditions to answer the current difficult problematic law³⁰. The universal fatwa should properly consider all aspects of benefit, both general and individual in co-19 hegemony.

Social media opens up opportunities and threats about the invitation of Islam in the public space of Muslims in Indonesia³¹. In these social media, Muslims can witness the various conditions of da'wah and fatwa

during the co-19 pandemic. It cannot be denied that there is a strong individual fatwa that seems to impose the will on Muslims to worship during a pandemic. Such fatwa can produce and suppress Muslims, generate phobia of Islam from its adherents. Da'wah and fatwa must lead to moderation, tolerance, and upholding peace among Muslims during the pandemic.

In Indonesia, through the Indonesian Ulema Council at least produce several fatwa products around covid-19 (approximately six fatwa products)³². In each fatwa product, the MUI provides recommendations to the government to carry out super-strict restrictions on the entry and exit of people and goods from and to Indonesia, except for medical staff and essential goods as well as emergency needs. MUI also recommends Muslims to be obliged to support and adhere to government policies that carry out isolation and treatment of people exposed to covid-19 so that the spread of the virus can be prevented³³. Observations of the fatwas produced by the MUI certainly pass through mature considerations. Muslims must be proportional in responding to the fatwas not by giving a negative impression that can give fear to other Muslims. Muslims must be able to accept the fact that the pandemic also affected aspects of religious rituals.

MUI fatwa products are related to medical personnel whose duty is to serve patients exposed to the 19th plague. MUI stated that Muslim medical personnel who use PPE (personal protective equipment) are still required to perform *fardu* prayers under their conditions. The ability of Muslim medical personnel to pray prayers that are within the span of two prayers, may pray following the provisions, the famous prayer with asar prayer (taqdim and ta'khir) and the evening prayer and evening prayer (taqdim and ta'khir). The ability to perform tayammum as a substitute for wudu for prayers in a state of facing difficulties in removing the PPE. Medical personnel who are on duty than are in a disabling condition that is not possible to purify or PPE is unclean, may perform fard prayer in these conditions and are required to repeat the prayer (i'adah al-shalah) after serving. The fatwa product provides a broad understanding for Muslim medical personnel that Islam emphasizes the aspect of humanity (hifzh al-din) by giving dispensation for

²⁸ Arif., 109.

²⁹ Farid F Saenong dkk, *Fikih Pandemi; Beribadah Di Masa Wabah*, I (Jakarta: Nuo Publishing, 2020), h. 3.

³⁰ Arif., h. 110.

³¹ Wahyudi Akmaliah, 'The Demise of Moderate Islam: New Media, Contestation, and Reclaiming Religious Authorities', *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 10.1 (2020), 1-24 <<https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v10i1.1-24>>.

³² Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 'Produk Fatwa MUI', 2020.

³³ Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 'FATWA MAJELIS ULAMA INDONESIA Nomor: 14 Tahun 2020 Tentang PENYELENGGARAN IBADAH DALAM SITUASI TERJADI WABAH COVID-19', *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (Jakarta: mui.or.id, 2020), p. hlm. 1-10., h. 9-10.

adherents in the form of relief (*rukhsah syar'iyah*) in the form of a little "sacrifice" of the way of worshiping medical personnel during the task of overcoming covid patients -19.

Muslim medical officers are required to carry out their professional duties and servitude to Allah. not at the expense of one of them. Rituals of worship and professions must go hand in hand for the benefit of other Muslims. The Muslim medical officer was emphasized not to blame religious teachings or professional duties. Thus, MUI products related to the Prayer for Health Workers Who Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) When Caring for and Handling Covid-19 Patients are in line with the special principles of *al-balwa*.

MUI fatwa product contained in Fatwa Number 28 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Takbir Covenant and Eid Al-Fitr Prayer During the Covid-19 Pandemic on May 13, 2020, M / 20 Ramadan 1441 H. The fatwa product issued several legal decisions that allowed the ability to carry out Eid al-Fitr prayers at the residence of Covid-19 on May 13 2020 M / 20 Ramadan 1441 H. each and may no one act as preachers if no one is capable. The fatwa emphasized all Muslims always prioritize the aspect of personal safety (*hifzh al-nafs*) by observing the provisions of religious teachings during the co-19 pandemic. Although the prevalence of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr activities is carried out in mosques or fields, it is different when the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic still allows transmission. The MUI fatwa indicates that there is a *rukhsah* in religious teachings that must be understood by Muslims. *Rukhsah* is meant by performing Eid prayers at home. Muslims are emphasized not to impose their desire to continue to carry out the Eid al-Fitr prayers in mosques or fields because there are strong fears of co-19 transmission.

The special concept of *al-balwa* from the MUI fatwa product during the pandemic period is an implicit priority. This is evident from the considerations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as well as the principles of fiqh and the opinions of Jurists who are both classical and contemporary before issuing fatwas. Consideration of the reality of the Muslim community at large and the individual ummah also did not escape observation.

Thus, to suppress the phobia of Islam from its people needed a concept. The special concept of *al-balwa* can be applied in all legal products, both religious and state law. Fatwa products or government

policies if they understand well the special concept of *al-balwa* which has not been widely studied so far can be used as a new idea so that it gives birth to fatwa products and policies that provide solutions to the problems of Muslims during the co-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of religious rituals without regard to social distance and health protocols by several groups gave rise to new Islamophobia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is compounded by the conspiracy and propaganda carried out by groups who have long hated Islam. This has further worsened the image of Islam, even fearing becoming a new ammunition to launch discriminatory acts, harassment, and slaughter, especially in Muslim minority countries.

The concept of *khusus al balwa* is closely related to *masyaqqah*, a condition where a Muslim can take *rukhsah* instead of performing the ritual as usual. *Saf* which normally requires a tight position can be stretched according to the health protocol. Friday prayers that must be performed in the congregation can be replaced with Friday prayers alone at home, even with the midday prayers. Doctors and nurses who cannot change their clothes because of their work during a pandemic, can postpone their prayers or hold their prayers in these clothes.

Such rituals of worship always must be echoed, not the rituals that are contrary to human nature, not rituals that violate the rules of distance and not rituals that endanger others. Islam must prioritize *maslahah* and following conditions in a community or individually. This can be achieved by considering *Khusus Al-balwa*.

In reality, *al-balwa* especially happened a lot amid the pluralism of Muslims to prevent the outbreak of Islamic phobia amid co-19 issues. Specifically *al-balwa*, a concept that Muslims need in the midst of co-19 hegemony, especially in terms of providing a complex understanding to present a calm and peaceful Islam, not that provokes hatred and islamophobia.

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