HABERMAS' CONCEPT OF "LEBENSWELT" AND SYSTEM AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF RELIGION IN PUBLIC LIFE

Sunaryo
Universitas Paramadina, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: sunaryo@paramadina.ac.id

Abstrak

Konsep Lebenswelt (dunia kehidupan) dan sistem merupakan konsep dasar dalam pemikiran Jürgen Habermas. Lebenswelt dipahami sebagai pengetahuan latar belakang yang diterima begitu saja secara naif. Ia menjadi horison dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Dalam konteks hubungan antara Lebenswelt dan sistem, Habermas menegaskan pentingnya keterhubungan antara keduanya agar masyarakat tidak kehilangan makna. Dari penegasan ini, penulis kemudian mengajukan pertanyaan bagaimana Habermas memahami agama dalam kehidupan publik. Jika agama kita pandang sebagai bagian dari Lebenswelt, bagaimana sebaiknya kita menempatkan agama dalam pembentukan hukum? Untuk menjawab pertanyaan ini, penulis melakukan penelusuran riset pustaka atas karya Habermas dan juga para komentatornya dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis. Dari penelusuran atas pemikirannya, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa Habermas membuka ruang partisipasi yang lebih akomodatif pada agama. Ruang itu ada dalam praktik diskursus atau deliberasi publik. Dalam diskursus, pandangan-pandangan yang diinspirasi dari agama dapat diajukan ke ruang publik sejauh sudah mengalami proses rasionalisasi. Semua pandangan itu didiskusikan secara terbuka dan diuji keabsahannya. Mereka bisa diterima sejauh cukup rasional untuk menjadi hukum publik. Praktik diskursus menuntut warga dari kelompok agama untuk semakin dewasa dan rasional dalam memformulasikan ide keagamaannya di ruang publik. Gagasan agama tidak lagi ditempatkan sebagai gagasan yang tertutup dan anti kritik.

Kata kunci: *Dunia kehidupan, Sistem, Tindakan Komunikatif, Agama, Kehidupan Publik, Diskursus*

Abstract

The concept of "Lebenswelt" (the lifeworld) and the system are essential in Jürgen Habermas's thought. Habermas understands Lebenswelt as background knowledge that people take for granted naively. It becomes the horizon of their daily communication. He emphasizes the importance of coupling Lebenswelt and system. The uncoupling will make society get loss of meaning. Then we ask how he understands the position of religion in public life. How should we place religion as a part of Lebenswelt in making public law? To answer the question, we did the library research by exploring Habermas's works and his commentators. Then I conclude that Habermas offers accommodative participation to religion in public life through discourse. In the discourse, views inspired by religion can be put forward in the public sphere as far as they undergo a rationalization process. They should be openly discussed and tested instead of being taken for granted naively. Views inspired by religion will be accepted as long as they are rational. Discourse practice requires religious groups to be more mature and rational in formulating their ideas in the public sphere. Religious ideas are no longer positioned as closed and anti-criticism.

Keywords: Lebenswelt, System, Communicative Action, Religion, Public Life, Discourse.

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INTRODUCTION

In this article, I will explain Jürgen Habermas' concept of *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) and system and how he analyzes modern society through that framework. Habermas' idea about *Lebenswelt* and system is an essential framework for understanding society, values, and public law. According to Habermas, people's social life is understood in two areas: *Lebenswelt* and the system. Emile Durkheim inspired this understanding. Habermas referred Durkheim's *The Division of Labor in Society (*1933) that social life comes from a double source, the likeness of consciousness and the division of social labor. The collective consciousness reflects what

he calls *Lebenswelt*, and the social division of labor reflects the system concept (Habermas, 1987: 113–115). The classification is also in line with Bryan S. Turner's view that since the 1890s, the sociological theory has been dominated by two main issues, namely social order and the social meaning of collective life (Turner, 1991: ix).

In understanding the concept of *Lebenswelt*, he divides it into three components: culture, society, and personality. These three components have functions that need to be maintained. The components can experience interference, so the people face disturbances. According to Habermas, disturbances that occur in culture can result in a scarcity of meaning. Disturbances in society can lead to a scarcity of social solidarity. Meanwhile, disturbances at the individual level can make the ego strength disappear, causing psychopathological conditions (Habermas, 1987: 138–141). The primary functions of these components need to be maintained so that society does not lose meaning, social integration, and appropriate socialization actions.

According to Habermas, in modern society, we witness disruption. In the modern phase, the system is increasingly controlled by two sub-systems: economic rationality (money) and administrative rationality (state). These two sub-systems then colonize communication in *Lebenswelt*. The communicative action, initially based on norms of *Lebenswelt*, is increasingly shifted to the rationality of the market and state (Habermas, 1987: 185–187). This condition certainly needs to find a way out so society does not lose meaning, social integration, and appropriate interactive actions. *Lebenswelt* and system need to be reconnected, but not by bringing society back to premodern. Habermas offers to connect the system with *Lebenswelt* through discourse practices. Here, *Lebenswelt* does need to experience rationalization, and communication must be more reflective. People can make their *Lebenswelt* an inspiration and even an aspiration in the public sphere, but they must rationalize it.

From Habermas' thesis about the importance of coupling the system and *Lebenswelt*, how should we place religion as part of

Lebenswelt in public life? How should we formulate the relationship between religion and public life without falling to the domination of religion in public life? Then, in this relation, how should we make public law? Religion as a belief and ritual has survived for a long time until today. It shows extraordinary endurance and has proven to be an essential thing for human life. Therefore, we cannot neglect the significance of religion in human life. At the same time, the expression of religion must be more reflective instead of just naive views. Based on these questions, I will elaborate on Habermas' thoughts to find an accommodative model of religion in public life.

The debate about the position of religion in the public and political sphere has become a concern in contemporary political philosophy discussions. John Rawls offers a strict model and even tends to be the politics of evasion. He understands religion as part of a comprehensive doctrine or background culture. The characteristic of comprehensive doctrine is the belief in the whole truth. In his view, accepting comprehensive doctrine to involve the public sphere will make it occupy public life. Another possibility is the conflict between comprehensive doctrines that are not compatible with each other. We can see the experiences of church dominance in the Middle Ages or the conflicts between Catholic and Protestant groups in the early Modern Age (Rawls, 2000: 149–150). Therefore, instead of providing space for comprehensive doctrines, he offers a neutral public sphere of all these comprehensive doctrines (Rawls, 1996: 12, 2001: 5–6; Yates, 2007: 881–882).

Charles Taylor criticizes Rawls' conception of political liberalism. With the idea of politics of recognition, he sees that Rawls' view ignores societal differences. He calls it difference-blind liberalism (Taylor, 1999: 449). According to Taylor, there is always diverse culture, history, and values. This diversity becomes an existential part of the community, and we must recognize the differences. Ignorance of these differences can be considered the absence of the politics of recognition. It can be seen as an act of violence and injustice. Taylor offers a political model that is more inclusive. We can find this kind of criticism from communitarian

thinkers (Farrelly, 2004: 98). Troy Dostert, in *Beyond Political Liberalism*, said that instead of limiting the space for diversity, democracy would be better if we open for diverse societies (Dostert, 2006: 3).

The view that I also point out here is Amartya Sen's idea of justice, which is based on public reasoning (Sen, 2009: 46–47; 122; 169). He criticizes the concept of impartiality proposed by Rawls as closed impartiality. In closed impartiality, public reasoning only involves those who are already bound by a social contract. People outside the citizenship contract are excluded. Sen calls the consensus that is based on closed impartiality parochial consensus (Sen, 2002: 445, 2009: 126). Sen proposes the concept of open impartiality. By the concept of open impartiality, he offers a truly open public reasoning model in the collective decision-making process. Public reasoning must be open to all preferences and values of people.

DISCUSSION

1. Communicative Rationality in *Lebenswelt*

One of Habermas' important views when reflecting on the criticism of his predecessors in the Frankfurt School, especially Max Horkheimer, is the concept of communicative rationality. He criticized Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, who emphasized only the concept of purposive rationality. Through Max Weber, Habermas explains purposive rationality as attitudes that consider rational calculations in achieving specific goals by choosing means that are considered efficient (Hardiman, 1993: 74). Thus, the measure of purposive rationality is the success of an action. In contrast, communicative rationality is an attitude that refers to actions directed by mutually agreed norms based on mutual expectations between interacting subjects. Symbols understood reciprocally become media in this action (Hardiman, 1993: 78; Owen, 2002: 87–88). The measure that exists in communicative rationality is mutual understanding.

In communicative action, social interaction does not occur arbitrarily. There is rationality in communicative action. Rationality exists in the fact that actors always orient themselves toward achieving mutual understanding. Communicative action always seeks agreement among participants (Hardiman, 2009: 34–35). We can call the consensus rational if the participants express their opinions freely. Not only that, but the statement contained in the communicative action also presupposes that the statement conveyed is true, honest, and correct. Without this presupposition, it is difficult to take a stand on the statements (Hardiman, 2009: 37–38). According to Habermas, consensus cannot emerge if the listener doubts the speaker's honesty. Likewise, if we convey an order but we are suspicious of the seriousness of the order, then consensus will not emerge (Habermas, 1987: 121; Magnis-Suseno, 2000: 225–231). Here Habermas shows that there is a very fundamental difference between purposive rationality and communicative rationality. The first is always oriented toward success, and the latter seeks to build mutual understanding among subjects.

Habermas further explains that in communicative actions, the statements conveyed by the speakers come from pre-reflective background knowledge (*Hintergrundwissen*). Speakers accept the content of that knowledge naively. Background knowledge forms the context of communication and operates behind the communication processes. In Habermas' view, background knowledge becomes a context for *Lebenswelt*. The contents of *Lebenswelt* are broad, starting from social, cultural, political, legal, and other aspects. *Lebenswelt* becomes a reservoir from which the speakers take the material. Although *Lebenswelt* is static, it can also be reproduced (Habermas, 1987: 124; Hardiman, 2009: 38–40).

The speakers in communicative action seek mutual understanding between them. They use language to connect everyone with the objective, social, and subjective worlds, which become components of *Lebenswelt*. Habermas understands the objective world as the totality of true statements which are

represented in culture. The social world is understood as a totality in managing interpersonal relations represented in society. Meanwhile, the subjective world is understood as a totality regarding the experience of expressing the subjective world to the public, which is represented at the personal level (Habermas, 1987: 120).

Thus, we can understand communicative action as objective, normative, and subjective. Communicative action is based on cooperation between speakers in interpreting something. In this process, the speakers connect communicative actions with something that is the objective world, the social world, and the subjective world. When they come to a shared understanding, they have reached an agreement regarding an utterance's validity. The agreement is an intersubjective acknowledgment of validity claims (Habermas, 1987: 120–121).

2. The Concept of *Lebenswelt*

Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann influenced Habermas' view of *Lebenswelt*. Like Edmund Husserl, in understanding this concept, they begin with "egological consciousness," in which *Lebenswelt* is understood as the necessary subjective condition of the experience that is concretely and historically formed (Habermas, 1987: 129). *Lebenswelt* is a condition of daily life experienced by individuals in society. In turn, this experience will become a horizon of the speakers in their communicative actions. In other words, *Lebenswelt* becomes a background for our attitudes and judgments in communication (Magnis-Suseno, 2000: 223).

There are three characteristics emphasized in *Lebenswelt*. The first is the naive knowledge that is given for granted without criticism. *Lebenswelt* exists and is given to everyone. It becomes a background that is experienced concretely and historically. Second, the validity of *Lebenswelt* is intersubjective, which is understood through and in language. Thus, *Lebenswelt* is not something private or personal. In other words, the validity of *Lebenswelt* is the

agreement between people. Third, *Lebenswelt* can indeed shift and expand, but it cannot be totally revised as a whole. *Lebenswelt* has walls that save it from total change (Habermas, 1987: 130–132).

The contents of *Lebenswelt* are obtained through the reconstruction of pre-theoretical knowledge from competent speakers. Thus, *Lebenswelt* will appear as a context forming horizons for anyone. *Lebenswelt* is an objective world that the members can access through communication. Speakers do not just respond or answer each other in daily communicative action. In communication, they also present a narrative of an event in their *Lebenswelt*. What is meant by narration here is a conversation that describes events or socio-cultural objects that exist in their lives. This narrative practice builds mutual understanding among members regarding their common tasks and functions in understanding each person's self. In narrative practice, people objectify what they have to *Lebenswelt* through which they construct their personal identity (Habermas, 1987: 135–136).

The communication and narrative presentation take place through and within language. There, we are carrying out the reproduction process of *Lebenswelt*, social integration, and the socialization of personal identity. In communication and narrative presentation, we reproduce *Lebenswelt* by building mutual understanding among members of society. There, we also strengthen social integration by coordinating actions among community members. In addition, we socialize personal identity by interacting with competent people in communication. The children internalize the values that exist in the group so that they can realize their personal identity appropriately.

Through the three processes above, Habermas then shows that the components of *Lebenswelt* exist in culture, society, and person. The components correlate with the processes that occur in cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization. Through mutual understanding, the act of communication transmits and, at the same time, renews the existing culture. Through coordinating actions, communication functions build integration and solidarity among

community members. Finally, through socialization, communication can help individuals build their personal identity (Habermas, 1987: 137–138).

Culture is the stock of knowledge that becomes the source for members to understand the world. Meanwhile, society is a legitimate order through which group members organize their membership and maintain solidarity. Finally, personality is the competence of the individuals to speak and act by which they can build and express their identity (Habermas, 1987: 138). Habermas then explains that we can highlight processes at every component, maintained conditions, and possibilities where the component experiences disruption or crisis in *Lebenswelt*. All of this is closely related to how each component of *Lebenswelt* responds to new conditions.

In the cultural dimension, cultural reproduction in *Lebenswelt* must ensure that the new situation connects with the existing conditions, especially in the semantic dimension. This connection has the function of protecting the continuity of tradition and the coherence of everyday knowledge. Continuity and coherence are measured through the rationality of knowledge that is accepted validly in the perspective of existing knowledge. Cultural reproduction that is not continuous will be considered a reproduction process that ignores the principles of mutual understanding. It will create a crisis of legitimacy and a crisis of orientation. This condition can give rise to a scarcity of meaning (Habermas, 1987: 140).

In society, social integration in *Lebenswelt* must ensure that the new situation connects with the existing conditions, especially in the social space dimension. This integration process pays attention to coordinated actions in which interpersonal relations are legitimately regulated. The process that takes place in society serves to stabilize group identity. Coordinated actions can be measured by the solidarity that exists among members. Chaos in the integration process can result in situations of anomie or conflict. Under these

conditions, we experience the scarcity of social solidarity (Habermas, 1987: 140–141).

Table 1. Components of *Lebenswelt*

Components of *Lebenswelt*	Reproduction Process	Achievement	Disturbance
Culture	Cultural Reproduction	Consensus	Loss of Meaning
Society	Social Integration	Legitimately ordered interpersonal relations	Anomie/ Conflict
Personality	Socialization	Interactive Capabilities	Psychopathologies

Lastly, the socialization of the members of *Lebenswelt* must also ensure that the new situation remains connected with existing world conditions, especially in the historical time dimension. This process secures the ability of the next generations to acquire competencies for actions and ensures that the individual life histories are in harmony with other collective forms of life. Interactive capacity can be measured through the responsibility of the person. Disturbances in the socialization process can result in psychopathology or alienation. In that condition, one's ability to act is no longer sufficient to treat intersubjectivity based on appropriate action. This condition, according to Habermas (1987: 141), will create a scarcity of ego strength or raise psychopathological conditions.

3. Modern Society and Its Problems

After explaining the concept of *Lebenswelt*, I look at how the evolution of society takes place. Habermas describes the process of evolution of society from tribal and traditional to modern society, inspired by sociologists and ethnologists. The emergence of a new system and levels of complexity marks the difference from one phase to the next. Habermas emphasizes the disconnection between the system and *Lebenswelt* in modern society. In modern society, system complexity causes the rationalization of *Lebenswelt*. In this

phase, so many aspects of life are no longer organized according to religious traditions and norms but by internal logic in related fields. He called this process the expansion of rationalization of *Lebenswelt*.

According to Habermas, the disconnection of the system from *Lebenswelt* occurs because the sub-systems no longer connect with people's *Lebenswelt*. The mechanism of the system is separate from the social structure. The phenomenon occurs in modern society. In modern society, system differentiation makes organizations more autonomous. These organizations interconnect through the delinguistified media of communication. It is a communication process that has dismantled the role of language as a medium. In modern society, this role has been taken over by non-language media in the form of money and administrative power. In this society, social relations are disconnected from norms and values. In other words, in modern society, the existing sub-systems within the economy and administration are separate from the foundations of moral politics (Habermas, 1987: 154).

Before describing the disconnection between the system and *Lebenswelt* in modern society, we first explain how the relationship occurs in tribal society. In tribal society, the existing structures are always mediated by language, and social interaction constitutes these structures. The worldview integrates the institutional order with the unity of meaning. At the same time, individuals can understand the context of meaning so that they can control the situations that take place around them. In this kind of society, there is a correspondence between the structure of meaning that is socially objectivated and the structure within individuals. The people do not experience alienation from processes that take place socially and institutionally. Institutional patterns of action and their interpretation correlate with the members' subjective structure (Habermas, 1987: 156).

The correspondence between socially objectivated meaning and the meaning within the members can be seen in the systems operating in primitive societies. We can see this in their kinship structure and mythical consciousness structure. The kinship system

in tribal society consists of families arranged according to hereditary relations. One family consists of parents and children who live together. A family is formed through marriage. Marriage has the function of protecting children born so that their status can be identified socially. The kinship system also regulates anyone whom marital ties cannot bind. The limitations of the marriage system are related to mythical beliefs. According to Habermas, in this system, there is no categorical difference between society and nature (Habermas, 1987: 157–158).

The norms of the kinship system also describe the binding strength that comes from religious foundations. Members of a tribe are usually automatically members of a religious community. In tribal societies, the validity of social norms does not come from the state but from those who have prestige and influence in society. The process of social control is tied to religion and myths. This view of myth has made the boundaries between the objective world, the social world, and the subjective world blurry. Each dimension in the components of *Lebenswelt* cannot be separated categorically. The mythical view also does not make clear boundaries between interpretation and the reality being interpreted (Habermas, 1987: 159).

In tribal society, the existing system is firmly anchored in *Lebenswelt*. It is even a tendency that it is difficult to separate the relationship between systems and *Lebenswelt* because what exists in the systems is nothing but the institutionalization of *Lebenswelt*. Rules regarding marriage in tribal societies are a reflection of mythical beliefs. This fact confirms that the system that takes place in tribal society is always very strongly connected to *Lebenswelt*. This feature becomes the basic character of the relationship between the system and *Lebenswelt* in tribal society.

Then, collaboration within communities becomes a necessity because they cannot fulfill their own needs. In cooperation, there is an exchange in which a group specifies itself in a particular function. Through social cooperation, complexity develops, including those related to the kinship system. The exchange of marriageable women

with outside groups often occurs as cooperation occurs. In collaborative practice, there are two dimensions in which action systems adapt to new functions' demands. The two dimensions are power relations and exchange relations (Habermas, 1987: 160–161). The complexity of the two dimensions continues to grow and evolve. The power dimension evolves into the state, and the dimension of exchange relations becomes the market.

Habermas points out mechanisms that characterize the process of social evolution from a hereditary system to a state system and from the exchange of women through marriage to a market system mediated by money. In premodern society, exchange relations were based on segmentary differentiation, where they exchanged women through intermarriage. Then, the exchange mechanism is carried out through a medium called money. Meanwhile, in the dimension of power, premodern society, which was based on the stratification system in heredity, evolved into a modern society based on the administrative system in state organizations (Habermas, 1987: 165–166).

Table 2. Evolution of Mechanism of System Differentiation

	Premodern	**Modern**
Exchange Relation	Intermarriage	Money
Power Relation	Heredity	State Organization

Premodern society is relatively homogenous and differentiation as well as division of labor are still simple as opposed to its modern counterpart. Meanwhile, in modern society, the functions and division of labor have begun to become complex. The transition from premodern to modern mechanisms always brings changes at the institutional level, and there are different levels of system differentiation at each stage. In tribal and traditional societies, system differentiation is still connected with *Lebenswelt*. Meanwhile, in modern society, systems interconnection has started to separate from the normative context. The social system in modern

society disconnects from the horizon of *Lebenswelt* and is separated from the intuitive knowledge that takes place in daily communication practices.

The more complex a social system is, the more *Lebenswelt* will be marginalized into sub-systems. However, according to Habermas, this fact should not be understood that changes in *Lebenswelt* depend on the system's complexity. We must understand it in reverse, namely that the system's complexity must be anchored in the differentiation that exists in *Lebenswelt*. This understanding is based on the logic of communicative rationalization that he developed. Thus, any newly emerging mechanisms of system differentiation must be institutionalized in family status, governmental authority, or property laws. The developing system is always anchored in *Lebenswelt* so that morality and law will always be connected (Habermas, 1987: 173).

Habermas then shows how the relationship between morality and law is ultimately separated in modern society. Based on Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development, as Habermas referred to Kohlberg's *Essays on Moral Development* published in 1981 and 1984, there are three stages: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. At the pre-conventional stage, the way society evaluates will be imposed on the consequences of actions. At the conventional stage, society has built norms, and judgment will be directed at what is considered a violation of these norms. Meanwhile, in the post-conventional stage, norms have become principles (Habermas, 1987: 174).

Habermas said that according to Klaus Eder in *Die Entstehung staatlich organisierter Gesellschaften*, 1976, these three stages are symmetrical with the developmental stages of tribal, traditional, and modern society. The morality in tribal society is magical ethics, and the type of law is the revealed law. While the morality that exists in traditional society is ethics of the law, and the type of law that exists in this society is traditional law. Finally, morality in modern society is the morality of conviction and responsibility, and the type of law is formal law. According to Habermas, the

relationship between morality and law in tribal society is inseparable. There is no dividing line between the type of law based on revelation and the magical morality developed in tribal society. Meanwhile, the dotted line limits the relationship between morality and law in traditional society. There is a boundary between the two that is not clearly visible. Finally, we see in modern society where law and morality are separated (Habermas, 1987: 174). In modern society, the law is no longer connected with morality in society.

Table 3. Stages in the Development of Law

Stages of Moral Consciousness	Basic Socio-Cognitive Concept	Ethics	Types of Law
Preconventional	Particular expectations of behavior	Magical ethics	*Revealed Law*
Conventional	Norm	Ethics of the law	Traditional law
Postconventional	Principle	Ethics of Conviction and Responsibility	Formal law

Because the law is no longer connected with morality, modern society places morality only as a personal system that is believed individually. It could be a control system for individual behavior, but the scope is limited to the individual level. While the role of law then becomes an external force that forces everyone to obey. If there is a violation of the law, the state will impose sanctions on individuals who violate it. Thus, the law becomes an institution that is separate from ethical motivations in modern society. Habermas asserts that social integration will not occur in social evolution unless the legal institutions have been connected with the existing moral consciousness (Habermas, 1987: 174–175).

4. Pathology of Modernity

Habermas cited Talcott Parsons's concept of value generalization in social life. The term means the tendency to make values publicly institutionalized. In tribal communities, this process is carried out by those who have prestige and influence. In general, they are persons that are constituted on the basis of heredity. They transfer their values to society, and society accepts them because of their prestige and influence. In contrast, the process of value generalization in modern society is not carried out by those with prestige and influence but by those who are mandated to hold legal authority. In modern society, the political order will be considered legitimate as long as citizens obey the law (Habermas, 1987: 179–180).

According to Habermas, the obedience of modern society to those entrusted with legal authority is less personalistic than the obedience of tribal society to those who have prestige and influence. The obedience of tribal society to those who have prestige and influence has a more emotional attachment to the person than modern society's obedience to those entrusted with legal authority. In modern society, they pay less attention to personal ties. The actions of modern society are determined by motives to obey the law.

Meanwhile, in modern bourgeois society, they demand a higher level of value generalization. There is a strict separation between morality and law. Modern society applies general principles of morality in the private sphere and complies with the law in the public sphere. Thus, according to Habermas, if the motives of tribal society are controlled by values built by those who have prestige and influence, then the motives of modern society are guided by abstract obedience to the law. The higher the generalization level of values is, the more separate communicative actions will be from traditional and concrete normative behavior patterns (Habermas, 1987: 180).

The separation shifts the weight of social integration from ties based on religion to processes of consensus formation in language.

The coordinative action in this phase takes place in the mechanism of achieving understanding. In this sense, value generalization is carried out to reach an agreement in the communicative action. The agreement is no longer based on the particular morality that exists in society. Habermas calls the process in modern society the rationalization of *Lebenswelt* (Habermas, 1987: 180). He describes rationalization as the expansion of sub-systems-specific types of purposive rational of action, and the functions within them become increasingly complex (Berger, 1991: 168–169).

On the other hand, the absence of moral values in communicative actions also creates a separation between actions oriented toward success and actions oriented toward mutual understanding. This polarization marks the separation of system integration from social integration. In system integration, we only focus on how the built system can run, while in social integration, we pay attention to how inter-community relations are maintained and strengthened. The separation of social integration and systems integration means a differentiation between two types of coordinating actions. One comes through consensus, while the other comes through the interconnection of action functions (Habermas, 1987: 186).

Problems arise when system integration intervenes in the basic forms of social integration. The communication structure in *Lebenswelt* is used as an instrument for the interests in system integration. Thus there is structural violence in *Lebenswelt*, namely that there are systemic boundaries in the process of communication that takes place in *Lebenswelt* (Habermas, 1987: 187). The integration in the social world is increasingly driven by the existing sub-systems in the market (money) and state power. In a sub-system guided by money, the system's mechanism will raise its law, namely a social structure that is free of norms. Thus, it is separated from *Lebenswelt* (Habermas, 1987: 185).

The pathology in modern society is not because of the process of rationalization of *Lebenswelt* but because the system itself has been or is being increasingly driven by two sub-systems, namely market

rationality (money) and administrative rationality (state). Not only that, the pathology of modern society also occurs because there has been a process of impoverishment of culture which threatens *Lebenswelt* where its substance has been devalued. This condition occurs because of the separation between the elitist 'expert-cultures' and the culture of everyday life. Max Weber called this condition loss of meaning (Berger, 1991: 169). In this condition, the experts who build the system do not accommodate the world lived by the grassroots community. The system they make is no longer connected with the values that exist at the grassroots. It is this disconnection that gives birth to pathology.

5. The Position of Religion in Public Life

Habermas' ideas about *Lebenswelt* and system and his analysis of modern society can be an inspiring framework for understanding culture, society, and the law. People are born together within *Lebenswelt*, which contains meaning and value. From Habermas, we get an important insight that the system and *Lebenswelt* must always be connected so that the people do not lose their value orientation. Then we ask how we build a system or social order in which the society has various value orientations. It is a crucial question concerning religion and public law in plural societies. How do we place religion in public life within Habermas' framework of *Lebenswelt* and system?

Through discourse theory, Habermas offers a concrete and practical way to answer this question. In his view, a statement or action is rational if the reasons can be explained or acknowledged intersubjectively (Hardiman, 2009: 43). Our communication in *Lebenswelt* generally proceeds naively. The content is taken for granted through family and community. However, the values in *Lebenswelt* are not without criticism. Some members of society may ask questions about the values in *Lebenswelt*. If this happens, it means that we have started deliberating the contents of *Lebenswelt*. In discourse, *Lebenswelt* has indeed lost its naiveness by making it

more reflective. It has changed from background knowledge (*Hintergrundwissen*) to foreground knowledge (*Vorddergrundwissen*) (Hardiman, 2009: 44). Instead of accepting the content of *Lebenswelt* naively, we must actively test its validity.

In other words, in discourse, all people with different *Lebenswelt* need to do public deliberation in making decisions. People can convey their views, but at the same time, others have the right to ask about the validity of that view. It is the essence of deliberative democracy. In making public law, citizens have the right to convey aspirations inspired by their beliefs, and others can test the validity. In Habermas' view, this model simultaneously has a control function in democracy (Hardiman, 2009: 128–129). Habermas sees that the basis of legal legitimacy comes from democratic processes (Habermas, 2010: 5).

In the context of the relationship between *Lebenswelt* and the system, Habermas tries to keep both connected with the mechanisms of discourse. The citizens from various *Lebenswelt* cannot simply presume to accept the naive views. These views can be inspirations and even aspirations, but all of these views must undergo public testing in discourse practices. Habermas provides an equal position for all citizens, including religious people, to make political decisions as long as they are also open to the principles in public deliberation.

Habermas understands the state and its constitution as the result of public deliberation. A constitution can be legitimate if it comes from the citizens. In making laws and constitutions, citizens, of course, have various views from their cultural backgrounds. They need to develop various procedures that are democratic and compatible with human rights while still rooting these views in the various views that exist in society. In this way, on the one hand, people have rationalized their way of making public laws, and on the other, they can still be connected to their *Lebenswelt*. In Habermas' view, a democratic law depends on legitimacy rooted in beliefs that have been tested in public deliberation (Kleden, 2010: 130–131).

People with diverse *Lebenswelt* must develop public deliberation in making public law. Habermas introduced the term post-secular society to describe a condition in which religion persists in modern times and is seen as an essential part of today. In a post-secular society, religious and non-religious people must talk, listen and learn from each other (Bahram, 2013; Habermas, 2006; Sunarko, 2010: 78). The open space for religion is not intended to return religion with its whole truth to be adopted in state law as it happened in the Middle Ages. The public deliberation model is more intended as the discourse that accommodates various views in society. However, in the deliberation, the opinions are not taken for granted, even if those aspirations are considered sacred by specific religious communities. All aspirations and inspirations from religion or non-religion must be treated equally, and their validity must be tested (Lafont, 2009: 128–129).

Therefore, in responding to the question about the position of religion in public life, Habermas does not offer a blockade to religions. He proposes a model that is more accommodating to various values in *Lebenswelt*, including religions (Habermas, 2010: 27–28). The practice of discourse opens up space for all values. However, all aspirations originating from people must go through rationalization and public deliberation. The blockade against religions can make the believers feel that they have lost their value orientation in carrying out the political consensus. Instead of causing people to feel disorientation and alienation, it would be better if they were invited to be involved in public deliberation. There, people can convey their views, and at the same time, they must listen to and learn from each other.

The participation of religious and non-religious citizens in making collective decisions is essential to reduce social exclusion. It can also avoid deprivation of *Lebenswelt* in new social systems. Making public law that does not involve various values will create serious gaps. They may experience alienation and lose meaning because they do not see the significance of the law within their *Lebenswelt*. This gap can cause difficulties in many forms, such as

radicalism and terrorism based on religion. This kind of gap can be reduced if the citizens are involved in making public law. An open discourse can reduce the gaps. The phenomena of loss of meaning, alienation, and pathology can be reduced.

Habermas' view regarding the position of religion in public life and in the process of making public law is more capable of answering the facts of a pluralistic society. His views are also critical and evaluative on secularism, considered an established model in the modern state. Habermas's model is more accommodating rather than blocking religious views. Therefore, what Habermas offers makes more sense when compared to John Rawls's political liberalism. As mentioned above, Rawls's views on *Political Liberalism* tend to be stricter in addressing the position of religion in public life and especially in the context of making public law. Habermas' views are also less lax than Charles Taylor's communitarian views. Habermas' views tend to moderate between Rawls' political liberalism and Taylor's communitarian (Sunaryo, 2021: 180–191).

In facing religious participation in public life, the most serious challenge is the way religious people communicate. Most religious people see their beliefs as sacred. Sometimes this way makes them close the space for public deliberation. This behavior is not compatible with the principles of Habermas' discourse. Because of this behavior, some experts have doubted Habermas' proposal (Boettcher, 2009; Yates, 2007). To answer this doubt, religious people must develop a more mature attitude to accept the reality of pluralism. The invitation to involve in public life is not intended as a return to the Medieval Age system. Their maturity must be proven in equal communication before or with other communities, religious or non-religious. The practice of public discourse presupposes an equal position to build a more just coexistence life.

According to us, Habermas' views about the position of religion in public life and public law-making are quite relevant and suitable for Indonesia. Attempts to maintain the relationship between *Lebenswelt* and the system, on the one hand, and *Lebenswelt*

rationalization process, on the other hand, are parallel efforts to maintain the orientation of meaning in society and encourage religious people to be more rational and critical. As a society that still adheres to religious values and at the same time aspires to a modern rule of law, Habermas' offer could be a good model. We need to continue to uphold the ideals of the nation's founders in developing Indonesia to become a modern state that is not based on one particular religion. At the same time, we also need to develop religious values and behaviors that are increasingly rational and critical.

CONCLUSION

From Habermas' concept of *Lebenswelt* and system, we can emphasize the importance of uncoupling so that society does not lose meaning or experience anomie. We can see this in his analysis of modern society which has been driven by two sub-systems, namely market rationality (money) and administrative rationality (state). He describes this condition as the pathology of modernity. The way out of this condition is the reconnection of the system to *Lebenswelt*. Of course, efforts to reconnect systems to *Lebenswelt* are not to drag modern society back into premodern. Reconnection is carried out by rationalizing *Lebenswelt* in public deliberation. Communications that take place must be more reflective rather than naive acceptance. In this way, people can involve in making new system while, at the same time, they remain rooted in their *Lebenswelt* more rationally.

In the context of the position of religion in public life, Habermas sees religion as an essential part of people's *Lebenswelt* that must be involved in making public law. Nevertheless, Habermas' thesis is not to make the model of the Middle Ages into modern times. This accommodative model requires a process of rationalization in public discourse. Through discourse, people can convey their views from the *Lebenswelt*, including religion. The views are not automatically accepted. However, they must undergo a process of rationalization in public deliberation. Views originating

from religious groups must be publicly tested. It is accepted as it is rational to be a public law. Habermas's offer can be a way to understand the relationship between religion and public spheres. On the one hand, he does not reject the involvement of religion in the public sphere, but on the other hand, he also demands religious people to be more mature and rational in public discourse.

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