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Modernity and the Challenge of Pluralism: Some Indonesian Lessons

Abstraksi: *Dalam tradisi ilmu-ilmu sosial Barat tumbuh suatu penger-tian yang "keras" tentang sekularisasi: tersingkirnya agama dari kehidu-pan publik; agama hanya menjadi urusan pribadi masing-masing orang; ia tidak punya peran sosial yang berarti.*

Pandangan tersebut bersumber dari pengamatan tokoh-tokoh ilmu sosial Barat atas gejala keagamaan di Barat. Peran agama di sektor pub-lik akan tersingkir dengan semakin menguatnya diferensiasi-fungsional dalam masyarakat. Diferensiasi-fungsional ini akan semakin kuat keti-ka masyarakat semakin modern. Di samping itu modernisasi yang ber-langsung dalam suatu masyarakat sangat bertumpu pada budaya yang sangat menjunjung tinggi peran akal hingga tumbuh ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi modern. Iptek inilah yang menentukan tingkat moderni-tas suatu masyarakat. Sementara itu agama difahami sebagai sesuatu yang irrasional, dan karena itu bertentangan dengan tuntutan rasionalisasi masyarakat moderen. Semakin moderen suatu masyarakat, maka ia akan semakin meninggalkan agama. Agama akan menjadi semakin kurang berperan. Kalaupun berperan, perannya tersebut terbatas hanya pada urusan individu masing-masing.

Pengertian sekularisasi yang berdasar atas pengalaman masyarakat Barat seperti itu apakah juga berlaku pada masyarakat Islam?

Menurut penulis tidak. Kalaupun konsep sekularisasi digunakan in-telektual Muslim, pengertiannya berbeda. Sekularisasi lebih difahami se-

bagai upaya meletakkan secara tepat mana yang sakral dan mana yang profan, mana yang kudus dan mana yang duniawi. Dalam Islam, ini merupakan konsep monoteisme murni, tawhîd. Dalam Islam, yang sakral dipahami sebagai realitas lebih abstrak, bukan sebagai kekuatan ghaib yang menjelma dalam realitas duniawi, seperti pada benda-benda, tumbuhan, binatang, manusia, dan lembaga-lembaga sosial. Sekularisasi dalam Islam adalah penolakan atas sakralitas realitas duniawi ini, bukan menolak adanya yang sakral. Juga bukan berarti menolak peran agama di sektor publik. Agama dapat berperan sebagai sumber nilai bagi masyarakat.

Sekularisasi dalam pengertian itu tidak membuat Islam anti modernitas, ilmu pengetahuan, dan teknologi. Karena itu, sekularisasi yang dialami masyarakat Barat, seperti digambarkan oleh para teoritisi sekularisasi selama ini, tidak berlaku bagi masyarakat Islam. Setidaknya, teori sekularisasi yang "keras" harus direvisi ketika dihadapkan dengan kenyataan yang berkembang dalam masyarakat Islam.

Tuntutan bagi revisi tersebut sangat kuat ketika memperhatikan pengalaman-pengalaman umat Islam Indonesia yang sedang mengalami tantangan modernitas seperti masyarakat lain di belahan dunia ini. Umat Islam Indonesia secara kreatif telah mengembangkan pemikiran keislaman dalam rangka modernitas dan masyarakat Indonesia yang plural secara keagamaan. Telah tumbuh di Indonesia suatu kultur keislaman yang dapat mengakomodasi tantangan modernitas dan pluralitas keagamaan. Pemikiran ini sangat nampak pada kelompok pembaru pada masa Orde Baru ini, terutama dimotori oleh Nurcholish Madjid.

Gagasan sekularisasi atau desakralisasi kaum pembaru Islam Indonesia telah membuat Islam tidak identik dengan kelompok-kelompok sosial-politik tertentu. Islam telah terbebas dari konflik-konflik politik hingga bisa diterima oleh umat Islam secara lebih luas. Kategori-kategori priyayi, santri, dan abangan, yang digunakan Clifford Geertz untuk membedakan orientasi keagamaan di kalangan kaum Muslim Jawa, sekarang sudah tidak relevan lagi digunakan. Priyayi dan abangan sekarang sudah melebur ke dalam kultur keagamaan santri. Sekarang sedang berlangsung apa yang disebut sebagai "santrinisasi" atau "Islamisasi" di Indonesia. Ini berlangsung dalam masyarakat Indonesia yang sedang menjadi semakin moderen, di mana kelas menengah semakin kuat. Islam telah menjadi kultur kelas menengah ini. Modernitas bergandengan dengan Islam. Di Indonesia, Islam juga dapat mengakomodasi tantangan pluralitas, yang merupakan sisi lain dari modernitas. Islam telah berperan positif bagi kehidupan negara-bangsa Indonesia.

روبرت و. هفنير

التجديد وتحدي التعددية: بعض الدروس من إندونيسيا

الملخص: فى تقليد العلوم الاجتماعية الغربية نبتت فكرة جامدة عن العلمانية: إن تنحية الدين من الحياة السياسية فالدين إذا أصبح أمرا شخصيا فحسب لكل إنسان فليس له نفوذ اجتماعى ذو قيمة ولا معنى.

هذه النظرة صادرة من ملاحظة شخصيات العلوم الاجتماعية الغربية الذين سادوا الاعتبارات الدينية فى الغرب. إن نفوذ الدين فى المجال الشعبى سينزوى كلما تقوى عملية المفاضلة فى المجتمع. وعملية المفاضلة هذه تزداد قوة أثناء يكون المجتمع فى تقدم مستمر. وبجانب هذا، فإن التقدم القائم فى مجتمع ما أكثر تؤثرا بالثقافة الأعلى اعتمادا على نفوذ العقل حتى ظهرت العلوم والتقنية الحديثة.

هذه العلوم والتقنية هى التى قررت مدى مستوى تقدم مجتمع ما. فى أثناء ذلك، فإن الدين يفهم كأنه غير عقلى، ولهذا يتعارض والمطالب العقلية من المجتمع المتقدم.كلما تقدم المجتمع كلما ابتعد عن الدين، فالدين سيصبح ضعيف النفوذ. إذا كان له نفوذ، فإن نفوذه محدود فى الأمور الشخصية لكل امرئ.

معنى العلمانية المبنية على تجارب المجتمع الغربى مثل ذلك هل تحدث كذلك فى المجتمع الإسلامى ؟.

بناء على رأى الكاتب: لا. ولو استعمل المثقف المسلم نظرية العلمانية فإن الفهم يختلف. فإن العلمانية تفهم أكثر كخطة ساعية بطريقة سريعة وضع ما هو مقدس وما هو دنيوى. ففى الدين الإسلامى يعتبر هذا نظرية التوحيد الصافى الأديم، وفى الإسلام الشيئ المقدس يفهم كأنه حقيقة مجردة، وليست كقوة غيبية تظهر فى الحقيقة الدنيوية مثل فى الجمدات والمزروعات، والحيوانات والبشر والمؤسسات الاجتماعية. فالعلمانية فى الإسلام هى رفض قداسة الحقائق الدنيوية

هذه، وليست رفض وجودها القدسى. وكذلك ليست .بمعنى رفض النفوذ الدينى فى المجال الشعبى. فالدين يمكن أن يكون له نفوذ كمصدر تقييم للمجتمع.

الإسلام بفهمه للعلمانية فى هذا المفهوم لا يكون معاديا للتقدم ولا للعلوم والمعارف، ولا للتقنية. ولهذا، فالعلمانية التى يدركها المجتمع الغربى كما صورها أصحاب النظريات العلمانية طيلة هذه المدة لا تتلائم مع المجتمع الإسلامى. على الأقل، نظرية العلمانية المذكورة يجب أن تبحث من جديد عند ما تعرض أمام الحقيقة المتطورة فى المجتمع الإسلامى.

اظهار هذا البحث من جديد شديد الأوار حين نتأمل تجارب الأمة الإسلامية الإندونيسية التى ما زالت تواجه التحديات التقدمية كالمجتمعات الأخرى فى النصف الآخر من هذه الدنيا. إن الأمة الإسلامية الإندونيسية بصفة خلاقة قد طورت الفهم الإسلامى فى المجال التقدمى للمجتمع الإندونيسى المتعدد من الناحية الدينية. وقد نما فى إندونيسيا نوع من الثقافة الإسلامية التى تستطيع الأعداد لمواجهة التقدم وتعدد الأديان فى إندونيسيا. هذا التفكير الجديد الظهور فى كتلة التجديد فى آونة العهد الجديد هذا خصوصا الذى يقوده Nurcholish Madjid (نور خالص مجيد).

إن خطة تنظيم عملية العلمانية أو عدم القدسية الدينية لهؤلاء المجددين للإسلام فى إندونيسيا قد جعلوا الإسلام ليس مطابقا والكتل الاجتماعية السياسية المعنية. إن الإسلام أصبح حرا من المنازعات السياسية حتى يمكن أن تتقبله الأمة الإسلامية على نطاق أوسع. إن نوعيات priyayi, santri dan abangan الذين استعملهم Clifford Geertz (كليفورد جيرت) لتفرقة توجيههم الدينى فى اوساط المسلمين الجاويين أصبحت الآن غير صالحة للتمثيل بهم.

Priyayi و abangan أصبحوا الآن فى خليط واحد مع الثقافة الدينية المدرسية الإسلامية. الآن ما زال سائر ذلك الذى نسميه "santrinisasi" (الإجراءات الإسلامية) فى إندونيسيا. هذا واقع فى المجتمع الإندونيسى السائر إلى تقدم أكثر، الذى فيه المجتمع المتوسط أكثر قوة. فالإسلام أصبح ثقافة المستوى المتوسط. إن التقدم كتفا على كتف مع الإسلام فى المجتمع الإندونيسى. ففى إندونيسيا الآن الإسلام كذلك يستطيع مواجهة تحديات المجموعة المتنوعة التى تصور طرف آخر من التقدم. إن الإسلام له نفوذ إيجابى فى حياة دولة الشعب الإندونيسى.

T here are times when world events undergo such rapid and massive transformation that they challenge our sense of history and of our likely future. We are living through one of these periods of intensely destabilizing change right now. The collapse of communism in eastern Europe, the international drive for democratization, the clamor over human rights, the contest between secularist and religious visions of government and society —these and other things have forced observers in many societies to wonder whether there are not important commonalities to social development in our era.

In raising this issue, of course, we reopen a Pandora's box of unresolved questions concerning what is variable and what general in history and human experience. Can cultures be compared? Are modern societies developing in a convergent direction? Is it possible to talk about human rights across cultures? And, most relevant for my concern today, can we say that the modern era brings with it secularization or some other cross-culturally similar process of religious transformation?

Not since the years following World War II have such broadly comparative issues been in the air. At that time, Western social scientists were confident that one could talk about a general or worldwide process of social and culture modernization. Modernization theory dominated the social sciences and Western understandings of modern social change. During the late 1960s and 1970s, however, the "orthodox consensus" (Giddens 1984:xv) that underlay this perspective collapsed, and with it went agreement on the idea that there are broad commonalities to history and modernity. During the 1980s and 1990s, no analytic orthodoxy succeeded in reimposing itself in the Western social sciences, but there was growing skepticism about universalist preachments. Earlier characterizations in contemporary societies were subjected to critical deconstruction. Universalism seemed to give way to relativist affirmations of the incommensurability of cultures and the playful, even ironic, indeterminacy of modern social change.

It is against this background of relativist and generalist ferment that I want to ask whether recent research allows us to say that secularization is intrinsic to modern social development. For the moment let me note that by "secularization" I mean the process whereby domains of social activity and human experience previously organized around religious norms are "desacralized" by their reinterpretation

in terms of ideals and practices of a less directly sacral nature (cf. Wilson 1985). This issue is not merely academic, of course, but has very practical implications for the question of what role religion should play in government, the economy, and the public order generally. The topic of secularization has also been controversial among Indonesian Muslim intellectuals, where scholars such as Nurcholish Madjid have suggested that a measure of secularization or *tawhîd*-inspired "desacralization" is not merely inevitable but deeply necessary for Islam's religious and social vitality.

To assess these questions, then, I will in the first part of this paper return to earlier discussions and examine what was meant by secularization and why it was thought intrinsic to modernity. This exercise reveals that, though many Western scholars have seen secularization as a feature of modernity, their analysis has at times been compromised by two questionable views: an unjustifiably narrow understanding of religion as a system of private belief rather than (in addition) a way of life, and the tendency to identify aspects of religious change in the West (and only some of the West, at that) with what is universal in the modern era.

Heaving briefly examined aspects of secularization theory, I want in the next part of this paper to raise the question as to how religious change in the modern Muslim world compares with that of the West. In particular, I want to ask whether the Muslim world is the "great exception" to secularization, as Ernest Gellner has recently argued (Gellner 1992:18), in that it alone among the world's core civilizations "totally and effectively defies the secularization thesis". I will examine this question not from the perspective of general theory alone but in relation to religion and politics here in the most populous of majority-Muslim societies, Indonesia. As Gellner would predict, recent developments in Indonesia seem at first to defy the secularization thesis and suggest that Islam is a "great exception."

At a deeper level, however, developments in Indonesian Islam remind us that, though the universal preachments of the secularization thesis itself are deeply flawed, there are in fact important affinities between the challenges faced in the Muslim world and those encountered in the West. In particular, historical comparison suggests that one of the central challenges to religion in both regions is the question of how to respond to the pluralism of the modern world. The manner in which believers in both traditions respond to this chal-

lenge can certainly vary —pluralism is, in any case, general to our era. In the case of Indonesia, moreover, the options being pursued for the management of pluralism could well provide important lessons not merely for the Muslim world but for the West as well.

Secularization Theory Revisited

Secularization theory is less a theory in the technical sense of the word that it is a loosely structured set of assumptions as to the contours of religious development in the modern era. What is most remarkable about these assumptions is less their analytic rigor or depth of insight than their breadth of appeal. Despite the great differences that separate these approaches, secularization assumptions in the West filtered into each of this century's great schools of social thought: marxist, liberal, and postmodernist.

The "inherited model" (Wilson 1985) of secularization theory drew most directly on the works of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. From Durkheim, the model adapted its structural model of societal modernization, with its assumption that modern development involves the increasing differentiation and specialization of social structures. In this view, commerce and, later, industrialization bring about a growing division of labor, and this in turn promotes a generalized "differentiation" (separation and specialization) of social institutions. Kinship, politics, education, and employment all separate from their original primordial unity and assume a dizzying variety of complex, more specialized, forms. Societies are thereby transformed from simple, homogeneous collectivities into the pluralistic entities we associate with modernity today.

According to Durkheim and later secularization theorists, this process of structural functional differentiation involves not just adjustments in social organization but the fragmentation or pluralization of life-worlds, meanings, and experience. Where previously there was a "sacred canopy" (Berger 1967) stabilizing life experience and providing a basis for shared meaning, in modern times the canopy is rent and the collective bases of morality and identity are diminished or lost. Unlike the German philosopher Nietzsche (and many postmodern theorists who reference him for their works), Durkheim believed that this loss of religion was but a temporary dysfunction of early modernization. No society can survive without a collective moral consciousness, he thought, and eventually a new, though largely

secular, "civil religion" would emerge to play the role earlier assumed by religion. Centered on Durkheim's "cult of the individual", this civil religion would provide coherence and stability even in the absence of a theistic canopy.

The idea of civil religion was central to Durkheim's views on secularization, and, with the related concept of "civic culture", played a role in models of modernity developed by such leading figures as Edward Shils (1961), Robert Bellah (Bellah 1975; Bellah and Hammond 1980), and, early in his career, Clifford Geertz (1973). Most versions of secularization theory, however, relegated the civil religion theme, with its image of a secular (or lightly secularized) equivalent to traditional religion, to a secondary role. These approaches looked beyond Durkheim to the sociologist Max Weber and the German philosopher, Freidrich Nietzsche. Like them, this version of secularization theory adopted a bleaker perspective on the prospects for the reconstitution of a civic morality in the modern era. Borrowing from Weber's ideas on instrumental rationalization, these models emphasized that science, technology, and modern capitalism have not merely worked to differentiate our world, as Durkheim implied, but also to depersonalize and "disenchant" it. Having used a religious ethic to help institutionalize capitalism and bureaucratic government, modern Western society in the twentieth century has decided that it can work quite well without religious buttressing. In the view of this version of secularization theory, modernity's challenge to religion and civic morals is more severe than Durkheim had imagined.

In short, though one wing of secularization theory remained optimistic about the prospects for a reconstituted moral consciousness in the modern world, the other echoed Weber and Nietzsche in affirming modernity's destabilization of all religious and foundational certitudes. Though during the 1960s and 1970s secularization theory vacillated between these Durkheimian and Weberian poles, recent social theorists in the West have tended to favor the Weberian or Nietzschean view of the irrecoverable fragmentation of live-worlds bringing about the demise of religion. There are, of course, other, less main line theories of religious modernization among Western scholars, some of which affirm the potential for spirituality even in a postmodern age (Berger 1992; Cox 1990). What is so intriguing about the secularization tradition, however, is the ease with which it moved from a modest or "neutral" view of religion to an extreme or even

hostile one. The modest version affirmed that with society's struc-
tural-functional differentiation (or some equally radical process of
live-world pluralization), the scope of religious institutions and mean-
ings is progressively narrowed, until both are made a matter of pri-
vate, individual belief rather than publicly-enforced morality. This
view of the inevitable "privatization" of modern religion is clearly
expressed in the work of one of the most eminent secularization theo-
rists, the British sociologist Bryan Wilson:

> "The secularization thesis implies the privatization of religion, its continu-
> ing operation in the public domain becomes confined to a lingering rethorical
> invocation in support of conventional morality and human decency and
> dignity —as a cry of despair in the face of moral panic" (Wilson 1985:19).

As this quote itself unwittingly illustrates, it is a slippery slope
from a soft secularization thesis to a hard one. Many Western writers
move quickly, almost unthinkingly, from generalizations about the
desacralization of the public and the pluralization of beliefs to gener-
alizations about the "irrationality" and inevitable decline of religion.
Thus Wilson (1985:18) describes religion as "deep-laid in man's es-
sential irrationality" and implies that it is only because of this "essen-
tial irrationality" that the inexorable progress of secularization has
not advanced further. On the evidence of a country like the United
States, where the great majority of citizens continue to profess a reli-
gious faith (Wuthnow 1988), this characterization of religion as irra-
tional and in inevitable decline seems curious at the very least. But it
was typical of the tendency among early secularization theorists —
and many Western intellectuals generally— to confuse the analysis of
modern religion with their own secularist world views.

Islam and Secularization: the Great Exception?

Given the severity of many secularization forecasts, it is not sur-
prising that Western observers have been perplexed by the phenom-
enon of modern Islam. While the Judeo-Christian tradition is repre-
sented (much too simplistically) as in irreversible decline, religion in
the Muslim world seems as vibrant as ever. Ernest Gellner aptly sum-
marizes this paradox:

> "It is possible to disagree about the extent, homogeneity, or irreversibil-
> ity of this trend [i.e., secularization]...; but, by and large, it would seem
> reasonable to say that it is real. But there is one very real, dramatic and

conspicuous exception to all this: Islam. To say that secularization prevails
in Islam is not contentious. It is simply false. Islam is as strong now as it was
a century ago. In some ways, it is probably much stronger" (Gellner 1992:5).

Other, equally distinguished observers of the Muslim world come
to similar conclusions. Thus, for example, the respected sociologist
Bassam Tibi has written extensively on Islam and secularization. In
his view, secularization is inevitable in modern industrial society. In-
voking models inspired by modernization theory, he attributes this
development to the functional differentiation of social structures (Tibi
1988:127). When he turns to the Muslim world, Tibi observes that
Islamist political theorists insist on a "congruence between the sacred
and the political" (131). Such a view, Tibi goes on to argue, represents
a preindustrial, "organic" view of religion and politics incompatible
with the modern era's demand for autonomy and functional special-
ization. Citing the European experience, in which Protestantism was
"primarily domiciled within the sphere of interiority" (p.139), he ends
by predicting, "The future of Islam seems to lie in a parallel direc-
tion." Thus what began as an oversimplified, indeed distorted, under-
standing of religion's fate in the West is quietly generalized to the
Muslim world.

While Ernest Gellner agrees with Tibi in seeing Islam as out-of-
step with what he believes are the secularizing and privatizing im-
peratives of the modern world, he is much less optimistic about the
long-term prospects for the kind of change Tibi envisions. Modern
Islam, Gellner insists, has a social organization and ideology unique
among the world religions in its ability to adapt to the challenges and
opportunities of modern development. More particularly, Gellner
asserts, modern Islam has been able to play a role akin to that of
ethno-nationalism in the West, but with quite different consequences
for religion. In the West, Gellner argues, nineteenth —and early twen-
tieth— century nationalism revived and idealized, thus ultimately
transforming, popular ethnic culture. Though in some Western coun-
tries (such as Ireland, Poland, and Spain) religion played a role in
nationalist movements, in most of the West, Gellner notes, national-
ism emphasized folk culture rather than Christendom at its core value
complex. In this manner it displaced Christianity from its role as the
key emblem of European political identity.

Like Christianity, Gellner continues, Islam too had long been split
into a high and low variant. The high tradition was associated with

the trans-ethnic and trans-political clerisy of *'ulamâ'*, while the low or folk tradition was grounded on kinship politics and localized shrines to Muslim saints (Gellner 1981:75-76). Throughout history the two traditions flowed into and influenced each other. Periodically, however, they also erupted into conflict, when reformers "revived the alleged pristine zeal of the high culture, and united tribesmen in the interests of purification and of their own enrichment and political advancement" (*ibid*). With its industries, education, and, above all, powerful state, the modern era, Gellner argues, has irreversibly altered this "flux and reflux" (Gellner 1981; 1992:14) between localization and universalizing reform. Today, modernizing reformists identify the folk variant of Islam as the source of the Muslim world's backwardness. In reformers' eyes, Gellner claims, the twin challenges of modernization and Western dominance demand that this backward tradition be replaced once and for all with a purified, high Islam. Only through such a total-cultural revolution can the Muslim world restore its lost glory and propel itself into the modern era.

For Gellner, Islam is unique among the world's historic religions "in that it allows the use of a pre-industrial great tradition of a clerisy as the national, socially pervasive idiom and belief of a new style community" (Gellner 1983:81). Whereas in the Western world the rise of the modern state diminished Christianity's role in political life, in the Muslim world nation-state development has revitalized religion. Though Gellner shies away from making social forecasts, he hints that things are not likely to change in the near future. "So far," he comments, "there is no indication that it [Islam] will succumb to secularization in the future either" (1992:18).

Islam and Pluralism in Indonesia

I want to put aside for the moment the question of whether Gellner's general characterization of secularization is right (I think it is not), and shifting focus a bit, examine this problem of the putative "exceptionalism" of the Muslim world in the light of Indonesian Islam. Indonesia is rather far from the historic heartland of the Muslim world, but it is the most populous of Muslim nations and, over the past two centuries, has experienced movements of political and religious reform like those known in other parts of the Muslim world. For the sake of brevity, I will limit my empirical illustrations to recent history and to just one portion of the vast Indonesian archi-

pelago, the island of Java, where some 60 per cent of Indonesians live.

The standard characterization of Javanese Islam is that provided by Clifford Geertz in his, *The Religion of Java*. Whatever its short-comings, which are many, this work succeeds at capturing the extraordinary pluralism of Javanese Islam in the 1950s and the forces animating its change. Geertz identified three strains of Javanese Islam: the *abangan* or folk variant, which he saw as a ritualistic melange of indigenous, Hindu and Muslim elements; the *santri* or more normatively "orthodox" variant of Islam; and the *priyayi* or aristocratic variant, which Geertz saw as deeply influenced by Java's earlier Hindu-Buddhism.

Marshall Hodgson (1974:551) and, more recently, Mark Woodward (1989) have demonstrated that in distinguishing "Hindu-Buddhist" from Islamic elements in Javanese religion Geertz used an unjustifiably narrow conception of Islam. As a result, much of what he regarded as Hindu-Buddhist is more properly understood as derived from popular Sufism and courtly styles of polity and devotion adapted from Indo-Persian Islamic precedents. For the purposes of our present discussion, however, whether Geertz's analysis is philologically on mark is of secondary importance to what his work, and that of his teammate on the "Modjokuto" research project, Robert Jay (1963,1969), reveals as to the dynamics of Islamic reform in the mid-twentieth century. Conducting their research at a time when Indonesia had one of the freest parliamentary democracies in all Asia, Geertz and Jay describe a situation in which class and ideological conflicts were supercharged with religious antagonisms pitting *abangan* Javanists, who tended to support Indonesia's nationalist and communist parties, against *santri* Muslims. Though religious issues were but one influence on this bitter polarization, the conflict, with its politicization of religion, had serious implications for the nature of religious change in modern Indonesia.

The more properly religious dimension of this political conflict often pitted *abangan* traditionalists, with their cults of local saints and revered ancestors, against *santri* reformers who wanted nothing but to replace what they regarded as polytheistic deviations with devotional worship of a unitary Allâh (God). Muslim reformers also criticized spirit-mediums, magicians, healers, herbalists, and any one else who appeared to traffic in magical powers or tutelary spirits. Reports from other times and places in Java paint a similar portrait of

a Muslim drive against rural Javanist traditions (Hefner 1987,1990;
Pranowo 1991). Forty years after Geertz and Jay's research, we can
now assess the results of this reformation effort. The evidence is com-
pelling and clear: the reformist efforts were astoundingly successful,
suppressing heterodox cults and canalizing popular spirituality away
from the *wujûdî* pantheism once characteristic of folk Javanese reli-
gion and into more *tawhîdic* or monotheistic devotional forms.
Though, by comparison with other Muslim societies, Javanese Islam
today remains remarkably pluralistic, there can be no question that
reformist Muslims have carried out nothing less than a great transfor-
mation, bringing popular religion into closer conformity with nor-
mative Islam (Pranowo 1991).

Is this secularization? Clearly if our ideas on secularization are
based on the "hard" version of the thesis that I described above, this
is not secularization at all, but simply a delegitimation of old reli-
gious practices and the sacralization of others. Religion has not been
banished to the realm of the personal, exposed as "essentially irratio-
nal" (to invoke Wilson's unhappy phrase), or pushed down the slip-
pery slope toward inevitable extinction. On the contrary, while at-
tacking spirit cults and shamans, Muslim reformers promote mosque
attendance and other conventional expressions of Islamic piety. From
a normative Islamic perspective, the Javanese appear more religious
than ever.

If, however, what we mean by secularization is more the "soft"
secularization to which I referred earlier, with its pluralization of
meaning systems and the desacralization of domains previously spiri-
tualized, I think it is fairly clear that the efforts of Islamic reformers
contain elements that resemble a good deal of our phenomenon of
secularization, or some general process hidden within this troubled
concept. In attacking the worship of guardian spirits, belittling the
spiritual efficacy of ancestors, and contesting the morality of all forms
of magic, Muslim reformers have *desacralized* domains that previously
fell under the spell of magical and spiritist technique, and *relocated*
divinity to a higher or more abstract plane of experience. In so doing,
the reformers have created a *tawhîdic* ethic more general or abstract
than the one they displaced in the way it explains and controls things
like curing, agriculture, and human destiny.

Let me explain this last point, because it is central to our task of
distinguishing what is useful and what is mistaken in earlier versions
of secularization theory. This process whereby worldly acts are

desacralized and divine agency is relocated away from the immediacy of individual instances of curing, cultivating, etc., is, I believe, a relatively common feature of modern change in the world religions, though it is often mischaracterized in secularization theories that equate secularization with the decline of religion entirely. Like an earlier Christian reformation, Islamic reform does not disenchant the world, but distances its spiritual agency from the immediacy of specific, this-worldly space-time events. Rather than a cure being achieved because a spirit can be cajoled to intervene, blessing comes to those who live in the way of an all powerful, but also more remote, Allah.

Though theorists from the hard-secularization school may have difficulty distinguishing this kind of change of religious consciousness from the desacralization-slipping-into-disbelief that they emphasize, the difference is profound. By coming to conceive of God in more abstract terms —for example, as an all powerful creator ultimately responsible for all that exists but not "in" the world in the immediate and responsive fashion that, say, an animist spirit is— this "soft" secularization or desacralization can coexist with other, more empirical vehicles of explanation and control. In particular, like post-Reformation Christianity, Islamic reform opens itself to natural science and sees no conflict between scientific technique and religious belief.

The kind of change promoted by Muslim reformers that I am describing here, of course, is a vital preadaptation for the open and empirically-oriented world view sometimes referred to as modern or scientific rationality. In as much as this kind of change has taken place in much of the Muslim world, which I believe it has, it also bears a striking resemblance to the earlier efforts of Christian and post-Christian philosophers to carve out a space for empirical science by insisting that the book of nature was as legitimate a way to God as the Book of Revelation (Casanova 1993:24). Thus, like their Christian counterparts in the early modern era, modernist Muslims throughout the world have little difficulty accepting the legitimacy or importance of modern medical science; indeed, they prefer it over localized magical traditions. Whether, in fact, we want to continue to use the term "secularization" to refer to this type of religious change is not as great a concern for me as the recognition that religious rationalization like this has occurred in many parts of the modern world. Whether we want to call it "secularization" or not, we see here a striking convergence in modern religious experience.

If from one perspective Islam in modern Indonesia has been a powerful agent of something that resembles what used to be called secularization (or, if you will, "desacralization and abstraction"), from another perspective Muslims seem to be working for something different. In the 1950s, the highly-charged and politicized drive for Islamic revitalization focused not just on the *tawhîdic* repudiation of parochial healing cults and shrine worship, but on efforts to Islamize Indonesia's political and economic institutions. During the first or "Old Order" period of Indonesian independence, some Muslim political parties militated for the establishment of an Islamic state (*negara Islam*). Failing that, others in the leadership hoped that, at the very least, the national government would enforce the so-called "Jakarta charter." The latter statement had originally been included in the 1945 declaration of independence, but was subsequently dropped after protests from Indonesia's Christian and Hindu minorities (Boland 1982). According to the charter, the government was to work to "carry out" (*menjalankan*) Islamic law (*sharî'ah*) among the Muslim portion of the Indonesian populace. In other words, rather than building a high wall between church and state, Muslim reformers sought to link them with a sturdy, stable bridge.

The effort to achieve an Islamic state was opposed, of course, by some in the Muslim leadership, as well as the leadership of the Indonesian Nationalist and Communist Parties. Supercharged by a deteriorating economic situation, the struggle between Muslim parties and the communists came to a tragic climax during 1965-1966. Then, in the aftermath of a failed left-wing officers' coup, Muslim organizations joined forces with the military to strike at the Indonesian Communist Party (Cribb 1990; Hefner 1990). Though the motives that fueled the killing were varied, some Muslim political organizations sacralized the campaign against the communists, a few even calling it a holy struggle or *jihâd*.

From this abbreviated historical account, we can see that, whatever may have been occurring in the realms of medicine and spirit worship, Muslim politics was not animated by a unitary desacralization of the mundane. On the contrary, some Muslim politicians saw themselves as engaged in a holy struggle to recapture the Indonesian nation from their secularist and atheistic rivals. On the surface, then, the Muslim campaign conformed rather nicely to Gellner's vision of modern Islam. A purified high Islam was posed in

opposition to the corrupted low Islam of the *abangan* community. Rejecting communism, secularism, and Western liberalism, political Islam was to provide a basis for the revival and redirection of the nation.

The efforts of political Islam did not end, of course, with the destruction of the Communist party. In the aftermath of 1965-1966, the government announced that its first priority was the political and economic stabilization of the country. It moved quickly to restrict the activities of political parties, including Muslim ones. In the face of government restriction on political Islam, the Muslim community split into several camps, some supporting cooperation with the government and others favoring opposition. One debate which ensued among Muslim intellectuals is interesting for our purposes, because it came to focus on the highly charged question as to whether the modernization of Islam required its "secularization" (*sekularisasi*) (Madjid 1987). Several leaders called for an innovative program of Islamic "renewal" (*pembaruan*). They criticized the identification of Islam with party politics, implying that the earlier politicization of Islam (through its association with formal political parties) had only undermined popular piety. The campaign for a Muslim state, they added, confused a profane preoccupation with a sacred one.

There is nothing in scripture, these critics argued, to indicate that Muslims must struggle to create an Islamic state. Hence this and other mundane political initiatives must be viewed in a new light —they must be "secularized." In a limited sense, Madjid and others meant that Muslim should repudiate all forms of partisanship that confuse mundane goals with sacral ones and shift their attention to more properly religious affairs. More generally, however, the renewal groups' call for secularization was a bold affirmation of their belief that the Muslim response to the modern situation must include a struggle to live with, and respond to, Indonesia's pluralism.

As we all know, this appeal for secularization provoked disbelief among some in the Muslim community. The intellectual most closely associated with this call for secularizing renewal, Nurcholish Madjid, was attacked for trying to transform Islam into what one Muslim critic called a "spiritual personalist ethical system" akin, it was claimed, to modern Western Christianity (Hassan 1982: 114, 123). Madjid and his followers took care to emphasize that they rejected the ideology of *secularism*, with its privatization of religion, while supporting *secularization* construed as the desacralization of things wrongly sacral-

ized. But their critics countered that any move toward secularization violates the very essence of Islam . Islam is a "total way of life," they said, and, unlike Christianity, provides clear norms as to how law and society should be organized. To talk of secularization is thus to abandon the social and ethical totality demanded by Islam.

Though Madjid's influence temporarily declined following this controversy, the government's wariness toward politicization of religion made any kind of mass-based mobilization difficult during the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, whether they agreed with the "desacralizers" or not, most of the Muslim leadership channelled their energies during these years away from party politics into programs of social and educational reform. It is clear that many prominent figures in the Muslim community, like Madjid, Dawam Rahardjo, Djohan Effendi, and Abdurrahman Wahid, saw these efforts at religious education and social reform as the proper focus for a pluralistic Islam that had renounced once and for all the ideal of an Islamic state. Others outside this leadership, however, may have seen these non-political initiatives as a kind of temporizing strategy, designed to win time and support.

It would take me beyond the confines of the present paper to describe events during the 1970s and 1980s in any detail (see Hefner 1993). For the purposes of our present discussion, let me say simply that the "depoliticization" of Islam coupled with the Muslim effort to deepen mass piety had, by the late 1980s, proved a brilliant success. The Muslim leadership's forswearing of party politics calmed the nerves of officials opposed to the politicization of religion. At the same time, and with the support of the Department of Religion, the Muslim community was able to embark on a bold program of cultural and religious revival. It doubled the number of mosques in the country in just ten years, introduced religious education into the public schools, established a network of teacher-training colleges which graduated thousands of religious teachers, and, in brief, reversed the decline in Muslim piety that had resulted from the politicization of Islam in the Old Order period. For those of us familiar with the Indonesia of an earlier era, the results of all this campaign have been astonishing. Today, Indonesia's public culture is far more Islamic than it was in the 1950s and public piety much greater.

The very ascent of this politically low-profile, cultural Islam has changed Indonesia's political culture, creating a Muslim middle class with greater initiative and influence than at any time in the New

Order era. As Islamization brings more and more people to piety, it is inevitable and, in fact, important that Muslims and non-Muslims reconsider the role of religion in public life. Just as such discussions have shaped the role of religion in the West —in ways far more varied than modernization theory once acknowledged— they will here in Indonesia as well.

Conclusion: the Challenge of Pluralism

By way of conclusion, let me return to my earlier comments on secularization and determine just what the Indonesian example can tell us, first, about pluralism, secularization, and modern religious change, and second about whether or not Islam constitutes, as Gellner argued, a "great exception" to modern processes of religious change.

The first and most general comment we can make is that, when examined closely, the processes that might correspond most directly to what classically-trained Western theorists call secularization are a good deal more complex than generalizations about "structural differentiation" imply. Here in Indonesia, it is not at all clear that "structural differentiation" or a growing division of labor has been the primary engine of secularization. Yes, Muslim reformists —incidentally, like their Hindu counterparts in neighboring Bali (Bakker 1993)— express support for modern science and criticize magic and spirit cults. Their criticism represents a kind of secularization —in our limited sense of the desacralization of mundane things in conjunction with the maintenance of a still-strong commitment to an overarching divinity. And in some round-about way this development can be traced back to the achievement of modern science and an industrial division of labor. For the most part, however, to the degree that it has occurred at all, this desacralization has been promoted in advance of a thorough-going transformation of the Indonesian economy or its division of labor. It has been pioneered by religious reformers, nationalist politicians, military officers, educators, and others distinguished not so much by their role in an industrial division of labor, but by their participation in the political and moral project to create a modern Indonesia. To put the matter in two-polar terms, one could say that the process of modern religious change here has been more decisively affected by the struggle for a modern nation than it has secularization theory's "structural differentiation".

Whether in Indonesia or the West, the "inherited model" in secularization theory, with its Durkheimian emphasis on economic dif-

ferentiation, tends to overlook this more complex play of forces. In both regions, modern religious change has in fact been deeply shaped by religion's role in the life of the nation as much or more than it has economic change. Though classical secularization theory tended to overlook this fact, this same influence was decisive even in the development of modern religion in the West. This can be seen in the fact that Western societies like France and England institutionalized very a different relationship between Church and state in the early modern era despite having achieved similar levels of economic development. The critical influence on religion in public life was not the economy alone, then, but the relationship of religion to government and civil society.

Let me illustrate this with a brief reference to the varied role of religion in Western Europe. In France, we know, a monopolistic Roman Catholic clerical establishment opted in the pre-Republican era for a strong alliance with the royalist state; it used this alliance, in turn, to suppress religious pluralism, especially that of the Protestant Huguenots, who were hunted down and killed. As so often happens in human history, however, this apparent gesture of strength —which involved the sacralization of an all-too-human political establishment— proved over the long run to weaken religion in French civil life. Identified as it was with a repressive and monolithic state system, the Church's policies guaranteed that later popular struggles for political reform would show an equally monolithic hostility to the clergy and all religion. Herein lies the origins of the "laic" [secularist] tradition which, to this day, is such a strong influence on French national life —an influence visible in the French government's continuing opposition to such issues as the rights of young Muslim girls to wear veils (*hijâb*) to school. As David Martin (1978) has noted, this same pattern of a religious polarization, pitting an often quite conservative religious establishment with strong ties to the state against radical anticlerics hostile to religion in public life, was also once prominent in Spain and some other parts of the Latin-Catholic world.

But patterns of religiosity in the West are far more diverse than modernization theories have often implied. In contrast with France, the Church of England was also an "established" (state-backed, and official) religion and at times its leadership had aspirations every bit as monopolistic, and bloody, as its French Catholic counterpart. Catholics and dissident Protestants (known as "nonconformists") were at times hunted down and killed. At a certain critical moment in its

development, however, the Church had to decide what to do with Protestant dissenters who rejected the legitimacy of the Church of England. Rather than choosing to suppress pluralism, the Church balked and ended up tolerating it. The stand-off between establishment supporters and their anti-establishment rivals was long and at times difficult. In the end, however, the *failure* of England's rulers and Church leaders to push for a decisive suppression of Catholics and Protestant nonconformists created a free space conducive to pluralism and religious dissent. This tradition of tolerating religious dissent provided, in turn, a precedent for more general forms of pluralism and tolerance. This same tradition of religion-within-pluralism would be institutionalized in an even more vigorous form in the United States.

The point here is that, in England as in all of Europe, the precise role of religion in government and society was much more complex than is implied in modernization theory and many commentaries in Western political theory. Here, as in the contemporary Muslim world, the process whereby religious institutions and values were (or were not) woven into the fabric of modern national life varied widely; more specifically, the role of religion in public life was deeply affected by the decisions religious and political elites made in the face of religious pluralism and dissent. While "established" churches which suppressed pluralism may have worked in the short run to defend religious institutions, over the long run they often generated a deep hostility on the part of some in the broader public toward religion itself. It is no coincidence that it is in Europe's Mediterranean Catholic countries that one finds some of the strongest traditions of secularist anti-clericalism. Conversely, the nation with the strongest and most pluralistic tradition of religious "disestablishment" in the West, the United State, is also the one with the most vibrant religious life today. On this evidence, it would seem that a judicious measure of religious tolerance can, in some instances, work to deepen rather than weaken the influence of religious institutions in society as a whole.

A similar contest over the direction of government and civil society is one of the primary influences shaping the course of religious change in Indonesia and other parts of the Muslim world today. Some contestants in this struggle reject religious "disestablishment" and insist on a direct and literal application of Islamic law to all aspects of government and social life. Others insist, with good reason I believe,

that such a view distorts the historic understanding of law within Islam, attributing a fixed and closed quality to Islamic law which the tradition itself never had. For some such critics, then, the role of Islam in a pluralistic era is to play a more general or abstract role, by providing an ethos or spirit for public culture and government, not a finished or closed blueprint.

Indonesian Pluralism

Relative to many other Muslim countries, what is remarkable about the Indonesian case is that, at the moment, so many prominent Muslim leaders support the pluralist understanding of religion rather than the establishmentarian view. In part, I suspect, this reflects the rich heritage of pluralism within Indonesian Islam. Though earlier Western scholars once identified Indonesian Islam's most distinctive trait as the strength of so-called "pre-Islamic" survivals (many of which were actually Islamic), the more unusual feature of Indonesian Islam is its remarkable and long established tradition of pluralism. Even in an earlier era when virtually all Javanese, Malays, or Minangkabau called themselves Muslims, for example, neither the courts nor the *'ulamâ'* exercised a total monopoly of power over the Muslim community's moral and intellectual life. There were diverse religious views even in premodern times, and diverse ways of being a good Muslim. The reform movements of the past century have altered the contours of Indonesia's Islamic pluralism. But it is remarkable to see how the community as a whole has eschewed totalizing answers and single, all-powerful leaders. Though a few Muslim leaders occasionally lament this pluralism, seeing it as fatal political weakness, from a democratic perspective, this pluralism is really a blessing in disguise. Much as in part of Western Europe in an earlier era, it has led Indonesia's many Muslim leaders to the realization that the aspiration for monopolistic unity must be renounced in favor of pluralism, tolerance and the abstraction of Islam into a deeply pervasive civic influence. Perhaps it is for this reason that at a recent conference I attended on Islam in Bellagio, Italy, Leith Kubba, an Iraqi intellectual who directs an influential Islamic Foundation in London, remarked, "When I travel to Syria and Iraq I feel that I see Islam's past, but when I travel to Indonesia, I feel that I see its future".

There are more contemporary influences on this Islamic tradition of tolerance as well. The experience of Muslims since Indonesian independence has impressed upon many the dangers of politicizing re-

ligion too directly. It was, after all, during the Old Order period, when the religious issues were politicized to an extreme, that one heard the loudest cries among some in the Javanist community for a turning away from Islam. Similarly, it was in the aftermath of the bloodshed of 1965-1966, that one saw some Muslims turn from Islam to Hinduism and Christianity. Conversely, these has been an unprecedented deepening of Islamic piety since the 1980s, a period during which political Islam has been far less influential than civic-cultural Islam. It is clear that for some Indonesians this dampening political-religious passions, which is to say, the "desacralization" of certain kinds of party politics, has allowed for a deeper Islamization of society.

Though this historical experience may seem a fragile basis on which to build a consensus for pluralism, it is exactly the kind of heritage that promoted, and promotes, civic-pluralist ideologies in the West, where they exist. Conversely, where, as in some other Western countries, such a pluralist precedent is lacking, we see quite clearly that Western societies can slip as easily as any other into civic and religious discord. As World War II, the contemporary tragedy of Bosnia, and debates over the Muslim minority in certain Western countries all painfully illustrate, the struggle for pluralism is not something the West has today decisively resolved, it is a living, ongoing challenge. Where the foundation for a civic-pluralism accommodation among religions exists, however, it makes an enormous difference, making easier the accommodation of new religious traditions, such as those recently carried by new Muslim immigrants to the West. However imperfect the achievement, the example reminds us that religious pluralism and dissidence from established Churches in the early modern era was a training ground in which national communities learned to live with pluralism and religious nonconformity. With its remarkable pluralism and history of tolerance, Indonesia has the potential of developing a civic pluralist tradition as well, one which could serve as a remarkable example for the Muslim world —as well as the West.

Let me return, finally, to secularization theory and modern religious change. What I have tried to suggest is that we must reject the cruder versions of secularization theory, especially those that understood secularization as an inevitable and universal process of religious decline. While rejecting these ideas, however, I have suggested that we should retain secularization theory's conviction that there are commonalities to religious change in the modern age, especially as regards

two things: the widespread development of a non-magical and more "abstract" understanding of divinity-in-the-world, and discussions and/or disputes over the role of religion in the nation. The former commonality is related to the widespread influence of natural scientific institutions in the modern world. The latter has to do with a development of equally ubiquitous influence: the appearance of the modern nation-state with its associated machinery of communications, education and markets, and its equally important concern for the shaping of modern institutions and identities.

   To put it a bit too simply, then, what I am suggesting here is that the processes of modern religious change should, for some purposes, be placed alongside or inside the phenomenon of the nation-building, rather than at its margins. Religion in the modern era is clearly influenced by a variety of forces, but the development of pluralism in the contest of the nation-state poses similar challenges for all world religions. Though the precise role that religion comes to play in the public world will, of course, vary, we can at the very least affirm that, contrary to Gellner and some modernization theorists, there is nothing improper or "countermodernizing" to those who insist that religion has a vital role to play in modern national life (cf. Casanova 1994). At the same time, in the face of those who would press for the imposition of a more monopolistic union of religion and state, we should remind ourselves that the politicization of religion through the suppression of pluralism has in the modern era been a consistent catalyst for antireligious movements or, to borrow John Esposito's phrase, "secularist fundamentalism." Modernization brings pluralism, and pluralism presents believers with difficult but important choices. In an era when certain Western and Muslim leaders speak of an inevitable "clash of civilizations", it is useful to remind ourselves of the challenges we all face, and of the fact that there are many people of good faith in the Western and Muslim worlds working for civic tolerance and pluralism.

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