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ISLAMIC POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

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Indonesia with a population of more than 90 percent Muslim is not an Islamic country, regardless an ongoing efforts among some Islamic leaders to implement Islamic shari'a (Islamic law) in people's everyday life. The political efforts of Islamic parties did not reach the maximum, as their vote achievements tended to be decreasing from around 43 percent in 1955 to 31.41 percent in 2014 election. Nevertheless, the idea to implement Shari'a is still alive, and some small Islamic organizations even voiced and fought for the establishment of an Islamic State. Moreover, radicalism also resurfaced, because not only is there supporters of Islamic State in the society but also their communication with Muslims in the Middle East is strengthened. The mainstream Islam in Indonesia, however, not only railed radicalism, but also rejected the ideas of the Islamic state. They are, instead, determined to make Indonesia as the country with the secular ideology, i.e. Pancasila, not Islam. This situation continues to heat up because in addition to the fact that the mainstream Sunni Islam is under attack from the Wahhabis they are also interfered with the presence of followers of Shi'ite who disturbed their ideology and practice of worship.

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INTRODUCTION

The desire of Muslims to establish Islamic State of Indonesia can be understood, given the fact that they constitute the majority, accounting up to more than 90 percent. Moreover Islam, as well as Hinduism and Buddhism religions had an impact on society and established them as a religious community. This is a result of a long process committed by Islamic preachers as well as politics surrounding the lives of Muslims. In addition to the fact that Indonesian Muslims have ever established kingdom of Islam in the early days of its presence in some of the region called Indonesia now, the long years of Dutch colonialism has made Islam used as a symbol of resistance and become a community identity that distinguishes them from the Dutch commonly called as the infidel exploiting the wealth of the Indonesian's land.

This long experience of Muslims eventually shaped them as a strong religious community, which has always turned to the source of their religion for anything in their lives. For Muslims, an Islamic life is a dream that should be pursued, which means that it should be the source and values of Islam enriching their life, including their political life. At the time of Indonesia's independence, Islamic political parties have been made as a good vehicle to convey their aspirations and to articulate their interests. Nevertheless, their ideals to apply Islamic law and especially to establish the Islamic state continues to decline, as seen from the unpopularity of Islamic parties in the presence of Indonesian society.

This article will discuss why the idea to implement Islamic shari'a (law) or mainly formalization of Islamic law did not get the support of the majority and the main stream of Indonesian Islam. How the idea of Islamic shari'a was rolling in Indonesian politics and was championed by Muslim politicians will be a focus of attention and discussion in this article.

1. The Return Of Islamic Politics

In the days before Indonesia's independence from Japanese occupation in 1945, the discussion about the ideology for the basis of the State was quite warm. Islamic circles in the so-called committee 9 wanted Islam to be placed as the ideological basis for the State, while the nationalists and especially non-Muslims rejected it. Although 8 out of 9 members of the committee were Muslim, the committee finally decided and chose Pancasila¹ as the state ideology, not Islam as proposed earlier. This decision showed that the Islamic leaders in the committee were more inclined to promote unity rather than imposing the will to make Islam the basis of the State. They realized well that the people to be formed in the region of Indonesia were plural in terms of their religions.

This fact demonstrates that on the one hand there is a desire of Islamic leaders to establish a state ideologically based on Islam. This means that Islam will be a source of law that governs all aspects of national life and of course also the life of society in general. Islam in this matter would be a reference - through formal political decision - for all regulations that will be enforced in the Indonesian State. On the other hand, the fact it also shows the extent of the tolerance of the founding fathers mostly Muslim by making the mutual interest of the nation above factional interests. In this respect their desire to implement Islam completely, including to make it as the basis of the State, must be set aside for the sake of unity as one nation among the existing various groups.

Nevertheless, with respect to the suggestion that the Indonesian people establish political parties, Islamic leaders then set up a political party with Islam as its base. In this case Islam was used as the party ideology that became a benchmark or a guiding principle in achieving the ideals of Islamic society that is prosperous or the so-called "baldatun thoyyibatun wa robbun Ghofur". Through several Islamic parties, the Islamic leaders who based their politics on the interests of Islam with the aim of "Izzul Islam wal Muslimins" (the glory of Islam and all Muslims) actually have some limited targets of struggle. In this case what they were doing was the efforts to apply Islamic shari'a (law) in society. They seemed to be absent from talking about the Islamic State, at least they put it and kept it in the mind and did not use it in their political discourse.

Masjumi was a big Islamic political party that took part in politics in the early years after independence until 1960 when it was dissolved by President Soekarno. Together with other Islamic parties, the Nahdlatul Ulama, this Islamic party fought and competed with other parties and strived to bring the Muslims as a political force of the nation. Especially for the Masjumi, the attempt to color the nation and the country with Islam had become their political agenda. Although both were to hold Islam as the ideology of the party, they turned out to have differences in practical political vision. Therefore, in many cases they also competed for profit and political victory. However, because the supporters and politicians of the Masjumi were derived from two different Islamic groups, which led to internal conflict, some of its exponent then established Nahdlatul Ulama² in 1952, a party that competed with Masjumi in the 1955 elections.

The views that were very Islamic centric were coloring Masjumi politics, while NU Party showed a rather nationalistic stance by directing the political interests of the nation at large. Competition and even conflicts often occurred between the two Islamic parties. They had different political thought and value resources made as their political grip. While Masjumi held strong Islamic thought and democratic socialism, NU party in this case always referred to Islam and Javanese traditionalism (Feith, 1970). Thus, although both were Islamic parties they had a different political agenda. In this case the politicians

¹ lit. means "The Five Principle", i.e. Believe in God, Just and Civilized humanity, the Unity of Indonesia, Democracy, Social Justice

² Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was a socio-religious organization when it was established in 1926. But in 1952, the ulama establishing the party changed it to political party named "Partai Nahdlatul Ulama".

of Masjumi derived from Islamic groups commonly called modernists, especially Muhammadiyah (see Noer, 1998) and Persis which were much affected by the Wahhabis, while the politicians of NU was wholly derived from the traditionalist Islamic groups.

In the 1955 election, the nationalist parties as a groups were stronger than the Islamic parties. Of the four major parties that existed, Masjumi and NU received national vote share of 20,92 and 18.41 percent respectively (Turmudi, 2006). Two nationalist parties with their political thought that was derived from Javanese traditionalism, i.e. the PNI and the Indonesian Communist Party, received a vote share of 22.32 and 16.36 percent respectively. When comparing overall strength of Islamic parties and that of nationalist parties, the whole Islamic parties only obtained a vote share of 43 percent. Despite often involved in conflict, both Masjumi and NU were standing as the parties fighting for the interests of Muslims in Indonesia without requiring an Islamic state

Suharto who rose to be president in 1966 seemed to position Islamic parties as the dangerous rival. In 1973, after he was successfully elected officially as a president with the support of Golkar that won absolutely the 1971 election, Suharto engineered to merge 10 political parties contesting in the election to just three political organizations. Four Islamic parties, including NU that obtained 18.41 percent vote share in the 1971 general election, were fused into the United Development Party, and five nationalist parties and non-Islamic parties were united to form the Indonesian Democratic Party. On the other hand, Golkar, Suharto's political machine remained standing as a political organization.

The 1977 general election showed that the Islamic party of PPP received about 29 percent vote share. This election that was full of cheating showed that Islamic party was the main rival party of Golkar, which not only competed to get higher vote but also provided resistance to fraud or injustice engineered by Golkar supporters. Suharto who felt alarmed by the strength of Islamic parties issued a policy of floating mass, where people at the grassroots were not allowed to play politics rather than just ones every five years, i.e during the elections. This policy clearly cut the PPP as an Islamic party from its supporters at the grassroots. Moreover, Suharto also later introduced a single ideology policy in 1984 in which all the organizations that existed in Indonesia might not use ideology other than Pancasila. This means that the Islamic party of PPP should replace its Islamic ideology with Pancasila, which means that the party was no longer an Islamic party. Suharto effort was successful, and PPP party in the 1997 election only gained a very insignificant vote share.

The emergence of Islamic political power in the 1999 elections signaled a change or shift in the map of Indonesian political power. What is certain is that Islam by that time looked like a considerable political force. This is evidenced from the influence of Islamic circles to power and especially by the development of Islamic societies themselves. In the power stage, three high state positions have been filled by devout Muslims: the position of President was filled by Abdurrahman Wahid and the Head of People's Consultative Assembly was occupied by Amien Rais and the House of Representatives was led by Akbar Tanjung. With this fact, the influence of Islam was attached to the first two of the above prominent politicians - albeit with different directions - as both were former leaders of the two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia.

This Indonesian politics seemed to resemble a period of liberal democracy marked by ideological rivalry. Clifford Geertz (1965) and Herbeith Feith (1970) describe it well, where maps of political support from the Indonesian people for the existing political parties was based on their ideological orientation popularly called "aliran" (lit. stream). The parties formed by the time preceding the 1999 general election were still depicting a variety of 'aliran' that existed in the 1950s with a few changes. The parties had a relationship genealogically with the three major parties that existed at the time of liberal democracy. PDI-P, for example, inherited the tradition of PNI, while PKB was to convey NU's politics and PBB was the incarnation of Masjumi. Hence, the political polarization that occurred preceding the 1999 election was similar to what happened in the 1950s in which several competing ideologies had influenced people's political orientation. What is not there was a party with communist ideology. So, it was Islam and Javanese traditionalism that had a major effect on Indonesia's political polarization in which the former very clearly had influenced the political orientation of devout Muslims, and hence it had become a source of influence on the parties smelled of Islam. The Java traditionalism, on the other side, had influenced on the secular nationalists. In other words, two major groups were

dealing to fight, namely those who were affected by Islam and those who were influenced by nationalism based on Java traditionalism.

Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that regardless of the similarities among the Islamic parties to use Islam as a factor or symbols that could attract the Islamic community to give supports, the existing Islamic group had politically already been polarized into various streams. This also answered the question that the emergence of political Islam does not necessarily expressed the real strength of Muslim society, because basically the appearance of specific Islamic groups in the power stage is not supported by other Islamic groups, or at least it can be said that the political power of Islam spreads and is held by certain groups.

2. Islamic vs Nationalistic Parties

Having received less serving to participate in politics for 32 years of Suharto's rule, Muslims make a political comeback during the "reforms" following the fall of Suharto from the presidency. The Islamic leaders were then busy to establish Islamic political party, as part of the democratic euphoria, so that 18 Islamic political parties out of 48 parties took part in the 1999 elections. The presence of these political parties indeed marked a major change in Indonesian politics, because during his rule, Suharto only allowed 3 political organizations. In the 1999 elections, considered the most democratic election, the Islamic political party leader had been determined to get seats in parliament, where they aroused people's emotions and assumed their political struggle as part of the struggle of Islam.

Islamic parties attempted to gain public support by burning their emotions and claimed themselves as the party of containing Muslims. In this case each of the Islamist party claimed to be the most to fight for the ideals of Muslims. Moreover, such a party's claim was expressed in a way to discredit the Islamic community regarded a somewhat less Islamic in orientation. The NU's party of PKB, for example, was often under attack from Islamic groups from another party, resulting from its claims as not an Islamic party. Therefore, disputes or veiled conflicts between Islamic party leaders occurred, coloring mass media. This conflict at once proclaimed the differences between Islamic parties on both their political goals as well as their interpretation of Islamic sources that they used in politics.

During the campaign period, Islamic parties received support in some urban areas. United Development Party (PPP), for example, still received some sympathy from devout Muslims, although there was a decrease in support for some of them even to leave the party by supporting another new Islamic party. The same held true with the PBB (Crescent Star Party) and PK (Justice Party), which received enough support from urban Muslims, despite their disappointing acquisition in the elections. However, in comparison with the PDI-P's, the Islamic party 's attainment was far from significant. The PDI-P received tremendous support and became the most popular party during the campaign. Megawati, as a daughter of Sukarno - the Indonesia's first president - who became the leader of the PDI-P had attracted the less devout Muslims and the non-Muslims. Megawati always received great support wherever she campaigned. The streets in Jakarta were filled with her sympathizers. Of the three rounds during the 1999 election campaign, the streets of Jakarta, has been transformed into a sea of red supporters of PDI-P.

Public support for the PDI-P during the campaign constituted a threat for the efforts to restore Islamic politics in the Indonesian political stage. Encouraged by that concern, some Muslim leaders tried to make political maneuvers in order to prop up the pace of the popularity of the PDI-P. Five days before the election, some Islamic leaders were digging that PDI-P candidates were dominated by the non-Muslims. The Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), for example, issued a 'taushiah' (religious advice) for Muslims to support only candidates who were Muslims. The obligation to support Muslim candidates according to this 'taushiah' constituted religious demands. This MUI 'taushiah' spread to various areas, which made the PDI-P leaders furious. In some areas, the activists of PDI-P were beating some mosque activists, resulting in the feuds with devout Muslims (supporters of Islamic parties).

From the above description it can be said that the Islamic leaders who were members of the Islamic parties were very worried over public support for the PDI-P. This concern stemmed from their lack of desire to be led by those who paid less attention to Islam. The PDI-P victory in the elections was regarded as an opportunity to lead the nation. According to leaders of devout Muslim, the PDI-P leadership would

not be different from Suharto's leadership for 32 years. The PDI-P, when in power, would not notice and would even marginalize the devout Muslims. They would never have the attention to Islam. This might happen because most of the PDI-P cadres were nominal or less devout Muslims and many of them were non-Muslims.

During the New Order government, the leaders of the PDI-P (when it was still intact named PDI) never fought for Islam. In fact, they are considered against what was championed by Islamic circles in the PPP. Therefore, according to Ahmad Tirtosudiro (a figure of Indonesian Muslim Intellectual or ICMI), the victory of the PDI-P would be very detrimental to Muslims because this party would influence the legal considerations (Islam) which has been filed by Muslims and affect the daily life of the Islamic community, including the fields of religion and culture (Media Indonesia, 06/16/99). To confront PDI P in this 1999 election, Ahmad Tirtosudiro advocated to raise the coalition of Islamic parties and formed the opposition.

Another concern of the Islamic circle was that the PDI-P was the reincarnation of PNI which most of its followers was the "abangan" or nominal Muslim (see Geertz and Feith, 1970). PNI was a nationalist front having different ends and means even was in conflict with Islamic parties. This concern has prompted Muslim leaders to forge a joint force. They continued effort of deterrence against PDI-P after the party won the competition in the 1999 elections. They affected public in order that Megawati (the presidential candidate of the PDI-P) was not elected by the People's Consultative Assembly to become the president. In few weeks preceding the presidential elections they raised issues concerning Islam's advice requesting that the state be not led by a women. This issue is emphasized and underlined by the MUI through its "tausiah". The same advice was delivered by the PPP as an Islamic party.

Because until the presidential nomination period there was no candidates from the Islamic party nominated for President, some Muslim leaders then turned to Habibie. Nominating Habibie who was supported by Golkar was the way to tackle Megawati's presidency. Although Habibie was the heir of the New Order that was corrupt and full of violence, he was still considered good enough since Habibie was ICMI figures. They supported Habibie on behalf of Islam, and some of the supporting groups were ready to wage jihad to push Habibie become president.

The last kick played by the Islamic parties to scuttle Megawati was by making a front called "central Axis". This front proposed another cadre for president different from that proposed by PDI-P and that nominated by Golkar. Through this front almost all Islamic parties supported the filing of Abdurrahman Wahid as a presidential candidate. This political action was the climax of competition between Islamic and nationalists parties. The front had united its members to face two candidates from among the nationalists who had great support because they won a lot of seats in Parliament. Efforts of Islamic circles finally succeeded after Abdurrahman Wahid defeated Megawati. Wahid victory over Megawati was greatly helped by the inclusion of the Golkar supports into 'central axis' after Habibie was to resign.

With the emergence of Abdurrahman Wahid as the president of Indonesia, the political competition seemed to be won by the Islamists. This victory gave a great hope that what he fought for, or to be achieved by political Islam will be realized. In addition, this victory was also simultaneously soothing Islamic circles, so for a while they get rid of their narrow political interests. The question is whether Abdurrahman Wahid would provide a great space for groups of Islamic parties to realize their political ideals? As was known although he was a scholar, he was also a democrat who paid attention to minority group among people of Indonesia. He explicitly included political direction through the establishment of PKB claiming the party as not Islamic. It seemed that the victory attained by devout Moslems did not leave a big way for the parties to realize their Islamic ideals, because on the other side Abdurrahman Wahid was forced to step down by his colleagues derived from Islamic parties that previously gave him a great support and choose him as the President of the Republic of Indonesia

3. A Voice of Muslims

Political reforms have indeed changed the political map and Islam in general in Indonesia. A wide variety of Islamic organizations emerged today even that trans-national in character. There are organizations that clearly have the same name with that in the Middle East, so that these organizations in Indonesia give an impression as the former's branch. There is also an organization that only its spirit

and ideals similar to that in the Middle East, while the name is different. What appears is that the reforms seemed to give room for any political ideas to compete. The Islamist idea that was prohibited during Suharto's reign is now emerging and become the movements among the fundamentalists. They no longer talk about the application of Islamic law or to formalize it by which Islam became the source of law or even the constitution of Indonesia, but carry the idea of an Islamic state or Islamic caliphate.

Of the many Islamic parties that exist in Indonesian politics, only PPP (United Development Party) that consistently makes Islam as its ideological base. Thus, this party is the Islamic party that seems to have right to claim as amplifying the voices of Muslims. What was surprising is what was done by a party regarded very Islamic. The party concerned is the Prosperous Justice Party that also changed its identity into an open party. Such open parties not only don't make Islam as their basis but also have recruited people of other faiths as a leading exponent of the party. In the absence of differences between the Islamic and the more nationalist party, then the program or the promises expressed in the election campaign by the former is no longer with the aim of "Izzul Islam wal Muslims". This change has led some supporters fled and became supporters of other parties that in terms of their program could be more interesting. That's why the 2009 election showed that the attainment of Islamic parties decreased significantly compared to that in previous elections. PKB as a big party of devout Muslims that might receive support from member of NU only obtained 4.9 percent share of the votes.

Another thing that causes a decrease in supporters' sympathy is the behavior of the party's elites who are no longer guided by ethics or values of Islam. Corruption is the most common morality decline that hit the members of Parliament of the Islamic parties. Although the ulema as the reference of the religious organizations assert about the illicit nature of corruption, the members of Parliament who become politicians of Islamic parties were still involved in corruption. The former Chairman of the Prosperous Justice Party has even been sentenced for corruption. Islamic community at the grassroots level is still expecting the presence of the party leaders with high morality. They squawk "How's the party leader willing to fight for Islam if honesty and integrity are no longer at their disposal". Therefore, the idea of the struggle for Islam is missing in the discourse of political parties, while those still voicing it are just small parties whose sounds are not meaningful. United Development Party, which used to be the political mouthpieces of the Muslims have been hit by conflict throughout its life so that the party has a lack of support. In the post-2014 elections, the party also broke into two leaderships, so that its elites no longer think about the struggle for the Muslims, because they are only thinking of their political interests.

In the midst of the weakening of Islamic political parties, the idea of the application of shari'a and even the establishment of an Islamic state is in fact voiced by Islamic organizations. They have also recently been born at the time of political reforms following the step down of President Suharto. Additionally, these organizations are also part of the trans-Islamic organizations or local organization inspired by international Islamic political movement. Two Islamic organizations are Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia. Majelis Mujahidin is local because it is not a part of the international organization. Nevertheless, the main exponent of this organization is involved in activities at the international level. The founder of this organization is Abubakar Ba'asyir, a figure involved in the formation of Jemaah Islamiyah, Southeast Asian chapter. Both of these organizations even envision the establishment of the Caliphate Islamiyya, which is a form of Caliphate State covering a wider area and is not limited to the territory of Indonesia. Perhaps what they hoped was the establishment of an Islamic empire similar to the Caliphate of the Ottoman Empire, which covered the entire Middle East region. But because they move in political discourse and not included in practical politics, where their ideas can be debated in a political official in parliament, these ideas lack the strength as well as support from the community. Besides Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia is not a political party or unwilling to establish a political party, its leaders are somewhat anti-democracy or do not trust democracy, and maybe they did not participate in the elections in Indonesia.

The poor acceptance of the idea of Islamic State and not to mention the Islamic caliphate is the fact that the mainstream of Indonesian Muslims, as represented by Nahdlatul Ulama, which is currently the largest socio-religious organization, do not want to form an Islamic State. NU has determined that Indonesia is not a religious state. As it has been decided by the founding fathers of Indonesia, in which NU leader was a member of the commission 9 deciding the state ideology, the state ideology is

Pancasila. NU has reaffirmed the position of Pancasila as the basis for the State on its congress in Situbondo, East Java in 1984.

Apart from the provision of mainstream Indonesian Muslims who chose Indonesia as a democratic nationalistic country, some small circles persisted in their desire to establish an Islamic state. Because the official political channels no longer provide a place for discourse and indeed no party are considering it, they use other means that later plunged in radicalism (see Turmudi, 2006). Although it is very political, such a movement did not have the basic foundation of socially acceptable to the Indonesian. According to them the State and the Indonesian government did not hinder anything to do with Muslim religious practices. Even with the development of Islam in Indonesia, the state have now approved many institutions established for the Muslim interests. There are now Islamic banks and Islamic religious courts, though with a limited scope of work.

Nevertheless, recent developments show that with the coming of trans-national organizations, the spirit of Islamism is consistently alive. The organization prohibited by the government a long time ago is revived and has moved people to work with the idea of Islamic state. The NII front man (Indonesian Islamic State) is now entering the campuses, so as to create a cadre of young Muslims who are not only fanatic in Islam but also obsessed with the idea of the Islamic state. They oppose the current government tacitly assuming the Indonesian government as infidels. The same was done to other Muslim communities outside them. They consider that the right people in obeying Islam are those who have idea to establish an Islamic state.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Political Islam in Indonesia is often misunderstood by associating it with the strict application of Islamic law and even being linked with efforts to establish the so-called Islamic state. Indonesia's history noted that some communities in Indonesia are desirous that the State put on the laws of Islam. In this case Islam was formalized and served as a source for the laws of the State. Moreover, there are also members of the public who want an Islamic State, in which Islam is not only used as a source of laws but also the State is expected to be formally Islamic.

Those desires actually are reasonable and understandable, considering that Islam had taken root in society. In addition, Islam is a religion of the majority, accounting for about 95 percent of the entire population of Indonesia. Nonetheless, political Islam is not dominant, because it is the secular thoughts that dominates and directs the State of Indonesia. The effort to formalize Islamic Shari'a through a political decision was never accepted by politicians although they are Muslims. So, the desire to establish an Islamic State is even just a dream of a small fraction of Indonesian Muslims.

In the history of the Indonesian people do once stood Islamic empire, and even the introduction of Islam to the community is initiated by the presence of the Islamic kingdom. Although culturally Islam is rooted in society, its political strength is missing or removed in the historical process that gave birth to Indonesia. The presence of the Dutch for 350 years as a colonial ruler in the region called Indonesia has contributed to the weakness of political Islam in the future. Dutch with all his rigidity has managed to create indigenious elites secular because Islam has evolved in discrete areas as a result of suppression by the Dutch during its colonial occupation.

The awakening of the people of Indonesia in the 20th century, therefore, was the result of the collective consciousness of its various elements. During the period of this resurgence, competition between the elites of Islam and those who tend to be secular was inevitable. Even with modern education they have obtained, the elite seemed to be more dominant than those of Islamic oriented. The secular elites were those succeeding education in the Netherlands, while Islamic elites were those graduates of Islamic schools traditionally devoted to learning Islam. The Islamic elites at the end of Dutch colonial periods remained more suspected because during that time they often put up a fight in which Islam has been used as a symbol.

It must be recognized that the Islamic elites were eager to make Islam as the foundation of the State. At least that's what they could do on the eve of Indonesia's independence. But the majority of the secular elites in the leadership of the youth movements who became the founding father of Indonesia has beat

the desires of most people. Of the nine members of the committee, that convened to formulate the basis of the State of Indonesia, only one person affiliated with non-Islam. But of the eight people who were Muslims only four who really wanted to make Islam the basis of the State. The failure of these people in making Islam as base of the state seemed to be based on their tolerance towards the non-Muslims, so that the committee 9 then decided to make Pancasila as the basis for the State of Indonesia, instead of Islam.

The decision to choose Pancasila as the foundation of this country is a momentum that then determines the position of Islam in the political life of the state of Indonesia. Although the Islamic politicians are trying to fight for Muslims interests, political support for them was not great. From the results of the elections considered the most democratic in 1955, the major Islamic parties had just obtained 43 percent vote share. In this case only devout Muslims supported for Islamic parties, while the majority of Indonesian Muslims is less Devout where the tendency to practice Islam is very minimal, especially in support of political Islam.

When political reforms were conducted in 1998, Islamic parties as had a great support in the elections held a year later. The transition from authoritarian to democratic rule has brought a new spirit among the Muslims to fight through politics. In the 1999 elections, Islamist parties emerged and gained support quite large, because the New Order government's party, Golkar, has dropped its prestige and even many politicians proposed it to be dissolved. The decline in the acquisition of Golkar as the party of the ruling secular authoritarian was resulted from the return of Muslims forced to vote for the party in the previous elections who are now voting for the Islamic parties. That is why the election seemed to bring back the ideological competition that characterized Indonesian politics in 1950s in the periods of liberal democracy.

But apparently that spirit lasted only briefly and only to accompany the democratic euphoria that characterizes the Indonesian people since in the next election the votes obtained by Islamic parties dropped significantly. The obtainment of a party from among the traditionalists for example, dropped continuously from 13 percent in 1999 elections to 4.9 percent in the election of 2009. Thus, compared with the acquisition of Islamic parties in the 1955 general election and at the same time public support for political Islam, Islamic party acquisition this times shows the lack of public support. This also shows that the mission of the struggle of political Islam lacks of support.

Indeed, there are many factors that cause it. The first factor is the passion of Islamic polities that is not developed by the Muslim elite. For example, the Islamic parties have been turned into open parties that means no longer Islamic. Currently, only one party that explicitly claims to be the party of Islam, namely the PPP. The party that is supposedly very Islamic, namely the PKS (the Just and Prosperious Party) has turned ideologically into an open party. With these changes some exponent of these parties come from other religions. In this case the parties are the same as any other secular parties. Secondly, the parties were established with different ideologies. There are some with Sunni tendency, but some others are leaning to Wahhabi. Differences in understanding their religion are clearly carried over into the "political Islam" which they fought.

The differences in the understanding of the religion have led to the emergence of conflict in society. Movements propaganda carried out by certain Islamic groups have responded by other groups. Because certain groups feel the most correct in understanding and implementing Islam, then to blame other groups became commonplace behavior. Later came the Shiite group that led to the conflict increasingly widespread among Muslims in Indonesia.

Political Islam championed over the years, especially by Islamic parties, actually limited to the Islamic sharia formalization efforts. In this case the shari'a would like to serve as a source of law and its implementation have the political strength. So far it never appeared formal political efforts that exceed it. But lately, with the advent of organizations with trans-national character, the voices that wish to establish the Islamic State has also been sounded loud. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia even wants to establish the Islamic caliphate, as heard in their propaganda. It's just sometimes a bit odd that their efforts were not accompanied or through the political terrain, as Hizbut Tahrir does not believe or even it reject democracy. They did not participate in the elections and did not want to establish political parties.

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