Understanding Islamism in the Reformation Era in Indonesia: A Political Reflection

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Abstract:

This study examines the important reasons for the burgeoning of Islamism in the context of democratization in Indonesia. This qualitative study found that authoritarian political repression during the New Order regime (1965-1998) failed the secular middle class to emerge as an alternative political force as they already coopted into the developmentalist discourse that supports the globalization of the neoliberal economy. In this context, the Islamic social movement has become an alternative force as it has already accumulated socio-political deprivation among urban Muslims under the New Order repression. This kind of deprivation has constructed the idea of Islamism as a response to global and national socio-political inequality and future uncertainty among Moslems at the local level.

Keywords: Islamism, Indonesia, developmentalism, democracy, socio-political deprivation, inequality.

理解印度尼西亚宗教改革时期的伊斯兰主义：政治反思

摘要：

本研究探讨了印度尼西亚民主化背景下伊斯兰主义蓬勃发展的重要原因。这项定性研究发现，新秩序政权（1965–1998）期间的独裁政治镇压未能使世俗中产阶级成为替代性政治力量，因为他们已经融入了支持新自由主义经济全球化的发展主义话语。在此背景下，伊斯兰社会运动已成为一股替代力量，因为它已经在新秩序的镇压下积累了城市穆斯林的社会政治剥夺。这种剥夺构建了伊斯兰主义的观念，作为对全球和国家社会政治不平等以及地方穆斯林未来不确定性的回应。

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关键词：伊斯兰教，印度尼西亚，发展主义，民主，社会政治剥夺，不等式。

1. Introduction

The main focus of this paper is to explore the reasons behind the rise of Islamism in Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto's New Order regime (1996-1998), which was authoritarian and repressive. The term "Islamism" is often used to describe a tendency to impose "Islamic teachings" on all aspects of a Muslim's life, based on a literal and textual interpretation of the sources. The secular middle class, which was favored by the New Order, has a negative perception of Islamism and sees it as a sign of intolerance, exclusivism, and anti-pluralism. On the other hand, the Islamist group, which was politically marginalized by the New Order, considers the secular middle class to be influenced by Western values and in need of re-Islamization.

According to Robison and Hadiz, the New Order regime failed to create a middle class that could support liberal reforms or progressive left movements (Robison and Hadiz, 2017; Robison and Hadiz, 2004). The depoliticization policy of the New Order made the middle class unable to embrace the new political forces that challenged the oligarchy in the democratic transition. In this context, Islamism has become a source of religious conflict and social activism. Some Islamists attempted to impose Islamic law in various regions of the country in the mid-2000s.

The rise of Islamism and its impact on Indonesian society has sparked a debate among scholars and observers. Some wonder if Islamist attitudes and behavior reflect the values of Islam itself, if they are a reaction to the marginalization of religious identity during the authoritarian New Order regime, or if they are the true expression of Indonesian Islam. These questions are relevant because Islamism and its movements are not supported by most Indonesian Muslims. The two biggest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, NU and Muhammadiyah, have agendas different from those of Islamists and often oppose their demands for implementing Islamic sharia and using violence or terrorism in the name of religion. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature and goals of the Islamist movement in Indonesia.

The authors of this book analyze contemporary Islamic thought and movement in Indonesia based on three regional categories, five aspects, and fourteen components. The regional categories are doctrine, concept (thought), and praxis (movement). The aspects are as follows: (1) ideological basis, (2) methodological spectrum, (3) idealism concept, (4) zone of action, and (5) reality and solutions.

The components are (1) the main source and foundation of Islam, (2) prophethood, (3) legacy of Islamic tradition, (4) law, (5) methodology, (6) concepts about Islam and Muslims, (7) comparative concepts about Islam and its treasures, (8) behavior, (9) science and technology, (10) politics, (11) social interaction, (12) the reality of Islam and Muslims, (13) problems of Muslims, and (14) progressive solutions. The authors use a table to illustrate the structure of their analysis (See Table 1).

These components move hierarchically and circularly. Hierarchical motion shows the vertical-interactive relation from the highest aspect and component to the lowest aspect and component, with the possibility of a multicomponent relation. Circular motion shows the referential relation of the lowest aspects and components, which tries to trace its source to the highest aspects and components for the fulfillment of progressive solutions to problems faced by Muslims in the contemporary era. Matrically, these three regions, five aspects, and 14 components can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Matrix of the structure of contemporary Islamic thought and movement (Huda, 2018)

Areas of Contemporary Islamic Thought and Movement	Aspect of Contemporary Islamic Thought and Movement	Component of Contemporary Islamic Thought and Movement
Doctrine	a. Ideo-theological Base	Sources and Main Joints of Islam
		Prophethood
Concept of Thought	b. Methodology Spectrum	Heritage of the Islamic Tradition
		Law
		Methodology
	Concept of Ideality	Concepts of Islam and Muslims
		Comparative Concepts about Islam and its Khazanah
Praxis (Movement)	Zone of Action	Behavior
		Science and technology
		Politics
		Social Interaction
	Reality and Solution	Reality of Islam and Muslims
		Problems with Ummah
		Proggresive solution

Islam has developed in diverse ways across different regions of the world, including Indonesia. As a result, Muslims encounter various challenges within their own communities and in relation to global society. To address these challenges, both intellectually and practically, progressive thoughts and movements have

emerged in the Islamic world, including Indonesia, that seek to offer solutions based on the principles of Islam.

2. Middle Class *Santri* and Islamization

The emergence of new middle-class Muslim Santri students was facilitated by the policy options of the New Order Government in the field of education. These students experienced vertical social mobility from rural to provincial and national contexts and gained access to bureaucratic and professional positions at higher levels. They also encountered real issues that affected society and became influential actors in Islamizing's process the state from the margins. They were disillusioned by depoliticization policy of the New Order, which prevented them from embracing a liberal pluralist ideology. Instead, they were drawn to the discourse of the Islamization of the state, which appealed to their identity-based political aspirations to restore Islam's glory. This discourse and their position within the state fueled Islamism as a response to their dissatisfaction with the status quo. Theories on Islamic fundamentalism are discussed by (Marty and Scott (1995).

Muslim scholars have different ways of articulating their views on the challenges facing their society. One group of scholars adopted a moderate approach that used the 'Western' intellectual heritage as a tool for analyzing and addressing social needs. This group includes Muslim activists such as Nurcholish Madjid, M. Dawam Rahardjo, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Djohan Effendy who contributed to the development and enrichment of Islamic and Indonesian discourses. These scholars had a strong background in Islamic education (pesantren), both traditionalist and modernist, and global experiences of studying in various contexts. They offered new ideas that differed from those of previous generations of Muslim activists. Their thoughts were influenced by the modernization of education and the sociopolitical and economic changes brought about by globalization that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. They also had to deal with the repressive and authoritarian tendencies of the state.

The main perspective that emerged from the first group of Muslim activists in Indonesia. They differed from the older generation of Muslim activists, who were more concerned with the formal symbols of Islamic politics. Instead, they focus on how to apply Islamic values in modern Indonesian society. This perspective is related to the statement of Nurcholish Madjid, a prominent Muslim thinker who sparked a long controversy. He argued that the Islamic movement should shift its orientation from politics to culture and coined the phrase: "Islam Yes, Islamic Party No" (Madjid, 1987).

Nurcholish Majid argues that involvement of Islam in politics has diminished its intellectual capacity. He believes that Muslims lack the necessary skills and knowledge to participate in the design of social and political change at the national level. Therefore, he suggests that the Islamic movement should focus on enhancing the intellectual, technocratic, and cultural foundations of Muslims so that they can adapt to modern life in Indonesia. This idea inspired the formation of the Association of Intelectual Moslem Indonesia (ICMI, Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia) in the early 1990s.

However, there is another group of new Santri middle classes who have a different vision of Islam. They advocate for a 'return' to the Islamic golden age by following the al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah. They are convinced that Islam is the only solution to the problems of humanity. They regard the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions as the best example for all Muslims to emulate.

Nurcholeis Madjid argues that religious identity needs constant renewal despite secularism and materialism, which he views as incompatible with Islamic teachings. Many early groups that shared this view opted to revive the Islamic heritage because they believed that Islam offers a holistic and complete worldview. They advocated for a return to Islamic law based on the Qur'an and the Sunnahto resist the secular and materialistic tendencies of Western culture. Some of these groups had exposure to Western cultural life, but they maintained their distinctiveness, as Ali Said Damanik puts it: nakhtalithu wala kinnatamayyazu (interacting without being contaminated) (Damanik, 2002). Here, they formed enclaves that continue to develop in a measured and organized manner with full calculation to control the growth of a new sub-culture that is different from the sub-culture that has existed before.

The New Order regime was very repressive toward the second group of Islamists who tried to follow the scriptures without considering the context. The regime did not allow any ideological diversity or mass movements, and it controlled the public sphere, including religion. The regime marginalized or eliminated Muslim leaders who were seen as stubborn, labeled vocal Muslim groups as extreme right, and forbade girls from wearing headscarves in public schools. The regime also imposed Pancasila as the only basis for the state and bureaucratized all Islamic institutions. In education, the regime restricted students' activities through a decree that normalized campus life and coordinated student bodies (NKK/BKK), which reduced the space and scope for student activism.

Islamic activists faced a repressive regime that suppressed their ideology and prevented their mass mobilization. They adapted by infiltrating the university sector as lecturers of Islamic courses and by occupying mosques in the urban outskirts near the campuses. These were the social spaces that the new middle class Santri had left behind as they moved up to the national level. The activists used these spaces to recruit and train new cadres in small groups, such as mosque worshipers and usroh groups, which formed a network of cells. They spread an alternative ideology that challenged the secular ideology of the state, which they considered incompatible with Islam and ineffective in solving the

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complex problems of society (Denny, 1990).

The state's failure to accommodate the aspirations and interests of Muslims in the country has created a sense of injustice among this educated segment. This sense leads to what is called relative deprivation, which is the discrepancy between the group and other groups, such as the perception of Islamic inferiority compared to other socio-religious groups, or dissatisfaction with the current situation compared to the idealized past.

This sense is shared and becomes 'identity' politics that motivates a stronger urge to participate in a movement to change the sociopolitical situation at an opportune moment. It is evident that their involvement in non-state organizations (non-government organizations) in education, health, and advocacy of the rights and duties of Muslim communities, especially, was a sublimation of the scarcity, or rather the impossibility, of taking a structural role in the government to fight for the rights of the Muslim community in the homeland.

The historical context of Islamic diversity in Indonesia in the late 20th century was influenced by global and regional events that shaped the Muslim psyche. One of these events was the advent of the 15th century Islamic calendar, which coincided with 1980, and was seen by many Muslims as a sign of a new era of Islamic revival. Another event was the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which toppled the secular and pro-Western regime of Shah Reza and established an Islamic republic under the leadership of Imam Khomeini and the Shiite clergy. These events inspired many Indonesian Muslims to seek a more authentic and faithful expression of their religion and to challenge the status quo that they perceived as un-Islamic or influenced by foreign powers. In addition, the Secretary-General of Râbithah Alam Islamî, Shaykh Alli Harakan, in a conference in Jakarta, urged Indonesia to take a leading role in the resurgence of Islam (Alatas & Desliyanti, 2002). Al-Harakan deliberately changed the word Indonesia to Andunisia, which is in plain pronunciation close to the term Andalusia who had carved the golden ink of a superior civilization of Islamic history. Thus, once again, the repressive authoritarian political structure and shared psychological atmosphere are becoming important variables for the rise of this contemporary Islamic movement.

Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that no matter how strongly they declare their desire to return to the treasures of Islamic tradition and are critical of the advantages and processes of modernization, that does not mean they are anti-modernity. Because they are also 'children' of the modernization of the country with a policy of opening wide access for Muslims to continue their education at home and abroad. Therefore, to a certain extent, the leaders of this movement are also enthusiastic about inviting Muslims toward a modern industrial society rooted in advanced technology. This is of course not surprising, because most activists are graduates of technology and natural science faculties such as the University of Indonesia (UI), Gadjah Mada University (UGM), Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) or Bogor Agricultural Institute (IPB) or universities in the West. To borrow Bjorn Olav Utvik's phrase, "if there is a typical vacation for an Islamist, it is the engineer's vacation" (Utvik, 2003).

Are these Islamic activists really voicing a desire to return to the Islamic model of the golden age? This is often misunderstood by their movements. The choice of ideologies, institutions, and ideals that try to reflect their orientation, character, and agenda are all very modern. The discourse of this movement, which is considered strange by groups different from them, is actually modern and rational because it adopts forms of self-development, social and economic mobility with completely modern language.

Borrowing Foucault's term, what they actually do is a form of self-technology, namely through practical education, they develop themselves and their groups independently, or with other help, some actions toward themselves, their souls, thoughts, behavior, and ways of life that are capable of changing themselves. They obtain certain happiness, obedience, wisdom, perfection, and immortality, which in this case is the progress of Islam and Muslims (Foucault, 1988).

Islamist activists use their social work as a way to address socio-economic challenges in a society that has diverse religious expressions. They also use their cultural capital, as Pierre Bordieu calls it, to adapt Islam to the changing situations and needs of the people. Islam, for them, is not just a set of universal and abstract theological principles but also a source of practical guidance and solutions for everyday life. They also use their networks and influence to spread their Islamist ideology to different levels of education, from universities to schools, and to challenge secular values that they see as non-Islamic. They also seize the opportunity to support political candidates who share their views, such as Anies Baswedan, who ran against Ahok (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama), the former governor of Jakarta, who was accused of blasphemy against the Quran. This is an example of how they mobilized Islamic populism as a force against their opponents in 2017 (Bourdieu, 1977).

The activists in this situation try to offer a new perspective that is based on Islam but not entirely influenced by Western culture and mindset. As Utvik (2003) argues, they seek cultural authenticity and nationalism that are relatively free from Western domination. They also stress the need for moral regeneration in society as a key condition for material development, because they do not oppose the accumulation of wealth and worldly prosperity, but rather in an Islamic way.

They see a major flaw in Western culture that is too materialistic and neglects moral life as the core of existence. This focus on reforming the moral life model is a common feature of contemporary movements in the Muslim world in general.

They (the West) claim to offer progress that is full of

material values. They can conquer space or make nuclear weapons, but they fail to reach human morals and the essence that others experience as happiness. For us (Moslems), human values derived from a harmonious relationship between parents and children, or between neighbors, are vital in human life (Qardhawi, 1994).

The discourse of 'They' and 'Us' plays a crucial role in the process of creating a sense of difference between Western culture and Muslims, and a sense of affinity among Muslims in an emotional way. To create a "glocal-solidarity" that combines global and local perspectives as an affective political strategy to build solidarity at the local, national, and global levels.

It is understandable that these Muslim activists are very critical of the corruption in the government, as well as the economic predators that is embedded in the neoliberal economy that harms many communities not only locally or nationally but also globally. Therefore, when they call for a return to Islamic sharia, they do not necessarily agree with the classical interpretations of sharia, but rather with a modern codification of sharia in legal texts that are done by specially elected individuals and then applied in the state justice system rather than religious courts. What they are striving for is to establish an 'Islamic governance' or implement Islamic sharia (rule of law) to humanize lives as the basic logic.

The opening of political space after the collapse of the New Order regime allowed various Islamist groups to voice their demands for the implementation of Islamic sharia in a literal way. This became a controversial issue that has been discussed in the public sphere ever since. The proponents of this idea often resort to repressive and violent methods to enforce Islamic sharia and religious teachings, which contradicts the spirit of intellectual activism that initially advocated the notion of Islamic sharia as a dynamic and contextual concept.

3. Two Domains of Islamism

This Islamist movement that has emerged in recent times has several main features that require careful analysis. There are at least two aspects of Islamism that have influenced Indonesian Muslim society. One is Islamism as an attitude and behavior that shows the tendency or preference of Indonesian Muslims to redefine issues related to Islamic teachings, such as the implementation of Islamic law in everyday life. The other is Islamism as a socio-political activity that involves an agenda such as the rejection of minority groups or views that acknowledge their existence in the current discourse of tolerance and religious pluralism. Moreover, at a more extreme level, this action can manifest as closing down places of worship that are allegedly unauthorized or destroying public places that are contrary to authentic Islamic values.

The second group of the new Muslim middle class, as defined by their different nomenclature, has a significant feature that distinguishes them from the others: their endorsement of Islamist views and actions that manifest in political parties and religious organizations as strategic tools at the local and national levels. Islamist views and actions tend to reinforce and conceal the latent potential of extremism, which may threaten the multi-cultural and religious life in Indonesia. To a large extent, it is also their strategy to develop their faith-based ideology to establish the potential for social change.

The main features of this movement worldview are as follows: First, it considers Islam a complete and holistic way of life that encompasses all aspects of human existence, including politics, law, and society. Therefore, it rejects any attempt to separate Islam from these domains or to compromise its principles. Second, it opposes Western secular ideology based on materialism and denies the role of religion in public affairs. It also accuses the Muslim community in Indonesia of deviating from the true path of Islam and neglecting its teachings. Hence, it strives to revive the Islamic sharia and implement it in all spheres of life as a solution to the problems facing the nation. Third, it emphasizes the importance of creating militant groups that are well-organized and disciplined to establish a new Islamic society in Indonesia.

Oliver Roy (1994) coined the term "radical neo-fundamentalism" to describe a movement that seeks to Islamize society through individual agency and the implementation of Islamic Sharia, without necessarily aiming for an Islamic state. However, this movement later evolved to embrace the idea of an Islamic state as a possible goal, especially after the fall of the New Order regime and the subsequent disappointment with the new government's inability to address the economic and political challenges facing society.

As mentioned earlier, this type of mindset is typical of many Islamist groups in Indonesia. Their language and symbols are often intertwined with religious meanings. What is more crucial to note is that some of these groups deliberately resort to violence, such as vandalizing the properties of other groups that they deem to violate Islamic sharia laws. They also act unilaterally outside the legal system if they believe that a community group does not comply with government regulations. This is evident in several cases of shutting down places of worship that are allegedly unlicensed or not following the legal procedures in Indonesia.

Religion can be a source of violence in various ways. One way is when individuals or groups attack others who belong to the same or different religions, based on religious reasons. Another way is when individuals or groups try to exclude, threaten, or banish others who have different or dissenting religious views. A third way is when individuals or groups damage or insult religious objects or symbols, such as holy books, prophets, or places of worship.

The data from PPIM in 2004 and other surveys in 2019 reveal a gap between the attitude and behavior of Islamism in relation to religious violence against other groups in the public sphere. The attitude of Islamism, which is measured by the willingness of a Muslim to

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take certain actions based on their religious beliefs, does not necessarily translate into the behavior of Islamism, which is measured by the actual participation in those actions. For example, the PPIM survey shows that 14.7% of Muslims are willing to destroy a church without a license, but only 0.1% have done so; 28.7% are willing to expel the Ahmadiyah group, but only 0.6% have done so; 23.2% are willing to stone adulterers, but only 0.8% have done so; and so on. These numbers indicate that there are other factors that influence Islamism behavior, such as social, political, or economic conditions. However, this does not mean that Islamism is harmless and cannot erupt into violent acts at any time.

A question that arises next is, to what extent are the attitudes and behavior of Islamism institutionalized? In general, it can be mentioned here that several militant organizations such as the Indonesian Mujahideen Council (MMI), Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), and the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) can be included as examples of movements that brought Islamism to the country. Even though there are some differences, both organizations are quite consistent in the Salafist struggle (manhaj salafis), such as in the implementation of Islamic sharia in Indonesia.

The leaders of these groups believe that Islamic law is fixed and immutable, and that it should be applied as it is, without any reinterpretation. They think that Islam is a complete, universal, and comprehensive religion and that its legal system, including the hudud punishments, is valid for all times and places. This view contrasts with the approach of some modern Muslim thinkers who advocate a contextual reading of religious texts in relation to the social realities that shape the domain of hudud.

FPI is a prominent actor in the enforcement of Islamic law in Indonesia, as it acts as self-appointed moral police that targets various entertainment venues (cafes, discos and clubs) in different regions of the country, claiming that they violate the Islamic law to which they adhere. This organization plays a significant role in imposing its moral vision on society through raids and closures.

FPI is an Islamic organization with a different agenda from other Islamic groups. FPI wants to implement Islamic shari'a in society and prevent munkar (evil deeds). FPI believes that Islam is a comprehensive and timeless religion that covers all aspects of life. FPI believes that the state should support and protect the practice of Islam by every Muslim. FPI also believes that the current problems in the country are caused by the government's adoption of a secular Western system that contradicts Islamic values. However, FPI does not aim to establish an Islamic state as its main goal. FPI respects the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and its leader, Habib Rizieq Shihab, who proposed the concept of the shariah Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia in 2017. However, this idea did not receive much support from other Islamists. FPI focuses on the application of

Islamic Shari'a in the Indonesian context. For the FPI, this is more important than the debate over an Islamic state that has divided many Islamic activists into the country.

MMI is a movement that follows salafi ideology and wants to apply Islamic sharia in the country. This organization has a main agenda of tatbiq al-shariah, which means to align the vision, action, and institution of the society with Islamic law. MMI believes that there are three stages to achieve this goal: *tansiq al-fardi* (harmonizing the vision), *tansiq al-amali* (harmonizing the action), and *tansiq al-nidhami* (harmonizing the institution). MMI tries to create Muslim individuals who follow these stages at the personal, family, and community levels. This is how the MMI prepares for the implementation of Islamic sharia in the country (Jamhari & Jajang, 2004).

Some observers have pointed out that some of the activists who participated in the MMI movement had a long-standing connection with Darul Islam (DI), a separatist group that opposed the Old Order regime and became a precursor of the radical Islamic movement in Indonesia. Thus, some people view the movement advocacy for the implementation of Islamic sharia in Indonesia as a continuation of the failed attempt to establish an Islamic state. Moreover, MMI envisions an institution that has the authority to enforce Islamic sharia as the final stage of creating a Muslim society, and that is, an Islamic state.

A different case is the Hizbut-Tahrir of Indonesia organization (HTI), which promotes a caliphate-based state ideology to its followers and rejects Pancasila (the five principles of the Indonesian state ideology). The government disbanded this organization on July 19, 2017 because it was considered to can incite conflicts in society and endanger the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

4. Understanding Islamism in Indonesia

One way to examine the emergence of Islamism in Indonesia and other countries is to examine the three sociological domains of micro-mezzo-macro dynamics and how they interact dialectically. This means that we have to consider how the local level reflects the global context and how social formations at the national level affect and are affected by the local level. This is an interactive way of understanding the local-national-global dimension of Islamism, which has different forms of relations with the global, such as reactions to the Marshal Plan geo-political and geo-economic agenda.

Emmanuel Karagiannis (2017) used the concept of The Glocalization Approach, from Ronald Robertson (2014), to study Islamism. Karagiannis argues that Islamic political movements in various countries adopt and borrow ideas from the transnational Islamic wave. Internet technology enables cross-border social interaction. However, the cultural diversity of each Islamic movement also influences its global dynamics resulting in cultural hybridization across borders.

Peter Mandaville (2014) examined the global dimensions of political Islam in different countries, considering the local and global contexts that influence them. He contends that Islamism at the local level is not isolated from the global processes of change, but rather participates in shaping them. Therefore, Muslim activists in various movements can articulate their political vision in a new way that reflects their identity and interests across different scales: local, national, and global. They have a strategic outlook that encompasses the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. In Indonesia, the expression of Islamism at the local and national levels is also affected by global factors such as neoliberal globalization, digital communication technology, and transnational Islamic issues. These factors create a hybrid form of Islamic politics and culture that transcends boundaries. As a result, Muslim activists develop a global awareness that enables them to perceive the world as a fluid space that connects the national-local-global contexts and the external world.

Islamism emerged as a significant socio-political force in Indonesia after the reformation movement of 1998, which ended the authoritarian rule of the New Order and opened up political space for various groups and ideologies. Islamism, in this context, refers to the political expression of Islamic values and norms, ranging from advocating for an Islamic state to promoting the implementation of sharia law in public life. Such aspirations were suppressed or marginalized during the New Order era, which prioritized economic development and social stability over political participation and diversity. The New Order followed the developmentalist agenda of the Marshal Plan, which aimed to modernize Indonesia through Western-style industrialization and urbanization. This sparked a debate among Muslim intellectuals in the late 1970s and 1980s about whether modernization meant Westernization and whether it was compatible with Islamic identity and culture. The reformation movement of 1998 created an opportunity for Islamists to voice their views and demands and to form new organizations and parties representing their interests. Islamism thus became a prominent feature of Indonesian post-New Order politics and society (Ali & Effendy, 1986).

The New Order regime sought to challenge Old Order thinkers by proposing alternative concepts that rejected ideology, politics, and parties. They claimed to be pragmatic and focused on programs and development, which became the new economic ideology of the New Order. This ideology also served to legitimize their rule and suppress dissent. The New Order developmentalism, which began in the late 1960s, created a new consciousness among Indonesians, especially in urban areas, who embraced the idea of modernization. This process was also influenced by the global spread of neoliberalism, which shaped Indonesia's' social, economic, and political structures. As a result, ideological and political thinking declined among Indonesians (Anwar, 1995: 121-129).

The New Order regime established by Suharto created a powerful oligarchy that persisted even after his fall. The political reform era in Indonesia did not dismantle oligarchic influence, but rather allowed it to reconfigure and infiltrate the party system (Robison and Hadiz, 2003; Hadiz, 2010). As a result, the oligarchs dominated both the legislative and executive branches, especially during the two terms of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2009 and 2009-2014) and Jokowi (2014-2019 and 2019-2024). The oligarchy adopted a neoliberal agenda but used democratic institutions to advance its own economic interests. The Indonesian political economy, unlike the neoliberal states in America and Britain, did not separate the economic and political spheres and thus failed to adhere to the principles of a free market with minimal state intervention. The state became an instrument for the oligarchs to exploit society and create socioeconomic inequality, which in turn fueled the rise of political Islamism in Indonesia since the onset of democratization.

Indonesian socio-economic-political structure has been integrated into the global neoliberal system, but this integration has faced many obstacles. The oligarchic power that was established during Suharto's New Order regime did not disappear after the political reform. Instead, it restructured itself and infiltrated the party system, dominating the parliament and the executive branch. This was evident in the two-term presidency of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2009 and 2009-2014), and in the two-term presidency of Jokowi, who initially represented nationalist populism. The rise of nationalist populism in Indonesia in 2014 was a response to global challenges and the influence of neoliberalism and liberal democracy. However, Jokowi's' government had to cope with the global political-economic situation that showed a systemic crisis of the neoliberal consensus and the emergence of populist movements in various developed and developing countries. According to Kuttner (2018) and Reid-Henry (2019), global populism poses a threat to the liberal order and reveals the pathological consequences of the free-market economy and liberal democracy.

Political populism worldwide reflects a desire for neoliberal policies that favor free market capitalism and undermine welfare and democracy. As welfare programs are eroded, the economic sector loses its influence on public policies that should represent the citizens'' will. Moreover, political parties fail to articulate the diverse interests of different social classes. Our research shows that Jokowi's government in Indonesia exemplifies this logic. For instance, his government tried to raise the BPJS health insurance premium in 2019, but it was rejected by the Supreme Court in 2020. Furthermore, political and economic oligarchs dominate the executive and legislative branches, compromising the representation of the people's interests. Additionally, the oligarchs have subordinated the Commission for Anti-Corruption to the executive branch, reducing its independence and

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effectiveness.

Urbinati (2014) argues that liberal democracies are facing a crisis of political representation because they have failed to address the social and economic challenges of global capitalism, such as the erosion of welfare, the convergence of party platforms, and the growing inequality and insecurity of citizens. This crisis has created fertile ground for the rise of populist movements and parties, which appeal to the discontent and frustration of various social groups, especially the Precaria and the middle classes, who feel betrayed by the political and economic elites. Populism, according to Kuttner (2018) and Renton (2019), is a global phenomenon that manifests itself in different forms and ideologies, from the left to the right of the political spectrum. Neiwert (2017) observed that right-wing populism posed a particular threat to democracy because it mobilized cross-class alliances around divisive and reactionary issues, such as nationalism, immigration, and identity. In the Indonesian context, tendencies similar to those that occurred in Europe and America also occurred, and opened up opportunities for Islamist groups to find space in Islamic populism, which showed its influence in 2017 and even put sharp political pressure on the 2019 presidential election process. Islamic populism is a political movement that claims to represent the interests of Muslims and criticizes elites deemed corrupt, secular, or liberal. Islamist groups use Islamic populism to spread their more radical and intolerant agendas, such as opposing civil rights, pluralism, and democracy. They also try to influence public opinion using social media, online campaigns, and street demonstrations. Thus, Islamic populism poses a serious challenge to Indonesian political and social stability, as well as to the Pancasila values that are the basis of the country.

The phenomenon of Islamic populism that attracts Islamist movements in Indonesia is part of a larger global trend. The emergence of Islamism in Indonesia is closely related to the socioeconomic challenges at the global and national levels that affect the local situation. This trend is also reinforced by the social insecurity that people experience as they face increasing risks and uncertainties in the world, and they react with a religious political logic that fosters the idea of Islamism.

Regarding Islamic political parties, AE Priyono identified five parties that share the same Islamist aspirations

[i] minimally aspires to fight for public and political life based on Islamic ethical and political principles or; If possible

[ii] endeavoring to apply Islamic Sharia in important areas of public life; and

[iii] maximally building a daulah Islamiyah (Islamic state) regime, although it must be pursued with various electoral and extra-parliamentary tactics, or

[iv] radically and the use of violence or practices of political extremism and/or Islamic fundamentalism movements outside parliamentary politics or electoral politics.

To assess how the five Islamist parties implemented their strategies and tactics, we can use Islamism's spectrum, which has four dimensions. However, because these parties participated in parliamentary or electoral politics, they did not resort to political violence as a means of struggle. Therefore, we can ignore the fourth dimension and focus on the other three. The table below gives a preliminary simulation based on these three dimensions. This is not a definitive representation, but a tentative one that needs further verification by a survey and other qualitative data.

Table 2. Islamic political party responses to the sharia principle and intention to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia (Priyono, 2019)

	Party				
	PKB	PAN	PKS	PBB	PPP
Application of Islamic principles in the public and political sphere	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application of Islamic Sharia in public areas is important	No	No/Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If there are political opportunities) upholding the Islamic State through electoral politics	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Political Islam or Islamism based on non-political socio-political organizations that emerged during the reform period were actually the products of the last decade of Suharto's rule. A study conducted by Zarkasyi (2009) illustrates that from 1990 to 1994, there were symptoms of remobilization of Islamic groups after Suharto relaxed his de-politicization policy toward Islam. From the 1970s to the late 1980s, Suharto underwent severe repression of all types of Islamist political movements. Similar to imitating Hurgronje's strategy, he was truly oppressive in political Islam. As a result, during this period, almost all Islamic forces withdrew from politics, and very few Islamist groups were willing to risk accepting government sanctions if they dare to mobilize political power (Priyono, 2019: 1-5).

Suharto's relationship with Islam changed in the early 1990s, when he faced subtle opposition from some of his own generals, who had a nationalist orientation. He sought the support of Islamic groups and established the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association (ICMI), which included almost all Islamic activists, except those loyal to Gus Dur. This was a strategic move by Suharto to repoliticize Islam and use it as a tool to counter the democratic demands of secular nationalists. He also wanted to isolate Islam from the democratization movement and make it a "buffer" against civilian and military dissent (Vatikiotis, 1994).

Borrowing Noorhaidi Hasan's view (2009), he argues that Indonesian Muslims have learned from their history of Islamism, which has tarnished the image of Islam with its negative aspects. He claims that Islamism is associated with intolerance, violence, extremism, and discrimination against other religions and cultures. He

suggests that the post-Islamism movement should offer a different vision of Islam, peaceful one, inclusive, respectful, and compatible with democracy and pluralism. He believes that this is the way to overcome the stigma that Islamism has created and to present Islam as a positive force in Indonesian society.

5. Conclusion

The New Order regime in Indonesia pursued a policy of "de-ideologization", "depoliticization or de-political-party-ization" and adopted a pragmatic approach to politics. The regime claimed that this was necessary for developing the nation and that it was different from Old Order ideology. This policy served as a way to legitimize the regime's' actions in society. As a consequence, many Indonesians, especially those in urban and suburban areas, embraced Westernization as a sign of modernity. This affected how urban middle-class Muslims perceived their identity and role in society.

The New Order also reformed the education system and created opportunities for a new generation of middle-class Muslim Santri. These were Muslims who moved from rural areas to provincial cities and capitals and became bureaucrats and professionals in various sectors. They had a significant impact on the social and cultural dynamics of their respective regions. They also faced challenges and dilemmas in balancing their religious and secular values.

Santri, who come from the middle class, have an important role in converting bureaucrats who are culturally dominated by Abangan and Priyayi. They played a role in the development of Islamism in Indonesia by developing identity-based politics to revive the golden age of Islam. In the context of depoliticization policies, the New Order failed to make them ideologically liberal pluralists. The repressive authoritarian political structure in this context has created important variable psycho-political conditions for the emergence of Islamism.

The emergence of Islamism in the form of any political movement in Indonesia is closely related to the context of global socio-economic problems that have affected the national level and local conditions. This condition has also strengthened social dissatisfaction in society because they feel that they live in an increasingly risky world and have no certainty about their future. In situations like this, they respond with religious political logic, which encourages the emergence of 'the idea of Islamism. The problem here is, is the Islamic community willing and able to move toward post-Islamism? To a certain extent, this work requires a lot of energy and strength to make it happen in a short time.

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