CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

$Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ has become the most important concept in the discourse of Muslim scholars, especially for Islamic political intellectuals. [1] $Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ is also called deliberation, which is basically one of the characteristics of an Islamic state that is highly recommended in Islam. [2] Along with the times, the interpretation of the term $Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ or deliberation has evolved, so that deliberation today is always associated with several modern political theories, such as republican systems, democracy, parliament, representative systems, senates, formats, and various concepts related to government systems. [3]

However, there is a contradiction in understanding the $Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ system, which is the mechanism of representation of Muslim voices in Islamic countries, with the democratic system, which is a Western system of representation resulting from *secularization*. [4] Given this fact, $Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ and democracy are two different things, in that $Sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ derives from the absolute power of law in the hands of Allah SWT, whereas in Western philosophy, deliberation or democracy is power determined by the hands of the people in elections. [5] In short, the identification of the Islamic political system can only be done by referring to the *Islamic Worldview* emitted by the Qur'an and confirmed by the Prophet and his practice. [6] This is the best solution for Muslims today so that they are not influenced by the Western deliberative

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[1] Colin Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed: A Critical Analysis of Said Nursi's Episteles of Light,* (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2013), 539.

[2] Muhammad Nazeer Ka Ka Khel, "The Conceptual and Institutional Development of Shura in Early Islam," *Islamic Studies,* Vol. 19, No. 4 (Winter 1980), 271-272.

[3] Dedi Masri, "The Concept of Islamic Musyawarah", *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal),* Vol. 4, No. 3, August 2021, 7395.

[4] Khurshid Ahmad, "Islam and Democracy: Some Conceptual and Contemporary Dimensions," *Policy Perspectives,* Vol. 2, No. 1 (Apr. 2005), 16.

[5] Rozali & Zulfikar, "Youth Perception of Legislative General Elections in Pidie Regency", *BIRCI: Budapest International Reserarch and Critics Institute Journal,* Vol. 3(2): 1262-1269.

[6] Sujiat Zubaidi, et. al., "The Political Identity: Between Qur'anic View and Western Theory", *Bulletin Al-Turas,* Vol. 29, No. 1, March 2023, 159.

democratic paradigm which is irrelevant to Islam.[7] If the Islamic political system has found its identity, the next step is to develop it conceptually. Thus, through the integration of the concept of *Shūrā* in Islam and the principles of modern democracy, a system of government can be created that combines the spiritual and moral values of Islām with the universal principles of democracy to create a more just, participatory and equitable society.

In this regard, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas said that Islam as *'al-dīn'* encompasses life as a whole, including the concept of *Shūrā* as the principle of consultation in Islam that provides the basis for collective decisions in the Muslim community. However, this concept cannot be directly equated with democracy in the modern sense. According to him, the *Islamic worldview* places ultimate authority on God's law (*shari'ah*) as the primary source of moral and social guidance.[8] In this context, *Shūrā* becomes a means to reach consensus in making decisions that are in accordance with Islamic principles, not just a secular democracy that places human sovereignty to determine everything according to their wishes.

After observing the discourse on the relationship between the concept of *Shūrā* and democracy, it becomes clear why many Muslim intellectuals have explored and expressed their opinions on the matter.[9] Fazlur Rahman who is a Muslim intellectual known for his innovative views on Islām and democracy, stated that democratic societies in the West are more inclined towards materialism which leads to the rejection of building a higher socio-moral order.[10] One of the

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[7] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Worldview Islam dan Kapitalisme Barat," *Jurnal TSAQAFAH,* Vol. 9, No. 1, April 2013, 5; Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "The Rise of Islamic Religious-Political Movements in Indonesia: The Background, Present Situation and Future," *Journal of Indonesia Islam,* Vol. 2, No. 2, Dec. 2008, 358-359.

[8] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1993), 75-76.; Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolrgomena to the Methaphysics of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995.

[9] Liv Tonnessen, "Democratizing Islam and Islamizing Democracy: An Inquiry into Hasan al-Turabi's Conception of Shura in Light of Western Democratic Theory, 2-3.

[10] Fazlur Rahman, *Revival and Reform in Islam,* (England: Oneworld Publication, 2003), 24; Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and the Constitutional Problem of Pakistan," *Studia Islamica,* No. 32, (1970), 279.

uniqueness of his notion of *Shūrā* as a democratic principle is its more inclusive and adaptive approach to the modern context by integrating the principles of *Shūrā* into modern democratic principles, giving it a distinct moral and ethical dimension while maintaining the basis of justice and consultation. In his political thought, Fazlur Rahman promoted the understanding of *Shūrā* as the principle of democracy in Islam.[11] He interpreted *Shūrā* as a way for Muslim societies to make political decisions through wider consultation and participation, which is often considered progressive thinking for its time. In the last years of Fazlur Rahman's life, the issue of *Shūrā* took center stage in the political debates of the Muslim world.[12]

Fazlur Rahman argued that Muslim modernists have not succeeded in explaining their goal of integrating modern values with traditional Islam. [13] Therefore, the implementation of this representative government does not deviate from Islamic rules. Rather, it would be an attempt to realize the values that actually "require government to be based on mutual council and consultation." Then, Fazlur Rahman concluded that only Allāh has the authority to enact laws, leading him to believe that there is a difference between the acceptance of moral principles or values and actual laws.[14]

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that Fazlur Rahman's views could be clearer and more consistent. On an ideal plane, he had the concept of an Islamic state with all its ethical Islamic values, merging into a modern *Shūrā*-based democracy. Practically, his ideas about the Islamic state and society were subverted by the political climate of Pakistan at the time, leading him to express

[11] Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and the Constitutional Problem of Pakistan", *Studia Islamica,* Vo. 32, (1970), 279-280; Sucilawati, "The Concept of *Shūrā* in Islamic Governance Practice of *Shūrā* during the Caliph Umar Bin Khattab", *IJOBSSOR: International Journal of Politics and Sociology Research,* 8(1), 2020, 19.

[12] Fazlur Rahman, "A Recent Controversy over the Interpretation of *Shūrā.*" *History of Religions,* Vol. 20, No. 4 (May, 1981), 291; Akhyar Hanif, "*Syura dan Demokrasi: Antara Konsepsi dan Praktik dalam Islam,* STAIN Batisangkar Press 2017, 69-70.

[13] Fazlur Rahman, "The Impact of Modernity of Islam," *Islamic Studies,* Vol. 5, No. 2 (Jun. 1966), 113-115; Fazlur Rahman, "Islamization of Knowledge: A Response," *Islamic Studies,* Vol. 50, No. 3/4 (Aut-Win 2011), 451-452.

[14] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam,* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1st ed., 1966, 70-71; Fazlur Rahman, "Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Altenatives," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 1, No. 4, (Pct. 1970), 317.

some very different opinions. This critical analysis aims to analyze the concept of *Shūrā* holistically and will culminate in discussing the fundamental differences and similarities between *Shūrā* and democracy, which is a product of secularism. So, to diagnose and treat the adverse effects of secularism, the concept of *Islamic worldview* is very suitable in responding to the dualism of the notion of deliberation between Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* and Western secular democracy. *Shūrā* and democracy have some similarities, such as the idea of deliberation, consultation, and decision-making by the people. However, there are fundamental differences between the two concepts, especially in the *Islamic worldview.*

Overall, while both democracy and *Shūrā* involve deliberation, consultation and participation in decision-making, they differ significantly in terms of their underlying principles, sources of authority and the role of religion in governance. Fazlur Rahman saw both traditions as advocating for parliamentary decision-making processes that respect the voices and rights of individuals and communities. This condition resulted in Fazlur Rahman's weakness in his thoughts on the concept of *Shūrā* as a principle of democracy.

B. Problem of Study

Departing from the above background and this discussion in this study does not extend to another discussion, hence the need for the formulation of the problem to be researched, which is as follows:

1. How is Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā*?
2. How is the Critique on Fazlur Rahman's Concept of *Shūrā* based on the *Islamic Worldview?*

So that the focal point of research does not widen and avoid discussion of all possible problems that will arise, the author provides the limitation of the problem as above in this study.

C. Objective of Study

In this case, the author takes the title "Critique on Fazlur Rahman's Concept of *Shūrā*", while the reasons for the author to discuss and research this title are as follows:

1. To know Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā*
2. To critically examine Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* according to *Islāmic Worldview.*

D. Importance of Study

The benefits and importances of this study with title "Critique on Fazlur Rahman's Concept of *Shūrā*", are as follows:

1. **Academic Importance**

   Academically, this research is expected to provide political construction in the study of Critique on Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* and also the figure of Fazlur Rahman. Studies on Critique on Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* are already quite diverse as well as the figures of Fazlur Rahman. However, not many studies that address specific focus on this title. Therefore, this research is expected to be able to provide a new reference about Critique Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* and also to develop politics and politics theory in Islam based on faith in Allah, strengthening that Aqeeda as the mother of science at the University of Darussalam Gontor in particular and the community largely.

   As additional reading and literature material for students and the wider community in general. And can provide a comprehensive and integral understanding, especially for the author of the concept of *Shūrā* is the reason for thinking of Fazlur Rahman as a provision to become a professional philosopher.

2. **Practical Importance**

   Practically, this research is expected to benefit through the analysis presented by research, not only individual and certain institutions, but also

society as an objective in general. Through this research it is expected to become reading material and discussion that can add more knowledge about Critique on Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā*.

And from this research, researcher hopes Critique on Fazlur Rahman's concept of *Shūrā* easily understood by the general public and wide, so they could illustrate that concept until it could raise several issues that have been mentioned above. Then the authors also expect there is further research that will able to explain it better and can be used as input for another research with a different theme or approach.

E. Literature Review

In this researcher as it could be more focused and directed, the author feels it is important to conduct a literature view as a reference in seeing the diffences from other researchers that discuss the concept of *Shūrā* according to Fazlur Rahman. Therefore, researcher has two sources of literature, the first is in the form of book that discuss about concept of *Shūrā* and the second is scientific works or journals which are still in the limitation of discussion in this research. Globally, the topic of *Shūrā* in Islam has given rise to an ongoing debate between religious and secular democratic values and has even become a rare debate among some Muslims.

The author finds an article written by Navin G. Haider Ali, Assistant Professor, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Karachi entitled "*Concept of Shūrā in Fazlur Rahman's Political ideas at Practical Level", Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC),* Vol. 8, No. 2, Fall 2018.[15] He focuses on the emphasis on *Shūrā* in Fazlur Rahman's early writings from the 1950s and 1960s. He highlighted the fact that Fazlur Rahman's ideas were heavily influenced by the socio-political conditions prevailing in Pakistan at that time and he seemed to contradict himself on some arguments about the authority of the head of state. This situation also highlights the dilemma of a thinker who also has to play the role of a reformer at a

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[15] Navin G. Haider Ali, "Concept of Shūrā in Fazlur Rahman's Political Ideas at Practical Level," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC),* Vol. 8, No. 2, Fall 2018, ISSN: 2075, eISSN: 2520-0313, 110-126.

practical level in a given political situation.[16] The author in agreement with Haider has observed that on the issue of the Islamic State and the powers of the head of state, and especially on the issue of the institution of *Shūrā* in Islam, Fazlur Rahman's views are very confusing and contradictory. On the ideal plane, he has the concept of the Islamic state with all its ethical Islamic values, fused into a Shūrā-based modern democracy. Thus, the debate on Fazlur Rahman's thought during the latter part of his academic career may form another matter and should be avoided here. Thus, further research is needed on the *Shūrā* being the system of consultation and election of leaders as prescribed by Islam and practised successfully in the time of the Prophet; and currently by countries such as Pakistan, Turkey and how if implemented in Indonesia.

In an article literature that has been written by Sulaiman Sheu Adua, he is a lecture in Islamic Studies at Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria entitled "*The Islamic Shūrā System and the Western Democratic Process: A Debate*", published in Political Science Review, Vol. 7, No. 1 2016. it contains an explanation of this idea suggesting that the majority of Western and Islamic scholars feel that the democratic ethos embedded in the Islamic *Shūrā* system has the potential to enhance the world's magnificent sanctuaries when combined with the Western democratic process.[17] He disagreed on whether it is applicable, especially when it comes to the current issue of secularism. It is important to immediately clarify that understanding the Islamic notion of *Shūrā* separately from "Islamic Democracy" is never possible. A political philosophy known as "Islamic democracy" aims to incorporate Islamic values into public governance.

However, the author finds that this field of assessment is limited. Although this review discusses the Islamic *Shūrā* system which has the potential to be combined with Western democratic processes in the critical thinking movement, the limitations of this access are restricted to Al-Farabi's thoughts on the concept

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[16] Navin G. Haider Ali, "Concept of Shūrā in Fazlur Rahman's Political Ideas at Practical Level," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Fall 2018, 110-126.

[17] Sulaiman Sheu Adua & Moshood Olayinka Salahu, "The Islamic *Shūrā* System and the Western Democratic Process: A Debate," *Political Science Review*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2016, 99.

of the ideal Islamic state which he compares to Plato's Republic (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)[18] which means that some major figures, such as al-Maududi, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Ridha, Iqbal, and Fazlur Rahman have not been included. In his analysis, Sulaiman recommends that a synergy towards the adaptation of the *Shūrā* system can be blended with a secular democratic ethos that ultimately results in good governance and credible leadership.[19] The author has analyzed the ideas of the aforementioned Muslim scholars, which are irrelevant to this study in a contradictory manner. However, it can be said at the outset that the rejection of the research is based on the ideas of credible scholars who contradict Sulaiman.

In an article entitled *"Fundamental Ethics in Islamic Political Thought,"* SOPHIST: *Journal Sosial Politik Kajian Islam dan Tafsir,* Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan-Jun 2021, Muhammad Rizky H.K. attempts to explore the concept of Shūrā and its possibility to be the ethical foundation of Islamic political thought. To address this issue, the main focus will be on two main discussions; the basic concept of Islamic political thought, and the Islamic concept of *Shūrā* (consultation). It is well known that the concept of *Shūrā* has been widely interpreted as the theoretical basis for electoral democracy in Islam.[20] The main objective is to present a more philosophical view of Islamic political thought through an ethical basis and to show that it is possible to enrich the discourse of Islamic political thought with ethical concepts in Islamic dogma. There is a difference in this paper with what the author discussed, in this study the author did not find a discussion of the correlation of the concept of *Shūrā* with the concept of democracy based on Islamic worldview. Here Rizky only concludes that the dynamics of *Shūrā* and its implementation require a deeper study with ethical concepts only.

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[18] Muhamad Fajar Pramono & Muhammad Iqbal Oki Akbar, "Al-Madinah al-Fadilah dalam Filsafat Politik Islam: Eksplorasi Pemikiran al-Farabi," *Al-Afkar: Journal for Islamic Studies,* Vol. 8, No. 1, 2025, 1015-1029.

[19] Sulaiman Sheu Adua & Moshood Olayinka Salahu, "The Islamic *Shūrā* System and the Western Democratic Process: A Debate," *Political Science Review,* Vol. 7, No. 1, 2016, 99.

[20] Muhammad Rizky H.K., "Fundamental Ethics in Islamic Political Thought," *SOPHIST*: *Journal Sosial Politik Kajian Islam dan Tafsir,* Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan-Jun 2021.

Rizky then concludes that the main obstacle to a democratic interpretation of Islam, which is the argument in favor of 'divine sovereignty', can be overcome by emphasizing a focus on the sovereignty of human beings who speak on its behalf according to their limited individual opinions, and are influenced by social, political, economic and psychological factors. The different concepts of the application of *Shūrā* provoke attention to the underlying values contained in *Shūrā*. The Qur'an and al-Hadith as the theological basis in Islam, can be a foothold for the keepers of Islamic Politics, to explore the ethical principles of *Shūrā* in reconstructing the study of Islamic political thought. The author argues that, it differs in the title because it does not explain in detail the political thoughts of Fazlur Rahman and the discussion is still limited and does not include the reasons why *Shūrā* can be a principle of secular democracy in the constitution.

Then, the author also found an academic work entitled *'The Concept of Islamic Politics According to Fazlur Rahman*", published in *JAQFI: Journal of Islamic Aqidah and Philosophy,* Vol. 3, No. 2, 2018, Rizky Yudha Permana found the results of his research first, that Islam does not explicitly mention the ideal Islamic political system. Second, Fazlur Rahman himself in the landscape of political typology belongs to the moderate typology. Although he rejects the formation of an Islamic state, he still asserts that substantive Islamic principles must be applied in the state system. Third, Fazlur Rahman asserts that the state must be based on the *Shūrā* pattern, which consists of a legislative and executive council.[21]

Here Rizky emphasizes that the most important concept of the state for Rahman is that the state must run with the concept of *Shūrā*. In short, the *Shūrā* referred to here is when the representatives of the people called *majlis Shūrā* consisting of legislative and executive formulate policies that will be implemented by deliberation. Like-wise in leadership, being a leader means receiving the people's mandate, therefore the process of selecting leaders must come from the people as well. This is in accordance with the democratic system where the

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[21] Rizky Yudha Permana, "Konsep Politik Islam Menurut Fazlur Rahman," *JAQFI: Jurnal Aqidah dan Filsafat Islam,* Vol. 3, No. 2, 2018.

government comes from the people by the people and for the people. However, what is superior or novel in the author's next discussion is that it must identify an Islamic political system that refers to the Islamic Worldview, so that the process of integrating Islamic principles with contemporary political and social contexts can be carried out.

Furthermore, Rizki Dwi Kurnia, Master Student in Islamic Studies and Psychology, who confirmed Fazlur Rahman's thoughts on Islamic politics consisting of ideas about the state, deliberation, leadership and political modernism. He explained that Fazlur Rahman did not only discuss the Qur'an as worship, but also discussed world affairs. Therefore, it is appropriate that political issues are also sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Then, he also gave ideas about modernism in Islam, where he strongly rejected Western hegemony over Muslims. It is appropriate to reform the Islamic government and break away from Western influences that embrace secularism among Muslim governments.[22]

To confirm the previous point, the author attempts to criticize Fazlur Rahman's thinking by using the thoughts of al-Maududi, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Ridha, Muhammad Iqbal,[23] and several other Muslim Intellectuals to show the negative side or error of Fazlur Rahman's *Shūrā* concept consistently and objectively based on the *Islamic worldview* as the basis to show the positive side of them. Because it is important for scholar Muslim in understanding the *Islamic worldview*, regardless of the field of science they are engaged in. This is what distinguishes the author from previous authors.

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[22] Ryzka Dwi Kurnia, "Fazlur Rahman's Thingking About Islamic Politics", *POLITICA: Jurnal Hukum Tata Negara dan Politik Islam,* Vol. 8, No. 2, 2021, 1-16. The term of "secularist" is here applied to any view that would openly follow an ideology other that Islam is most areas of public life. The most radical form of secularism, of course, would be one that wants to replace Islam in all areas, public and private. Far more influental has been a "moderate secularism" which seeks to "separate" religion from politics and other areas of public life. In the area of legal reform, secularism in its "pure" form replaces the Shari'a in all areas of public law with codes of other, in practice Western, origin and makes citizens of all religions in principle equal before the law. See, William E. Shepard, "Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 19, No. 3 (Aug. 1987), 309; Mohamad Latief, "Islam, State, and Secularism: Analysis on the Substantive Political Paradigm in Indonesia." *Unran: International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies,* Vol. 3, No. 3-1, 28-36.

[23] M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Islamic thought in Islam,* 1st Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986.