

REGIMENTED ISLAMOPHOBIA: ISLAM, STATE, AND GOVERNMENTALITY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This article discusses the arts of governing Islam in Indonesia, a majority Muslim country, which is neither secular nor Islamic. It tries to explain how the premise of governmentality is modelled into the state structure and politics. Rather than seeing Islamophobia as a cultural practice, the article argues that Islamophobia develops partly because of power relations between the ruler and the ruled, or as I call it “regimented Islamophobia”. It is the fear of “Islamic threats” – whether real or imagined – that is deemed as a potent challenge to regimes’ power and authority. While the notion of majority-minority relation remains essential to analyse the forms of Islamophobia, this article offers a new insight of how political regimes exercise “governmentality practices” or the arts of governing Islam and controlling Muslim aspirations. This practice of governmentality is a key strategy to pacify Islam during the colonial and post-colonial Indonesia. As far as Indonesian political history is concerned, this governmentality practice is old wine in a new bottle; it is the technique Dutch colonial government and the regimes following the Indonesian independence have exercised for subjugating Islam and controlling aspirations of its believers.

Keywords: Islam, Governmentality, Affective Governance, *Moderasi Beragama*.

A. Introduction

Islamophobia is a rapidly growing sentiment in the West and manifests through attitudes and behaviours of individuals as well as policies and practices of organisations and institutions. The Australian Psychological Society (APS) defines *phobia* as a feel of discomfort and anxiety. It is an extreme fear or dislike of a particular thing or situation, especially one that is not reasonable. At a sociological level, phobia may transform into ‘culture of fear’ (Tudor, 2008). Thus, in a simple sense, Islamophobia refers to the xenophobic perception towards Islam and Muslim societies. It is a feeling of fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims resulting in bias, discrimination, marginalisation towards and exclusion of Muslims from the social, political, and civic lives. Islamophobia suggests the existence of unreasonable fear of Islam and Muslims (Zimmerman, 2008).

Islamophobia is a global phenomenon (Morgan & Poynting, 2010), which flourishes in different contexts and collides with various forms of ideological practices. In Western countries, socio-economic and political factors, such as a violent image of Islam, threats of Islam to Western civilization, terrorism, to competition to winning scarce economic resources and the rising number of Muslim population in Western countries as well as the great influx of immigrants from Muslim countries, contribute to the rise of “feeling threatened” and fear of Islam and Muslim (Bleich, 2012). In Myanmar, where Buddhism is the dominant religious group, Islamophobia leads to discrimination towards Rohingya Muslims framed as the other “race” within Buddhist society (M. N. bin M. Osman, 2017). In the Muslim-majority state

Malaysia, the confluence of race and religion has resulted in increasing Islamophobic attitudes expressed against Malaysian Muslims (M. N. Osman, 2019). For Faisal Devji, the term Islamophobia was coined during the 1990s, referring neither to labour, as with anti-Black racism, nor capital, as with antisemitism, but a global arena without a politics of its own. Islamophobia has not supplanted its racist predecessors, but energised them in a context where nation states seem unable to display political mastery against non-state forces, whether environmental, economic or civilizational (Devji, 2020). It is a *long-durée* form of Western cultural racism rooted in the expansion of Western capitalism and colonialism (Ramón Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006). Islamophobia does not only exist in the labor market, education and global war against terror; it is indeed “the epistemological battleground about the definition of the priorities” (Ramón Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006, p. 11)”. In many Western countries, Islamophobia is a ‘phobia’ of multiculturalism and stems from the defense and resistance against the possible effects of multicultural contacts (Marranci, 2004).

However, the dominant studies on Islamophobia particularly focus on Muslim-minority contexts, such as in Western states and non-Muslim societies (Ciftci, 2012; Helbling, 2012). The relationship between the majority and minority groups, mainly in Western countries, is particularly maintained as a conducive environment for Islamophobia to flourish and, for many observers, Islamophobia would therefore be unlikely to develop within Muslim societies. Nevertheless, for sociologists Enes Bayrakh and Farid Hafez, Islamophobia is an ever-present phenomenon and could

grow in indifferent contexts, including within Muslim-majority societies. Widening the debates on Islamophobia within Muslim societies, a neglected issue within academia, Bayrakh and Hafez argue that Islamophobia should not only be analysed through the lens of majority-minority relationship, but also in terms of power relations, between the powerful and the powerless (Bayraklı & Hafez, 2019). Ramón Grosfoguel (2006, p. 3) further maintains that Islamophobia should be understood as an epiphenomenon accumulation of capital on a world-scale and is indeed a longstanding global cultural racism which is still alive in the world today.

This article, on the other hand, attempts to problematise the relation of Islam and state through the lens of Islamophobia in colonial and post-colonial Indonesia, where the majority of its population are Muslim. It partly contributes to the discussion on secularism in a country which is neither secular nor Islamic by looking at of how the state “puts into play different structures of ambition and fear” (Asad, 2003, p. 8). To do so, the article historically discusses various forms of Islamophobia and how power relations affect “threats of Islam”—whether real or imagined—in the largest Muslim country in the world. Importantly, the article also contributes to the discussion on the place of cultural identity in the global South. As Ramón Grosfoguel (2011, p. 14) indicates, studies on coloniality and post-coloniality emerge from the global North and mirrors European centrism. The global South develops its particular “colonial power matrix” as a result of different “colonial situations” (Grosfoguel, 2011, p. 14).

This article will look closely at the colonial and post-colonial Indonesian political history and poses questions of

how the fear of Islam has been negotiated through the state politics during colonial and post-colonial Indonesian regimes, what the impacts of the Dutch colonial presence to post-independence Indonesia are, and how regimes following the independence translate the fear of Islam into state politics. This article further argues that Islamophobia in a Muslim-majority society, i.e., in Indonesia, develops particularly because of constant negotiations among competing ideologies—between the secular state ideology and Islamic aspiration, the need to protect political stability and to deepen statehood loyalty and, at the same time, the centrality of Islam in the state-making in order to ensure and justify governability of Muslims. In Indonesian politics, although the Five Principles (Pancasila) reserves as the ideological bridge of the secular ideology and Islam, this middle-ground seems to overlook the emergence of what I call “regimented Islamophobia.” Regimented Islamophobia, as this article argues, stems from political regimes trying to harvest political supports from Muslims to control their aims and to avert unwanted interpretations of Islam and Muslims’ aspirations. To do so, political regimes exercise the so-called *governmentality* practices or the acts of governing Islam by promoting the ‘correct’ Islamic interpretations following certain procedures and conforming Muslims’ aspirations to the officially legitimate standard.

B. Governing Islam: Looking at Indonesia’s Past

In the mid-16th century, Muslim traders from Indian ocean world introduced Islam in Indonesian archipelago and, during the course of later centuries, major kingdoms in Java adopted Islam as the religion of the palace. The biggest

Javanese Islamic court was the 17th century Mataram sultanate with the political power reaching outside the island. In the 19th century, many courts in the western part of the archipelago, particularly on the islands of Java and Sumatra, approved Islam the official religion, whereas in the eastern part, the Dutch had successfully converted a significant number of the populations into Christianity. The conversion left unprecedented social changes within the society by fostering conflicts between the adherents of the local religion and the new one. In addition, Islam had to compete with Christianity, as the Dutch colonial government sponsored the massive expansion of Christianity challenging Muslim missionary activities. Furthermore, the Dutch colonial government perceived Islam as a perilous ideology spurring social unrest and several rebellions against its authority. The most well-known revolt against the Dutch colonial regime was the five-year Java war (1825-1830), led by the charismatic Muslim and Javanese prince Diponegoro (Carey, 2008). Also, at the end of the 19th century, the Sufi group (*tarekat*), Qadiriyya, waged a war against the Dutch government in Banten (Kartodirdjo, 1966). Outside Java, particularly in Aceh and other parts in Sumatra, similar cases emerged, where Islam fueled a revolutionary ideology against the Dutch (Dobbin, 1983).

Feeling threatened by Islam, the Dutch colonial government tried to prevent Islam-inspired revolts through the practice of governmentality. Rather than utilizing a confrontative response, the colonial government launched governmentality projects. Governmentality, as French philosopher Michel Foucault argues, is the art of government that is not limited to the official politics of the state alone, but

also incorporates a wide range of techniques of discipline and controlling objects (Foucault, 1991). The principle of governmentality, based on which the powerful controls the—in this case, Islamic—norms, discourses, and activities of the subjugated, justified the Dutch’s attempts to pacify Islam. The colonial government, as David Scoot (1995) argues, uses laws, rules, and other techniques to set condition “so that people, following only their own self-interest, will do as they ought.” It also, as Iza Hussin (2016, p. 37) argues, placed “a newly limited domain of Islamic law at the center of the politics of the colonial state”. The Dutch colonial government marginalised Islamic law by limiting it down into the domains of ritual, personal status, and family bureaucracy through the establishment of *priesterraden* (priest-courts, at the moment known as Islamic courts) in 1882 and *Kantoor voor Inlandsche zaken* (Department for Native Affairs) in 1899. The latter was responsible for supervising and controlling cultural activities of the colonial subjects, mainly Islamic norms and activities. The outstanding Dutch Arabicist and Islamologist Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) served as an *adviseur* of the department in 1899-1906. Mastering Arabic and Islamic literatures and maintaining vast contacts with “*Jawi*” Muslims living in Mecca (Laffan, 2003, p. 13), Hurgronje delivered advice to the colonial government to circumvent Islamic revolutionary groups and protect Muslim population from inflicting anti-colonial ideologies of Pan-Islamism (Benda, 1958a). The department, along with the Dutch consulate in Jidda, supervised and controlled the traffic of Muslim pilgrimage (*hajj*), which had been an important hub for the transmission of Islamic revolutionary ideologies to the East

Indies. The prolific author and *hadrami* scholar Uthman bin Yahya (1822-1914), later appointed as Hurgronje's assistant in the department, played a key role within the department's project to pacify the anti-Dutch sentiment among Muslims (Kaptein, 2014). In so doing, Uthman condemned the practice of *tarekat* and issued legal opinions (*fatwâ*) in favour of the Dutch colonial government. Despite the fact that he participated in the formation of the anti-Dutch Muslim organization Sarekat Islam (established in 1905 as Sarekat Dagang Islam/SDI and later named Sarekat Islam/SI or Islamic Union in 1906), Uthman installed a pacified form of Islam within the organisation and condemned other leaders of SI who conversed a revolutionary ideology against the Dutch, such as the most influential leader of SI Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto (1882-1934).

Although Dutch's governmentality method failed to curb Islamic-inspired revolts in many parts of Indonesia, the new Japanese colonial power during the 1940s maintained governmentality as a way to control Muslim subjects. During the Japanese occupation (1942-1945), the new colonial power further exercised governmentality techniques, but with different aims. In contrast to the Dutch, instead of inciting the fear of Islam, Japan glorified the spirit of Islamic revolts through invoking the doctrine of holy war under the banner of *jihad* against the colonial Dutch. Japan completely controlled the Islamic organisation Majelis Islam A'la Indonesia/MIAI (the Greater Islamic Council of Indonesia), and trained Muslim militia for wars against the Dutch (Nieuwenhuijze, 1958, pp. 147-157). The colonial Japan translated the *jihad* doctrine as an alliance with the Japanese soldiers in wars

against the Dutch -or to revolt against the European colonial power- for the promise of “*Kemakmuran Bersama Asia Timur Raya* (Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere)” under the empire of Japan (Aziz, 1963, p. 200). During the Japanese occupation, Islamic mobilisation through joint forces with the Japanese in the 1940s Southeast Asian Pacific War created a reversed political episode, in which the spirit of Islamic revolution resurfaced, in contrast with the decline of Islam under the Dutch colonial government. Moreover, the slogan “*Bantoean Japan kepada Islam* (a Japan benevolent to Islam)” as an ambiguous Indonesian sentiment during the Japanese occupation initiated a number of policies facilitating the adoption of Islam into Japanese colonial bureaucracy and transferred informal Muslim leaders into significant positions within the new colonial structure (Kobayashi, 2010). These initiatives reflected the political attempts of Japan to attain Muslim support to win the Pacific War while Muslim leaders, on the other hand, saw Japanese policies as a way to expand their influence (Benda, 1958b, p. 110).

In the eve of Indonesia’s independence in 1945, the fear of Islam -and secularism- particularly appeared through two ideological factions within the circle of Indonesian leaders, i.e., the secular-nationalists and the Islamists. While the former particularly perceived Islam as a potent threat for the unity of the future independent country and begged for a secular state, the latter demanded a political favouritism for the Muslim majority in Indonesia through the adoption of Islamic law within the state’s constitution, if not the establishment of an Islamic state (Ichwan, 2011a). The Islamists importantly perceived the nationalists’ agenda as a threat for Indonesian Muslims to

practice their religion. The division between the two culminated at the eve of the Indonesian independence. On 22 June 1945, Panitia Sembilan, the nine leading Indonesian leaders, worked in concert to draft the future state constitution through Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia/PPKI, a special committee for the preparation of Indonesian independence established by the Japan. The committee successfully agreed on the second draft of Pancasila, or well-known as Piagam Jakarta, of which the first principle writes “*Ketuhanan yang maha Esa dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariah Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*” (belief in one God with the obligation to abide by Islamic law for adherents of Islam). For the Islamist faction, the seven words *dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariah Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya* formed as an ideological promise to run the Muslim-majority country based on Islamic law, but the other faction sees otherwise: it is a threat to the unity of the pluralistic Indonesians (Jackson, 1980, p. 9). Nevertheless, on 18 August 1945, following the objection of non-Muslim political leaders, mainly the Christians, towards the formulation of the state ideology, the PPKI agreed to omit the Piagam Jakarta formula – ‘the obligation to abide by Islamic law for adherents of Islam’ – from the first principle of Pancasila.

The revision later generated disappointments of the small fraction within Muslim groups who felt that Islam has come under the threat of secularism. President Soekarno was also deemed as antagonistic to Islam for favouring secularism. The friction particularly culminated when the military leader Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo (1905-1962) refused the accord and, together with his Muslim militia, initiated the revolts against the new republic. As with the first Indonesian

president Soekarno, Kartosuwirjo was the private secretary of Hadji Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, the leader of the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia/PSII (Indonesian Islamic Sarekat Party). But unlike Soekarno, who justified the ideological fusion between Islam and nationalism, Kartosuwirjo saw Islam and nationalism mutually exclusive ideologies. He grew to prefer “Islamic favouritism” and struggled to establish al-Qur’an and the *sunna* (the Prophet’s tradition) as the constitution and to implement Islamic law as a national law of the new republic. In early 1948, as a response to the withdrawal of Siliwangi division of the Indonesian army from West Java in accordance to the Renville Agreement with the Dutch, Kartosuwirjo led his Hizbullah, a Muslim military unit, and continued his guerrilla war against the Dutch (Bruinessen, 2002; McVey, 1971, p. 138). In March 1948, the unit transformed into Tentara Islam Indonesia/TII (the Islamic Army of Indonesia) and Kartosuwirjo served as its general (Nieuwenhuijze, 1958, p. 168; van Dijk, 1981). Proclaiming Darul Islam/DI (the Indonesian Islamic State) on 7 August 1949 under his leadership, Kartosuwirjo dismissed the Republic of Indonesia under Soekarno (Boland, 1971, p. 57). On 22 October 1950, Kartosuwirjo demanded President Soekarno to abandon both communism and nationalism, declaring al-Qur’an and the *sunna* as the constitution of the Indonesian Islamic State. In the 1950s, Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam expanded widely across the archipelago. In South Sulawesi, Abdul Qahhar Mudzakkar (1920-1965) who joined Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam in 1950 led the rebellion against the republic under Soekarno. On 14 May 1963, Qahhar proclaimed the independence of Republik Persatuan Islam Indonesia/RPII (Islamic Federated Republic

of Indonesia) with its centre in South Sulawesi and installed himself the “caliph” (Mudzakkar, 1960; Tilhami, 1984, p. 58). In Aceh, an active military officer as well as the leader of Persatuan Ulama-ulama Seluruh Aceh/PUSA (the Union of All Acehese Ulama) Daud Beureuh joined Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam on 20 September 1953 on the twin premises: preventing Aceh’s absorption into the province of North Sumatra and the failure of the republic to implement Islamic law.

Soekarno’s government successfully pacified Darul Islam in Java by capturing its leader, Kartosuwirjo, in June 1962. Kartosuwirjo was sentenced to death and executed three months later. On 3 February 1965, the government killed the caliph of Darul Islam in South Sulawesi Qahhar Mudzakkar in Lasolo (Gonggong, 2004, p. 339). Likewise, Daud Beureuh’s movement was finally brought to an end in 1962 through negotiations between the central government and Aceh rebel forces. As a result, Aceh was granted the status *daerah istimewa* (special region) and the central government promised a broad autonomy in the fields of religion, custom (*adat*) and education. However, Daud Baureuh’s rebellion then inspired Hassan Tiro, who declared Aceh’s independence in 1976 (Reid, 2005, p. 341). Although the Indonesian government successfully overpowered these Islamic rebellions, the tension between the Islamic and secular-nationalist factions still prevailed as some attacks by Islamist groups continued, particularly during the 1970 and the 1980s.

Unlike Darul Islam that launched guerrilla wars against the republic, the Islamic party Partai Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia/Masyumi (Council of Indonesian Muslim Association) was the champion for Islamic opposition against

Soekarno. It struggled for the establishment of an Islamic state democratically and constitutionally, and strongly opposed Soekarno's government (Boland, 1971, p. 43). Since the revision of the first principle of Pancasila, Masyumi had demanded the re-appliance of Piagam Jakarta and was indeed against Soekarno because of his alliance with Partai Komunis Indonesia/PKI (Indonesian Communist Party). The 1949 Prime Minister of Indonesia, Muhammad Natsir, led Masyumi and became the champion in the fights against communism in the 1950s. He was also engaged in a campaign against Sukarno, whom he considered to be in favour of nationalism and secularism instead of Islam. The conflict between Natsir and Soekarno reached its peak after the 1955 election, which placed the PKI in the fourth position, below the Partai Nasionalis Indonesia/PNI (Indonesian Nationalist Party), Masyumi and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The tension became increasingly heated after the 1957 regional elections, which placed the PKI in the leading position in areas of East Java. Finally, on 15 February 1958, Natsir and many Indonesian Army officers, who shared the same opinion that Soekarno was a threat to Indonesian democracy and so were anti-Soekarno, proclaimed the establishment of the Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/PRRI (Revolutionary Government of the Indonesian Republic) in Padang, West Sumatera. After Masyumi's involvement in PRRI, in the late 1950s, Soekarno proclaimed Masyumi an illegal party and sent its key leader, Muhammad Natsir, to jail. Natsir was released in the 1960s despite the high state surveillance imposed on his activism after release.

The idea of establishing an Islamic state *vis-à-vis* religiously neutral-state had been the key ideological debate during the first two decades of the Indonesian republic. Nevertheless, debates on state and religion relation in post-colonial Indonesia differ from the secularism debates in Western contexts, which tend to define the relationship between the two in extremely antagonistic point of views. Secularism in Indonesia is closely related to granting religion – in this context, Islam – the proper place and scope in state and society, rather than drawing a separation between religion and state. Thus, in the early period after the independence, ideological debates centered on the question of “adaptation scale” of the new republic to Islam, i.e., on Islamic favouritism or “religiously neutral-state”, rather than on the notion of explicitly making a secular state (Ichwan, 2011b). The problem of the state constitution and the implementation of Islamic laws for Muslim citizens were crucial debates involving leaders of Islamic favouritism camp and religiously neutral state faction.

Proponents of the Islamic favouritism contested Pancasila, which had become the state’s ideology since the independence, bridging a theocratic state – if not an Islamic state – on the one hand and a religiously neutral state on the other. The secular-nationalist camp, however, felt Islam as a threat to the newly established republic. It was through the Piagam Jakarta that Islamic proponents found themselves with strategic political issues to revive the idea of a full adaptation of religion in Indonesian politics, if not to demand for the establishment of an Islamic state. The aim of the debate over the Piagam Jakarta was to ensure the appliance

of Islamic law, the Shariah, for Indonesian Muslim citizens, a political issue which nationalists, communists, and non-Muslim groups highly contested. The heated debate ended when the 1959 Majelis Konstituante (Constituent Assembly) failed to reach a solution concerning the state ideology and insisted Soekarno to declare his *demokrasi terpimpin* (guided democracy) (1959-1965), which brought democracy under a full-authority of the President Soekarno and transformed Indonesia into an authoritarian state.

The authoritarian regime of Soekarno later generated a strong opposition from Islamic groups that perceived the regime as a threat to Islam, thus crystallising the demand for a democratic governmental system and regime change. The tension between Soekarno's government and the Muslim groups was exacerbated by the concern about the deepening influence of the PKI at a grassroots level, threatening the authority of the *ulama* and the army on a local level, and about a possible economic collapse as well as the competition within the Indonesian Army, i.e., between the pro-Islam and the nationalist-*cum*-communist factions (Jenkins, n.d., pp. 2-3). Altogether, these concerns inflamed an opposition towards President Soekarno, which culminated following the failed coup of the *Gerakan 30 September* (30 September Movement).

Although the military leader Soeharto may or may not have secretly instigated the coup, he rapidly gained advantages of the ensuing political clash following the failed coup. He encouraged the discourses about the dangers of communism and the communists' plan to kill their enemies through the *Gerakan 30 September*. Consequently, Soeharto was able to cultivate a "kill or be killed" atmosphere that incited people

and set them up against communists (Cribb, 2002, p. 552). Between October 1965 and March 1966, as Robert Cribb estimates, 500.000 people, allegedly PKI members, were murdered (Cribb, 2001). Hundreds of Islamic organisations, mainly the Anshar, which is the paramilitary body of Nahdlatul Ulama, as well as local gangsters participated in the genocide. Also, in 1966, students of the youth movement called Generasi 1966 (Generation of 1966) demanded Soekarno to step down from presidency. It is worth mentioning that the Indonesian Army played a crucial role in assembling and igniting the students' protest (Boland, 1971, p. 142). Other important factors contributing to the harsh opposition toward Soekarno's regime were the beginning of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, the intensification of the Cold war in Southeast Asia (Ricklefs, 2008, pp. 256–269) and outside interventions, especially by the US government, which feared that communism would spread rapidly throughout Southeast Asia. As Benedict Anderson notes, the result of this fear was a series of US initiatives aimed at incorporating Southeast Asian countries within its sphere of influence through creating loyal and authoritarian anti-communist regimes (Anderson, 1998).

Following the fall of Orde Lama (Old Order) under Soekarno in 1966, the Orde Baru (New Order) (1966-1998) government under Soeharto gave first priority to the renewal of the direction of the state after decades of severe economic crises and ideological debates. The Orde Baru launched a developmentalism project (*pembangunan*) and at the same time banned ideological debates and ruptures for the sake of *stabilitas nasional* (national stability) to ensure the *pembangunan* projects. During the 1970-80s, Islam again

came under a strict surveillance of the state. The government imprisoned many Muslim leaders considered enemies of the state for promoting Islamic ideology, thus contesting the Pancasila. It also obliged all Islamic organisations to accept Pancasila as the sole foundation of the institution, known also as the policy of *asas tunggal* (the one and only principle). The biggest Muslim organisation Nahdlatul Ulama/NU officially accepted the *asas tunggal* in 1984, whereas the second largest Muslim organisation Muhammadiyah followed the move in the following year.

The Orde Baru government's fear of Islam was exercised through the regime's antagonism toward political Islam (*Islam politik*) referring to groups of Muslims who found Islam as an alternative ideology to Pancasila. However, the regime sponsored cultural Islam (*islam kultural*), i.e., Islam sans politics, and Muslims' aspiration and Islamic interpretation that correspond to the regime's authority and developmentalism policies. During the 1980s, the Orde Baru government launched some initiatives to control Islamic norms and associations and pacified Islamic political aspiration the government perceived threatening. In 1975, it established the Majelis Ulama Indonesia/MUI (Council of Indonesian Ulama), which quickly became a new body to align Muslims' aspiration with the Orde Baru government's developmentalism projects (Mudzhar, 1993). In addition to the MUI, the Orde Baru government also sponsored a Muslim foundation of Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila/YAMP (Pancasila Muslim Service Foundation) in 1982. The foundation campaigned the state ideology Pancasila as the *asas tunggal* by initiating Mosque-based activism. In so

doing, it built hundreds of mosques bearing the symbol of the Pancasila manifested as an ornament on top of the mosque roof with a pentagonal frame enclosing the Arabic word for God 'Allah' (Zuhri, 2016). Importantly, the Orde Baru regime perceived Islam as an ideology not completely integrated with modernity, a residue of modern age, which was framed in a Western-secular point of view. In the 1980s, the government exercised the "surveillance paradigm" (Sadequee, 2018) as an instrument to regulate Muslim ethical life so that it was suitable for the secular/modern world order. In so doing, in the mid-1980s, the Orde Baru prohibited veiling (*jilbab*) in government offices and in non-religious state (Salim, 2015, p. 139). In 1990, the Orde Baru also established a Muslim association of Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia/ICMI (the Association of Indonesian Muslim Scholars) chaired by Muslim technocrats rather than Muslim scholars/*ulama*. This government initiative is aimed at cultivating Muslim technocrats or Western-minded Indonesian Muslims.

Despite the several attempts carried out by the Orde Baru regime to control Islamic expression and aspiration, democratic movements that had swept Indonesia since the 1990s led to the devastating political institutions of the Orde Baru regime. The severe economic crisis engulfing Southeast Asia in the mid-1990 further worsened, destabilising the political structure of Orde Baru and crystallising the demand for Soeharto's resignation from his presidency. The fall of the Orde Baru regime in May 1998 gave birth to the *era reformasi* (reformation era), with which Indonesians again saw the promise of the democratic state and the freedom of public expression as well as political aspirations. However, the

reformasi had opened a Pandora's box, resulting in organised violence in many parts of Indonesia. At the state level, it further initiated debates on Indonesian form of secularism, thus reviving the old debate of Islam *vis-à-vis* Pancasila.

C. Finding the Path: *Moderasi Beragama*

Soeharto's resignation from his presidency on 21 May 1998 served as a symbol of hope for Indonesians who wished to build a democratic state. And it pinpointed a new era in Indonesian political history, *era reformasi* (the reformation era). Along with this political transition towards democracy, several Islamic parties and Islamic paramilitary groups, e.g., Laskar Pembela Islam (the Islamic Defenders' Force), Laskar Jihad (the Jihad Force), and Laskar Mujahidin (the Mujahidin Forces), were founded (Hasan, 2006, pp. 13–20). These groups particularly called for committing *jihad* in the Moluccas, where reportedly hundreds of Muslims were killed by Christians. The *jihad* project in the Post-Orde Baru Indonesia, according to Sidel (2007, p. 221), emerged as an expression of anxieties against the backdrop of the failure of Islam in the formal political arena, on the one hand, and the concomitant dissolution of Islam as a unifying force, on the other hand. The radical expressions of Islamic groups during the Post-Orde Baru exemplify political discontent and political strategy in order to elevate Islam as the influential factor – if not the only factor – in the state's politics since the Indonesian independence and after losing the first general election since the *reformasi* in 1999 (Liddle, 2000, p. 33).

Appealing to the public, some other radical Muslim groups, which Azyumardi Azra called “political Islam,”

demanded a comprehensive implementation of *sharia* and partly challenged Pancasila (Azra, 2000, pp. xiii–xiv, 2004, p. 138). Within the Indonesian parliament, the old debate about the omitted seven words of Piagam Jakarta came to the fore again, initiated particularly by the Islamist parties Partai Keadilan/PK (the Justice Party) and Partai Bulan Bintang/PBB (the Crescent Star Party). Along with the wave of the institutionalisation of Islam into the state’s ideology, small Muslim groups aspired to install *sharia* law through local regulations (*peraturan daerah syariah/Perda Syariah*). In other words, the “Islamic turn” following post-*reformasi* democratisation again highlighted an old issue on the Indonesian form of secularism, i.e., defining the proper place and scope of Islam in state and society, rather than setting a clear separation between religion and state. Thus, the debate centred on how the combination of religion and state is negotiated, i.e., how to set the limits of the division and the inclusion of religion in Indonesia’s political sphere, to which I mentioned earlier as “adaptation scale”.

Likewise, during the first two decades of the *reformasi*, Indonesians witnessed an increase in number and frequency of bombings and terrorist attacks, thus inciting the larger scale of ‘securitisation’ of Islam. In 2003, the government established two leading institutions specialised in counter-terrorism operations and deradicalization strategies, e.g., Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme/BNPT (the National Counterterrorism Agency) – before named Desk Koordinasi Pemberantasan Terorisme – and Datasemen Khusus/Densus 88 (the Special Detachment 88). Whereas the former institution works mainly on ‘soft approaches’ for

counter-radicalisation strategies, the Densus 88 is a special force within the Indonesian police force with a particular task in 'hard approaches' of counter-terrorism operations (Taufiqurrohman, 2013). The two official bodies have been successful in pacifying terrorist cells and implementing counter-terrorism strategies. However, the problem of terrorism remains, particularly how to undermine the leaders of the jihadist groups who are capable of controlling their combatants from behind bars, such as Maman Abdurahman and the charismatic Abu Bakar Ba'asyir.

Importantly, along with a greater demand for democracy and threats of terrorism, Indonesian Muslims have experienced "Islamic-moral turn" where Islam has become more significant to the lives of many Indonesian Muslims. Likewise, a proliferation of Islamic symbols has emerged in the public sphere. Greg Barton (2001, p. 245) calls the phenomenon of the rising Islamic awareness, mainly among the middle-class Indonesian Muslims, as "*santrification*" referring to an increase in Islamic piety and a stricter adherence to Islamic practices across large sections of the Indonesian society. Along with the wave of *santrification* following the *reformasi*, a rise in the number of attacks against non-Muslims and minority Muslim sects, such as Ahmadiyya and other non-orthodox Muslim groups, occurred (Burhani, 2013). For Martin van Bruinessen, in the years following the *reformasi*, Indonesians witnessed the so-called "conservative turn" in contrast with the long-admired "smiling face of Indonesian Islam" (Bruinessen, 2013). It confirms the "demise of moderate Islam" (Akmaliah, 2020). Like the previous regimes, Post-Orde Baru regimes had to face challenges with the growing Islamic conservatism,

which in many cases are supported by MUI and hard-liner Islamist groups, particularly the Front Pembela Islam/FPI (Islamic Defender Front) which the Indonesian government dissolved in December 2020.

From the state's point of view, the wave of Islamic conservatism is seen as a political threat to the state and to the religious harmony in Indonesian. And as the counternarrative – among other things – to Islamic conservatism, the state officially launched the project “*moderasi beragama*” – literally translated as “religious moderation”. *Moderasi beragama* is indeed the continuation of the colonial and the postcolonial projects to govern Islam into a political subject matter of “affective governance” (Trein, 2018, p. 1) through appropriating Islamic interpretation in order to define and establish political and religious subjectivities that ensure and justify governability of Muslims. The Kementerian Agama (Indonesian Ministry for Religious Affairs) has been at the forefront of the project. At the eve of his service, the Minister for Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin (2014-2019) officially inaugurated “an official manifesto” on *moderasi beragama* through the ministry's publication titled *Moderasi Beragama*. The book highlighted religion related issues and the state, such as pluralistic Indonesians, the state ideology Pancasila, and religion as a solution – rather than a problem – for the growing conservatism.

Importantly, the project *moderasi beragama* aims to strengthen the state ideology, Pancasila. Rather than seeing Islam vis-à-vis Pancasila, *moderasi beragama* again emphasises the compatibility of Pancasila and Islam, a strategy the regimes before the *reformasi* had always stressed when

explaining Pancasila from the light of Islam (Kementerian Agama, 2019, p. 56). The doctrine of nationalism, as this project constructs, is the consensus of Indonesian Muslims that should be maintained and protected from any threat of transnational ideologies. Thus, according to the manifesto of *moderasi beragama*, Indonesian form of nationalism contradicts Anderson's conception (2006) of "secular-mode of nationalism" which ignores religion. Indonesian form of nationalism is exclusively religious and reverberates what Menchik (2017, p. 67) calls "godly nationalism" – "an imagined community bound by a common, orthodox theism and mobilized through the state in cooperation with religious organizations in society". The current Indonesian government has exercised this godly-nationalism manifesto as a repertoire for disbanding the transnational Islamist movement Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia/HTI in 2017.

In addition to nationalism, through the prologue of the book *Moderasi Beragama*, Lukman Hakim further elaborates the meaning of *moderasi beragama* and writes:

Moderasi beragama aims to attune the two-contradictory factions in religiosity. On the one hand, there are believers who extremely believe their faith as the only valid interpretation towards religious texts and excommunicate different interpretations. This faction is usually identified as ultra-conservative. On the other hand, there are believers who glorify reasonings while neglecting the purity of the faith and sacrifice their faith for the sake of tolerance toward different religious believers. This latter group is the extreme liberal faction. Both need to be balanced. (Kementerian Agama, 2019, p. 7)

The above quote clearly tells that, despite targeting Islamic conservatism and instilling godly nationalism, *moderasi beragama* also resorts as a criticism toward a liberal group activism in Indonesia and calls for the need to attune the two competing Islamic interpretations, i.e., the conservative and the liberal interpretations of Islam. The conservative, as the official document *Moderasi Beragama* mentions, is a mode of thought that tightly holds a truth claim while neglecting and, in many cases, excommunicating those who have different views and often calls for a full adoption of Islam in Indonesian politics, if not to establish an Islamic state, particularly through the efforts of inserting a reference to Shariah into the Indonesian constitution. The liberal, on the other hand, is a mode of thought that emerges from the supremacy of reason while neglecting the textual dimension of religion (Kementerian Agama, 2019, p. 47). The liberal group activism, tied to the younger generation of Western-educated Muslims within two biggest Muslim organizations in Indonesia, NU and Muhammadiyah, actively campaign for liberalism, secularism, and pluralism while attacking fellow Muslims who are conservative (Nurdin, 2005). Nevertheless, the conservatives had long gained a strategic momentum to condemn the liberals after MUI issued a fatwa against the liberal group. Through its *fatwa* in 2005, MUI declared the need to protect Islam and Muslims from ‘*spilis*,’ the abbreviation of secularism, pluralism and liberalism (Gillespie, 2007). The abbreviation strongly referred to the disease syphilis, which also reflected the destructive image. The *spilis* agenda of the liberal group reserved as a “Western disease” that would potentially destroy Indonesia. For many conservative groups, such as FPI and HTI, the *fatwa* went beyond the condemnation against the liberal group because it was a vindication for their

agenda to turn Indonesia into an Islamic state or at least as a strategy to install *sharia* law as the state's constitution (Kersten, 2015, pp. 1-2).

Nevertheless, on the other side of the spectrum, *moderasi beragama* tries to defy the conservative groups that has gained momentum and followers in the Indonesian religious landscape. Conservative groups have a history of inciting intra-group conflicts within the Indonesian Muslim community with attacks against minority groups, such as Ahmadiyah-Muslim. They also exacerbate inter-religious group relations by protesting the place of Indonesian non-Muslims in a Muslim-majority public sphere and demanding Muslim favouritism in the state structure and bureaucracy. The groups often target night clubs, calling for the closure of places they consider sinful and contradictory with Islamic norms.

The most recent trial of *moderasi beragama* was the Ahok's case in 2017. As often found in Western countries where Islamophobia collides with racial issues (Lauwers, 2019), the Ahok's case incited Islamophobia, particularly among the minority Chinese Indonesian and Christians (Shukri, 2019). Popularly known as Ahok, the Chinese Indonesian and Christian politician Basuki Tjahaya Purnama once served as the vice governor of Jakarta and later as the governor as Joko Widodo was elected president in 2014. Since the beginning, by winning the provincial election in Jakarta, Ahok was a controversial, unfavourable political leader to the eyes of many conservative Muslim groups, mainly the FPI, that had voiced strong opposition for having a non-Muslim leader as early as 2012 when Ahok first took office as the vice governor of Jakarta. The strong opposition emerged on 27 September 2016 when Ahok mentioned in his speech that people should not vote for a candidate based on religious beliefs, criticising

the notion that Muslims cannot have a non-Muslim as their leader. An edited video of his remarks appeared on social media, quickly went viral, and incited a series of street protests of Muslim groups that accused Ahok of insulting the Qur'an. Conservative Muslim groups stormed the streets of Jakarta, demanding that the government arrest Ahok and send him to trial. The remarkable mass to join the street protests named Gerakan 212 (212 Movement) led by Rizieq Shihab, a Hadhrami-*sayyid* and the leader of FPI, successfully mobilised a significant number of Muslims, not only from Jakarta, but also from other cities in Java and outside. On 9 May 2017, Ahok was sentenced to two years in prison.

Nevertheless, Ahok's case has reenergised anti-Chinese prejudice and Islamic favouritism within the supposedly non-discriminatory state based on the five principles of Pancasila, a state that is neither secular nor Islamic. This effect has been an important issue in the 2019 president election, threatening the peaceful coexistence among religious groups in Indonesia. Lukman Hakim, the Minister of Religious Affairs who initiated *moderasi beragama* – a project which was later adopted as one of the ministry's priority programs – envisioned the project as a panacea for social disintegration and disharmony, particularly as a result of the diversity of ethnicities and religions. This panacea centers on the notion of *wasatiyyah* (middle or moderate), which strongly opposes religious conservatism on the one hand and religious liberalism on the other hand. At the same time, being *wasatiyyah* also demands statehood loyalty and obedience (Kementerian Agama, 2019, pp. 16–17).

D. Conclusion

Amid the rapidly growing Islamophobia in the West, as this article has demonstrated, culture of fear flourishes in

different contexts and collides with various forms of ideological practices. In Indonesia, it appears in the form of threats of Islam—whether real or imagined—which develops particularly because of constant negotiations among competing ideologies. In colonial and post-colonial Indonesia, the Dutch, Japan, and post-independence Indonesian regimes have exercised the arts of governing Islam through premises of governmentality. On the one hand, each regime struggles to establish its political power through idioms of Islam. On the other hand, they are worried about the possible threats of Islam as well. The Dutch colonial government and Indonesian regimes are in the same boat when it comes to the politics of the majority Muslim country, in that they apply their own versions of governmentality as a way of controlling Muslims' aspirations, implying that the practice of governmentality is a longstanding method for governing Islam. This technique of subjugating Islam and controlling Muslims' aspirations began with the Dutch and Japanese colonial governments and was continued by the following Indonesian regimes post-independence.

Culture of fear of the colonial and postcolonial regimes roots at the problem of adaptation scale of Islam, the religion of the majority. Rather than the problem of secularism signified by the antagonistic relation between the church and the state as we witnessed in the West, Indonesian politics tells that religion plays major roles in the state-making. Indonesian form of nationalism is exclusively religious and demonstrates "godly nationalism". It has never been secularistic and, therefore, religion is central in the nation-building. Colonial and post-colonial regimes have deployed a model of governance with which they appropriated the 'correct' Islamic interpretation and defined valid religious subjectivities that ensure and justify the governability of

Muslims. In turn, it affects the ways each regime governs 'fears of Islam' and defines the 'legitimate form of Islam' in a certain political period.

Therefore, as this article has also articulated, Islamophobia can occur in majority-Muslim societies. And in case of Indonesia, it exists in a form of "regimented Islamophobia," which is designed and developed by political regimes to win Muslims' hearts, to control their aspirations, and to judge the 'proper' interpretation of Islam in the country, thereby diminishing the presence of other interpretations -often contradictory- of Islam. By governing the interpretation of Islam, the Indonesian government has promoted a state-sanctioned form of Islam among the varied interpretations that exist — from the liberal to conservative, if not radical — and it has reinforced its agenda through implementing policies, establishing institutions and designing projects to enhance Muslims' statehood loyalty and obedience. The current Indonesian regime designates *moderasi beragama* as the official form of Islam criticising both the liberal and conservative interpretations of Islam, while at the same time serving as a tool to strengthen the state's nationalistic goals and the state-making.

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