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The Dynamics of Islamic Political Parties Amid Indonesian Multicultural Society

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Abstract

Islam is not limited to religion that only discuss about God. Islam has a comprehensive concept in all aspects of life, one of the aspect is politics (siyasa) that discusses the concept of the state, the exercise of power, who deserves to exercise power, how much power they can have, and the characteristics and objectives of Islamic politics itself. Political party is a superstructure in a political system that carries out several strategic functions, including political socialization, political recruitment, political articulation and aggregation of interests. Political party also has an important position in the policy making process. This article aims to analyze how the dynamics of Islamic politics in Indonesia in the middle of multicultural society by carrying out its function as an articulator and aggregator of interests.

Keywords : Islamic political party, multicultural society, political system

Abstrak

Islam tidak terbatas pada agama yang hanya berbicara tentang Tuhan. Islam memiliki konsep yang komprehensif dalam semua aspek kehidupan, salah satu aspeknya adalah politik (siyasa) yang membahas konsep negara, pelaksanaan kekuasaan, yang berhak menggunakan kekuasaan, berapa banyak kekuatan yang dapat mereka miliki, dan karakteristik serta tujuan politik Islam itu sendiri. Partai politik adalah suprastruktur dalam sistem politik yang menjalankan beberapa fungsi strategis, termasuk sosialisasi politik, rekrutmen politik, artikulasi politik dan agregasi kepentingan. Partai politik juga memiliki posisi penting dalam proses pembuatan kebijakan. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana dinamika politik Islam di Indonesia di tengah masyarakat multikultural dengan menjalankan fungsinya sebagai artikulator dan agregator kepentingan.

Kata kunci: Partai politik Islam, masyarakat multikultural, sistem politik

Introduction

Islam is a religion with universal rules. It is not limited to discuss about worship and *muamalah*, but also discuss about leadership, state, politics, and the relationship between the leaders and their people. Islam is not only synonymous with worship or the relationship with God,

but also has a set of rules of life for human as well as the surrounding environment. Thus, it can be said that Islam is not only regulates theories of worship in a ritual way, but also discusses the problems of daily life, including politics.

Political party is a suprastructure of political system that has strategic functions, including political socialization, political recruitment, political communication, and conflict management body (Budiarjo, 1991, p. 163). Political parties must be able to become a bridge for the society to convey their aspirations and carry out a process of aggregating the interests of the society through political parties. The articulation of interests is an effort by a person or group of people so that their interests and desires can be fulfilled by articulating all interests to the political body of the government that has the authority to make policies. While the interest aggregation is the process of combining the demands of different groups into alternatives for public policy making. In a multicultural society, the role of political parties has its own challenges because political parties must be able to accommodate many different interests, and are required to be able to aggregate these interests.

The dynamics of Islam and politics in Indonesia can be explained in several models, including: 1) the contact of Islam and politics in Indonesia before the independence signifies a complete understanding of Islamic doctrine in regulating human life; 2) Islam and politics are an interdependent unity, where Islam needs politics (the state) to spread goodness and uphold the *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* and the state needs values in guarding its government, especially in its moral aspects; 3) politics is one of the fields of charity for Muslims, therefore politics for Muslims must be obtained and implemented based on the basic principles of Islam (Prihatin, 2016). There is a dilemma in Islamic politics related to fundamental problem in the political life of Muslims in Indonesia, including theological problems, such as those concerning the relationship between religion and politics in Islam. However, there is something purely political in nature, that is concerning the political struggle strategy itself in the context of complexity of political life with plural political interest groups.

There are at least three models of Muslim governance as defined by Lutfi Assyaukanie in the book entitled *Ideologi Islam dan Utopia* : 1) the Islamic democratic state, a model that aims to make Islam the basis of the state and encourage Muslims to take a leading role in social and political life; 2) the state of religious democracy, a model that emphasizes the importance of plural life in Indonesia and aims to making the state as the guardian of all religions; 3) the liberal democratic state, that can also be a secular democratic state, aims to free religion from state domination and make secularism as the foundation of the state (Assyaukanie, 2011).

Islamic political parties in Indonesia have been formed since the beginning of independence. As a representation of the struggle of Muslims, Islamic political parties must have a goal as the spirit of the movement. The purpose of Islamic political parties is inseparable from the existence of a state institution that is a medium for Islamic political parties to realize the great ideals of Islam by forming a state with a fair and prosperous society blessed by Allah SWT. as stated in Q.S. Saba ' : 15 "...baladun thayyibatun warabbun ghafur" that means a territory that fair and happy, and under Lord Forgiving.

In the early after independence, Indonesia went through a periode of liberal democracy. In 1955, Indonesia held its first national election for the House of Representatives and Constitutional Assembly. Ten political parties based primarily on Islam competed in both elections. Two Islamic

parties gained significant votes in the Constitutional Assembly election : the Consultative Assembly of Indonesian Muslims (Masyumi, Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia) with 20,6% of the votes, and the Revival of Islamic Scholars Party (NU, Nahdlatul Ulama) with 18,5%. On the other hand, the Indonesian National Party (PNI, Partai Nasional Indonesia) and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia) won 24% and 16,5%, respectively. The absence of a clear majority in the Constitutional Assembly resulted in prolonged and unresolved debates over the state's ideological basis. The secularist, led by Soekarno (the first President of Indonesia and leader of PNI), promoted the Five principles (Pancasila); the Islamist, led by Muhammad Natsir (former prime minister and leader of Masyumi) promoted Islam as the state's foundation principles. Muslim leaders and Islamic political parties have struggled for the adoption of Syariah (Islamic divine law) into the Indonesian Constitution. Their efforts have met with persistent failure. For almost half a century, the debate between proponents and opponents of Syariah and constitutional change in the world's most populous Muslim nation has been largely static. (Baswedan, 2004)

This study uses a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a research that aims to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects holistically, and by way of descriptions in the form of words and languages, in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2007). This type of research is descriptive research that is used to find out and investigate a social problem by presenting the final results through the presentation and analysis of phenomena in a clear theoretical framework (Silalahi, 2009).

The object of this descriptive qualitative research is Islamic political party with a specific issue on the dynamics of Islamic political party in Indonesia amid multicultural society. The focus of analysis of this research is the political party where the review is focused on Islamic political party as a political suprastructure and how they work to implement Islamic politics in Indonesia amid multicultural society. Technical analysis used is data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. To collect data, researchers used library research techniques by collecting data from books, literature, documents, articles, scientific journals and various sources related to this research.

Discussion

Islam as a religion that is believed by the big number of Indonesian society certainly has a vital role for the dynamics of nationalism. What needs to be the concern of Muslims is Islam as a religion that not only discusses about a single doctrine about Theism, about human relation to their God and sich. Islam is a religion that is truly approved by religion and believe in God as a transcendent entity. Islam also provides a set of basic values as a basis for humans to interpret life and build their social relationships and environment. Relating to this, religion has two contexts, including the vertical context that is a moral doctrine that necessitates the belief of God as a primary cause and the horizontal context to presenting messages of morality and a set value, in order to reach human goals to create harmony in a shared life.

In the Islamic political thought studies, particularly about the relationship between Islam and state administration, there are three schools that have different views, including: 1) The groups who believe that Islam governs all aspects of human life, including political life and state affairs, therefore Muslims are required to follow the political concepts of Islam and run the system that has

been implemented by the Prophet Muhammad and *Khulafaur Rasyidin*. The figures of this school include: Maulana Abu al-A'la al-Maududi, Rashid Ridha, Sayyid Quthub, and Hasan al-Banna; 2) The groups who believe that Islam is merely a religion that takes care of mankind so that they live a noble life by upholding noble character. The main task of the Prophet was to realize the community with such noble character, not to establish a State. The figures of this school are Ali Abd al-Raziq and Thaha Husein; 3) A groups who believe that Islam does not have complete and detailed guidance regarding the constitutional system, but Islam has a set of ethical values for human and state affairs. The figure of this school is Mohammad Husein Haikal.

Political principles in Islam include the studies about human relationship (*hablun minannas*) or known as the *muamalah* principle. Referring to the views of Abu Zahrah Muhammad, there are a number of Islamic political principles. In the view of Islamic politics, all human beings have an equal position. Political relations that are established must be based on the principle of cooperation that brings benefits to humanity. Included in this principle are: 1) Human honor (*karamah insaniyah*): the principle of respecting and glorifying other parties whatever the conditions and attributes attached to it. If you are in a competitive or hostile condition, you may not insult the other party; 2) Humans as one people (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*): Islamic politics builds integrative relations rather than conflictual, finds synergies, not fosters hostility. Humans as *khalifah* cannot build prosperity on earth when only relying on unilateralism, but will be easily achieved by relying on universalism. 3) Human cooperation (*ta'awun insani*): cooperation is designed with reason to help each other in goodness and devotion rather than badness and disputes.

In carrying out political cooperation, the principle of non-intervention is important to be implemented. For example, in bilateral and multilateral relations, each state may not intervene the domestic affairs of other states. According to Islamic political ethics, there are several principles, including: 1) *Tasamuh*: the principle of respecting the privacy and interests of others. Islam is very friendly with the principle of non-intervention; 2) Independence (*Hurriyah*): the cooperative relationship is based on efforts to increase the degree of independence, not to undermine the independence of others; 3) Good minded (*fadillah*): in politics, giving does not have to be based on getting something more, however giving is based on sincerity.. This good minded principle is the antithesis of pragmatism that colors the politics today where giving is often motivated by interest; 4) Justice (*'adalah*): carrying out the logic of justice in establishing interactions with other parties. Fair is not only seen from the quantity, but also quality; 5) The same treatment: build reasoning relationships between people with equality. Interaction in Islam puts forward the principle of non-discrimination; 6) Compassion (*mawaddah*) and damage prevention: building harmonious relationships and preventing damage are important in the interaction among people.

The principles above can be a guide in political life and state affairs to realize principle *baldatun tayyibatun wa rabbun ghafur*. The Islamic political principles are different from western politics which sees politics as a struggle for power. In the view of political realism, humans have the potential to become enemies of the other because each party must have a self-help mechanism to survive in political constellation or at least avoid repression and imperialization. Then the political relationship that exists is mutual suspicion and alert to the threat of other parties. The principles above although only serve as a guideline of values, but can be a guide in preparing political steps in a practical manner with the aim of reducing the adverse effects, tyranny, and damage resulting from political implementation that is not in accordance with Islamic rules.

Multiculturalism in Indonesia is based on the 1945 Constitution which states that the Indonesian nation and society consists of various ethnic groups who are committed to developing Indonesia as a nation-state. This commitment and recognition is expressed in the symbol of the Garuda Pancasila. This symbol states that national life needs a precondition, that is tolerance as a form of appreciation for the existence of diverse Indonesian cultural communities, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) that has been a philosophy of life of Indonesian society. Multiculturalism is an attitude and understanding that accepts the existence of various groups of people who have different cultures and structures. This difference is not a threat to his existence either as an individual or as a group, although that does not mean he wants to adopt and consider the other party's culture as good as his own ethnic culture. Multiculturalism in Islam is explained in Q.S Al-Hujurat Paragraph 13 that means:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”

That verse explains that the diversity of ethnic, tribe, and gender aims to get to know one another, rather than triggering many conflicts. In Islam, the position of all human beings are equal before God. The thing that make them different is the level of devotion. Therefore, there is no reason for one party to feel better and discriminate against another party. In the writings entitled *Islam and Multiculturalism*, Samsu Rizal Panggabean gives an overview about Islam perspective on multiculturalism. Samsu Rizal Panggabean discusses multiculturalism in two perspectives, including multiculturalism from the Muslim community (internal multiculturalism) and multiculturalisme from other religious community (external multiculturalism) (Mujiburrahman, 2013).

Internal multiculturalism is internal diversity among muslims, it shows that Islamic culture is internally plural. This internal pluralism includes the field of social grouping; fiqh; theology; sufism; and political party in the modern era. While external multiculturalism is a condition of communal-religious plurality. As a part of plural society, Muslims continue to interact with people from other religions. As a religion that has a principle as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to the universe), Islam has universal values that can be implemented and developed in a pluralistic society, including (Abdillah, 2011, pp. xv–xviii) : 1. justice (Q.S Al Maidah verse 8); 2. trust and accountability (Q.S An-Nisa verse 57); 3. brotherhood and pluralism (Q.S. Al Hujurat verse 10 & 13); 4. equation (Q.S. Al-Hujurat verse 13); 5. freedom (Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 256); 6. consultation (Q.S. Asy-syu'ra verse 38 and Q.S. Ali-Imron verse 159); 7) peace (Q.S. Al-Anfal verse 61).

Muslims tend to understand the holistic nature of Islam as above in an organic way, in the sense that the relationship between Islam and all aspects of life must be built in a legal and formal pattern. They expect Islam to be the basis of the state constitution. While on the other hand, other Muslims are more inclined to interpret the holistic character in a more substantialistic pattern. They don't expect Islam to be the basis of constitution as long as Muslims can practice their religion well and maintain their environment and society in accordance with Islamic rules.

The objectives of Islamic politics can be formulated into 4 objectives : **first**, the principle of struggle is as a dedication to Allah SWT, upholding truth, honesty, justice, and unity; **Second**, creating a just society so that people get their rights such as the right to life, things to get security, the right to speak, and so on; **Third**, a prosperous society as an indicator of people's happiness;

Fourth, the function of the State is to provide security guarantees for its people (Al-Hamdi, 2013, p. 13).

After the Declaration of Vice President No. X on October, 16, 1945. There was a change in the Indonesian government system from presidential to parliamentary system. The Declaration November 3, 1945 contains the opportunity for the Indonesian people to establish parties to channel their political aspirations (Iqbal & Nasution, 2015, p. 294). On September 29, 1955, the first elections in Indonesia could be held. This election was attended by many parties with various political and ideological backgrounds. There were 39 political parties taking part in the elections in this period. The emergence of these various parties is seen as the most democratic in Indonesia. In total, the Islamic party received 16,518,332 votes with 115 seats in the constituency. Of the Islamic parties that took part in the election at that time, the biggest votes were Masyumi, NU, PSII, Perti, and PPTI. From this election, there are at least three ideologies that won the biggest votes and will compete in the constituents later. These three are Islam, nationalists, and communists. If simplified, there were four parties forces at the time, including PNI, Masyumi, NU, and PKI. Although these Islamic parties competed with each other, they were one voice in the constituent assembly, they had a unanimous voice to promoted Islam as the constitution basis of the State. They faced a secular nationalist party that promoted Five Principles (Pancasila), such as the PNI, PSI, the Catholic Party, Parkindo, IPKI and the PKI (Iqbal & Nasution, 2015).

Disunity among Islamic parties has weakened the power of Islamic politics. The impact of disunity will in turn make Muslims confused about who is the real representation of Islam. This happened because the Islamic parties all claimed to be the embodiment of Islamic representation and aspirations. The election results showed that the Islamic parties did not receive majority support from the Muslims. Masyumi only received 20.9% of the votes, NU 8.4%, PSII 2.0%, Perti 1.3%, and PPTI and AKUI each gained 0.2% votes. During the period of guided democracy, Islamic parties were forced to support the Nasakom ideology. In this case the Islamic parties were divided into two groups, that is the group that supported the Nasakom ideology represented by NU and the opposing group represented by Masyumi. As a result of that rejection, in 1960 Sukarno dissolved Masyumi. With the dissolution of Masyumi, practically Islamic political power was marginalized from the arena of power. This is because even though NU is in a circle of power, it turns out that it does not have any role and strength to influence politics (Iqbal & Nasution, 2015).

Soon after taking power in 1966, Soeharto's New Order indicated that it intended to contain political islam. This regime prevented the reestablishment of Masyumi, which had been the largest Islamic party in the 1950s. The New Order regime that was fully supported by the military was not willing to rehabilitate Masyumi and did not allow its exponents to get involved in practical politics. In exchange, the New Order regime allowed the establishment of the Indonesian Muslim's Party (Parmusi, Partai Muslimin Indonesia). For the sake of creating political stability as a prerequisite for economic development, the New Order then restructured the party system. With this policy, Islamic parties (Parmusi, NU, PSII, and Perti) and also other parties (PNI, Catholic Party, Parkindo, and IPKI) were forced to merge. The four Islamic parties, Parmusi, NU, PSII and Perti were force to merge into a single party named the United Development Party (PPP, Partai Persatuan Bangsa) (Romli, 2004). After the PPP complied, adopting Pancasila as its sole principle and replacing the party's symbol of the Ka'bah (the shrine located in the holy mosque in Mecca) with a star, it started

losing its attractiveness to Muslim constituent. On the other hand, the government party, Golkar, increasingly won Muslim votes.

The process of marginalization carried out by the New Order regime towards political Islam turned out to continue, namely by issuing a de-idealization policy. In this policy, political parties are not permitted to use principles other than the Pancasila principle. As a result of that policy, political parties have no other choice. Finally PPP, as the last bastion of Islamic political party, abandoned the Islamic principles and replaced them with the Pancasila principle. During this new order, Muslims did not have many options in political life. But on the other hand, cultural propaganda experienced rapid development. In the concept of cultural Islam, power politics is not the only alternative to the struggle of Islam in Indonesia. There are still great opportunities to develop Islam in various fields, such as education, social economy, culture, and others.

After years of silence under Suharto's rule, Islamic politics rapidly developed in the post-Suharto era. At this time Islamic politics reached a very strong foothold in Indonesia. The rise of Islamic politics was marked by a number of phenomena that barely surfaced during the New Order era. It shows the excitement of the formation of Islamic political parties. During the Suharto era two policies were issued relating to political parties, that is : (1) Law No. 3 of 1975 concerning Political Parties and Golkar. This law limits the formation of new political parties in Indonesia. (2) In 1985 the Pancasila Sole Principle Law No. 8. The principle of this law is that every political, social and religious organization must use Pancasila as an ideological basis. This means that every political party must use Pancasila as the basis of the state, there are no other principles except Pancasila. This situation changed after Suharto stepped down from power. After replacing Suharto as president of the Republic of Indonesia, B.J. Habibie gave permission for the formation of a new political party. Compared to other religious groups, most of the new political parties come from Islamic groups. By the 1999 General Election there were already 35 Islamic parties who registered themselves with the Department of Justice and after the selection by the eleven teams that passed as contestants. While in the 1999 elections there were 20 Islamic parties out of 48 political parties. In the 2004 elections when viewed not only from the principles used but also the symbols, names and mass base of supporters, there were seven political parties that could be said to be representative of Islamic political parties, that are PPP, PKS, PBB, Partai Persatuan Nahdlatul Ummah Indonesia, and PBR. The five parties are based on Islam. Two parties that relied on a mass base of supporters from Muslims were the PAN from Muhammadiyah and the PKB from Nahdlatul Ulama.

Reformation has become an important phase for Indonesia's socio-political order. Reformation brought a changing with the emergence of democratic life as an antithesis of a totalitarian political system or pseudo-repressive democracy like Soeharto did. Because in fact, political freedom in a democratic system has always been a dream of the Islamic movement, which was so castrated for several years by the Soeharto regime even though at the end of the year in power was given an expectation with the establishment of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association (ICMI).

Likewise, seeing from M. Natsir, one of the Muslim statesman in looking at the relationship between Islam and the state, he stated that religion is merely a ritual worship in daily terms such as prayer and fasting, will relate to all religions, boundaries in muamalah and social relations. Therefore, according to him, in order to agree with the rules and benchmarks, it can apply and run accordingly, necessary and must not, there must be strength in the association of life in accordance

with the state. However, Kuntowijoyo did not agree with the establishment of an Islamic party, because it could, among other things, stop the mobility of Muslims, create disintegration among Muslims, and narrow Muslims' understanding of Islam. The confusion of Indonesian Muslims was then responded by Kuntowijoyo under the title Muslim Identity. In the book Kuntowijoyo tries to bridge the relationship between morality and the morality system with political realities to create a harmonious relationship. Election history in this country shows that Muslim voters are not a critical mass, perhaps because there are still many people who are "politically blind". Their voting behavior is still influenced by patron-client politics, symbolism, emotional, submissiveness, and the principle of safety first (Kuntowijoyo, 2001).

In the 1950s, political Islam was identical with Islamic parties. Parties pursued the establishment of an Islamic state with the formal adoption of Syariah, although they varied in their level of commitment; for example, Masyumi was more committed than the NU on such an Islamist agenda. However, dynamic interactions between Muslim aspirations and the politics of secular Pancasila during the 1950s and during Suharto's tenure have resulted in the pluralism of political Islam, not only in the electorates but also in the parties platforms as well. Today, even the views of Islamic organizations such as the NU and Muhammadiyah have become pluralistic. These groups departed from their position in the 1950s, as they no longer shared the agenda of formally adopting Syariah into the Constitution. This does not mean, however, that the NU and Muhammadiyah are no longer Islamic or no longer articulate Muslim aspirations. Their views simply reflect the realization among many Muslims and their leaders that even without formal adoption of Syariah in the Constitution and formal Islamic political parties, Muslim aspirations can be fulfilled by the state. The focus is no longer on how to bring Islam into the foundation of the state, but how to bring Islamic coloration into state policies. By adhering to Pancasila and not focusing on the incorporation of Syariah, Muslims have been able to promote an Islamic agenda such as the Basic Law of Religious Justice in 1989 (Law No. 7) and the Compilation of Islamic Law in 1991 (Presidential Instruction No. 1). (Baswedan, 2004)

What inhibits the development of a harmonious synthesis between State Islam according to Bakhtiar Efendi is the difficulty of finding links between the two in a format that is acceptable to both parties. Substantially, Islam requires multiculturalism as *sunatullah* which must be grateful for keeping it alive, even God wants to prioritize the public interest rather than personal interests. This was evidenced by the historical fact that the Prophet could live peacefully in a pluralistic overseas country of Medina which could eventually compromise to produce the Medina charter which historians consider to be the first constitution on earth. After the reformation, actually the political discourse of Islam (Islamic State) has begun to melt where many changes have taken place in the Statutes and By-Laws and political maneuvers that are carried out, where there is minimal agenda for constitutional change in that direction.

However, it is important to realize that democracy has become a knife that has two opposing sides, namely opportunities and challenges for social movements. The development of political Islam at the beginning of the reform was quite strong, even with a desire to develop an Islamic State / Khilifah State, Even political Islam orientation follows political patterns that are "terror". The political orientation model is actually at odds with the idea of reform, one of which upholds democracy. The political orientation model of "terror" is precisely their political power being barren when dealing with the values of diversity, organic solidarity, and the ideology of Pancasila which

has long been inherent in the life of the Indonesian people. Political Islamic orientations make political groups very exclusive to religion and other political orientations. They demanded the basic values of Islam in the Qur'an, al-Hadith, and Fiqh as *philosophische grondslag* (Joebagio, 2016). This perspective comes from of mass organizations that have a revivalist ideology in the perspective of Haidar Nasir is quite strong. Of course this is the fruit of a democratic system that has been championed. Forms of accommodation of Islamic political parties towards multicultural societies are related in their views on several things, including women's emancipation, economic equality, as well as views on Pancasila

Conclusion

In the study of Islamic political thought, especially about the relationship between Islam and state administration, there are three schools that have different views, including : 1) Groups who hold that Islam is all aspects of human life, including political and state life; 2) The group that holds that Islam is solely a religion that takes care of mankind so that it lives a noble life by upholding noble character, and; 3) Groups who believe that Islam does not have complete and detailed teachings or guidance regarding the constitutional system, but Islam has a set of ethical values for human and state life. Substantially, Islam requires multiculturalism as sunatullah which must be grateful for keeping it alive, even God wants to prioritize the public interest rather than personal interests. This was evidenced by the historical fact that the Prophet could live peacefully in a pluralistic overseas country of Medina which could eventually compromise to produce the Medina charter which historians consider to be the first constitution on earth.

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