



Redrawing the Diverse of Muslim Politics: Study on Political Attitude of Islamic Political Parties in Indonesia

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Abstrak:

Politik Muslim dipahami sebagai sesuatu yang beragam, dinamis, dan jauh dari kata monolitik. Keragamannya tidak dapat direduksi menjadi sebuah konsep yang sederhana dan dipengaruhi oleh banyak faktor. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi faktor-faktor yang berpengaruh yang membentuk keragaman karakter dari politik Muslim. Mengambil contoh kasus partai-partai politik Islam di Indonesia, sebagai negara Muslim terbesar di dunia, argumen saya dimulai dengan mengatakan bahwa faktor yang paling berpengaruh dalam pembentukan karakter politik Muslim adalah konteks lokal dan pengalaman di mana politik Muslim dibentuk. Politik Muslim diimplementasikan dalam berbagai sikap, Gerakan-gerakan, dan organisasi seperti partai politik. Dalam konteks Indonesia, terdapat berbagai partai politik Islam dengan berbagai karakter yang berbeda. Meski demikian, yang paling dominan hari ini adalah partai-partai politik Islam yang cenderung moderat. Hal itu dikarenakan partai-partai politik Islam yang moderat dianggap lebih memiliki visi yang baik dibandingkan dengan yang lain.

Kata kunci: Politik muslim, Partai Islam, Keragaman, Indonesia

Abstract:

Muslim politics is understood as something diverse, dynamic, and far from monolithic. Its diversity cannot be reduced to a simple concept and is influenced by many factors. This article aims to explore the influencing factors that shape the diversity of Muslim political character. Taking the case of Islamic political parties in Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, my argument begins by saying that the most influential factors in the formation of Muslim political character are the local context and experience in which Muslim politics is formed. Muslim politics is implemented in various attitudes, movements, and organizations such as political parties. In the context of Indonesia, there are Islamic political parties with various characteristics as well. But the most dominant today are Islamic political parties that tend to be moderate. Moderate Islamic political parties are considered to have a good vision compared to others.

Keywords: Muslim Politics, Islamic party, Diversity, Indonesia

Introduction

In his phenomenal work “*Islam and Islamism*”, Bassam Tibi essentially defines Islamism as concerned with political order and does not refer to faith as Islam is. However, the domain of religion cannot be separated from Islamism considering that Islamism itself is part of religionized politics. Religionization of politics is the promotion of a political order that is believed to come from God's will and not based on the sovereignty of the people. Along with the trend of Islamic revival (*ṣaḥwa islamiyya*), Islamism does not make Islamism synonymous with it as it is usually portrayed. More precisely, Islamism is an attempt made to seek the call for an Islamic revival.¹

The call for an Islamic revival is the same as Islamism which is a new phenomenon. Its appearance after being traced has only been seen since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Historically, there is no denying that there is a close connection between this trend and the spread of colonialism initiated by Western countries against areas that were once the territory of Islamic rule. The impact of colonialism made the idea of secularism that separates religion and state must be applied in Muslim areas.² In fact, the Ottoman Caliphate, which was the last Islamic caliphate, eventually had to collapse in 1924 and turn into a secular government.³

Some things that make the discourse of Islamism as political Islam a discourse that attracts a lot of attention. Besides having motivated many adherents, Islam is the second largest religion in the world with adherents of more than 24% of the total population of the earth,⁴ but also because of its uniqueness that cannot be found in other religions. We can see that entering the nineteenth century, Islam became the single religion that was least receptive to secularization compared to other divine religions. While other religions easily compromise with diverse Westernizations and secularizations, Islam always does the checks first.⁵

Indeed, the attitude of the Muslim community in responding to Westernization and secularization cannot be equalized, especially in its political stance. This makes Muslim politics diverse and irreducible to a simple concept. Institutionally, Muslim political attitudes are accommodated in an organization known as a political party. Many Islamic political parties can be classified according to certain indicators. To focus on the research problem in this paper, I will limit the focus of research by taking the case of Islamic political parties that exist in Indonesia as the country with the most Muslim majority in the world. This research is based on two questions, first, how does the local context shape diversity in Muslim politics? Second, what is the attitude of Islamic political parties in

¹ Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 1.

² Peter G. Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics: Reimagining the Umma*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2003), 75, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203453155>.

³ Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*, 59.

⁴ Zhongmin Liu and Peng Fan, “On the Three Pivotal Doctrines of Islamism,” *Asian Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 13, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 295, <https://doi.org/10.1080/25765949.2019.1630572>.

⁵ Andrew F. March, “Are Secularism and Neutrality Attractive to Religious Minorities? Islamic Discussions of Western Secularism in the ‘Jurisprudence of Muslim Minorities’ (Fiqh Al-Aqalliyat) Discourse,” SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY, February 18, 2009), 293, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1346061>.

Indonesia as a forum for aspirations for Muslims in Indonesia? To answer this question, I will first elaborate on various points related to the following discussion.

Method

The type of this research is qualitative research using library research as its collection data method. The main objective of this article is to trace the diversity of Muslim political attitudes throughout historical trajectories and collections that are remaining until the current era. From this tracing, I expect to find the red thread which is the meeting point among the diversity of such Muslim political attitudes. This is not really a new discourse because previous scholars already discussed that issue. Because of that, I will do more elaboration by including Islamic political parties in Indonesia which is the largest Muslim country in the world as a case study. I use Bassam Tibi's *Islamism and Islam* and Salwa Ismail's book entitled *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism* as the primary source of my study. For secondary sources, I have gathered works including books, articles, or book sections related to my topic in this study.

Result and Discussion

Islamism: Does It Really Represent Only Political Islam?

It has been mentioned earlier that the main feature of Islamism according to Tibi is the political order. Quite in line with Tibi, Mehdi Mozaffari gives another definition of Islamism. According to him, Islamism is a religious ideology with a holistic understanding that has the ultimate goal of conquering the world at all costs.⁶ As an ideology rooted in religious understanding, religious elements cannot be separated from Islamism. Although it does not mention the word politics in its definition, the political element in its definition can be understood from what it means by the ultimate goal of Islamism to conquer the world. A political movement is one of the ways that the phrase is covered by all means. Even violent methods are one option that can always be chosen when other methods are not so effective.

Historical experience records that in the classical Islamic tradition, religion and power always went hand in hand and were inseparable. In every Muslim, there is a belief (*shared Muslim belief*) that Islam is a comprehensive religion that governs all aspects of life including the political aspects manifested in government. Therefore, the motivation to establish a government based on Islamic Sharia is very strong because it is believed to be commanded by God.⁷ Although in practice, sometimes religion is not positioned in a plane parallel to power because some Muslim rulers make religion a legitimacy for the monarchical government that they run. Perhaps the impression that Islam is a political religion

⁶ Mehdi Mozaffari, "What Is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 1 (March 2007): 21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14690760601121622>.

⁷ J.L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics: Fourth Edition*, Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse University Press, 1998), 30, <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=SIhxoTHLxeMC>.

may be due to the view that Islam was a religion founded through military conquest.⁸

If you look closely, Islamism does not only represent political Islam. Indeed, the underlying reason for this term being used in political overtones is very acceptable. In addition to being implemented in ideologies and political movements, its emergence is also a response to the politics of secularism applied by Western countries. As stated by Salwa Ismail, the term Islamism does not only refer to political activities but is broader than that, including re-Islamization which refers to various domains of social life accompanied by the use of signs and symbols that indicate Islamic cultural traditions, such as the use of hijab, consumption of religious literature and commodities, public expression of religious identity, to the use of economic terms within the framework of Islam.⁹

Apart from being a response to Western hegemony, the movement of Islamism has also emerged as an attitude that shows dissatisfaction with the situation experienced. Some followers of Islamism in urban areas are immigrants who moved from rural areas. They cannot adjust so the demands of economic welfare are not achieved. From the same experience, these people then formed their groups.¹⁰ Initially starting from a social movement that focuses on welfare, then it can turn into an institutionalized political movement. From institutional political parties, this then has the potential to become a violent movement that often oscillates between peaceful resistance and violence.¹¹

Thus, Islamism does not necessarily represent political activity carried out by Muslims. Some are manifestations of public expression of religious identity, the use of symbols that indicate Islamic traditions, to activities that focus on social welfare among Muslims. Nevertheless, the whole activity has the potential to become a political movement institutionalized within a political party. So that equating Islamism with political Islam or Muslim politics is only accepted within certain contexts. But this acceptance should not close the mind to other references to Islamism. That is, broadly speaking, the concept of Islamism refers to political Islam, but this concept is open and dynamic which allows other references to enter.

Sectarian Politics in the Islamism Movement

At the end of the twentieth century, Islamism created a negative stigma not only in the Western world but even among Muslims themselves who claim to be moderate Muslims. Entering the twenty-first century, especially after the tragedy known as 9/11, a bombing that targeted the towers of the World Trade Organization allegedly carried out by Al-Qaeda, not only did the image of Islamism get worse, but the image of Islam as a religion was carried over for the

⁸ Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Routledge, 1993), 3, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203401521>.

⁹ S. Ismail, *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2003), 2, <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=V-eKDwAAQBAJ>.

¹⁰ Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Anatomy of Egypt's Militant Islamic Groups: Methodological Note and Preliminary Findings," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, no. 4 (1980): 448, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163128>.

¹¹ Mohamed Abdel Rahim M. Salih, ed., *Interpreting Islamic Political Parties* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 2.

worse in the Western world.¹² This is allegedly because there is a conceptual error in distinguishing Islam and Islamism. The response to the tragedy has made hatred and unfriendliness towards everything related to Islam rise quite significantly in the West.¹³

It is undeniable, that various acts of violence to terrorism in the name of Islam carried out by the militant movement of Islamism not only make the image of Islam bad but create disappointment for other Muslims who are not involved. Since followers of Islamism generally use attributes adopted from Arabia, such as dress, veiled clothing, to beards that are maintained to length, such appearances eventually become an anathema (something that is hated because it is different from what is believed) for other Muslims.¹⁴ To overcome these calls for religious moderation initiated by moderate groups began to be intensified simultaneously.¹⁵

In fact, from the outset, describing the term Islamism with the connotations of militant Islamic movements was erroneous, even quite problematic.¹⁶ The reason is that, from the beginning, not all Islamist movements were uniform. The Islamism movement was initially divided based on sectarian and sub-religious politics. There are at least three main sub-religions on which various Islamist movements depend: Sunnī, Shi‘ī, and Wahhābī, although some argue that Wahhābī is still part of Sunnī. Each has its interpretation of the references used. Although they rely on the same source, they selectively select the elements according to the understanding they believe to be true. If one sect thinks it is holistic, perhaps not for another.¹⁷

Islamism movements that rely on previous sects and sub-religions usually have their understanding of holistic Islam. For most of them, holistic is based on the gathering of three elements: religion, way of life, and government. Therefore, they insist on establishing an Islamic government for the holistic nature of Islam to be achieved. Especially seeing the condition of Islamic politics today which is no longer as dominant as before the Mediaeval.¹⁸ In fact, some might argue that political Islam is now under pressure and other political influences. For Islamists, this is certainly wrong because it should be Islam that should hold supremacy. And the first step to achieving that for some Islamists is to establish an Islamic caliphate.¹⁹

Local Context and Experiences That Cannot Be Ignored

When describing the characteristics of the Islamism movement which is one of the embodiments of Muslim politics, many approaches can be taken.

¹² Zachary Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 1st ed, Asian Security Studies (New York: Routledge, 2007), 41–43.

¹³ Mohammed Ayoob, “Political Islam: Image and Reality,” *World Policy Journal* 21, no. 3 (2004): 11, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40210231>.

¹⁴ Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 123.

¹⁵ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 141.

¹⁶ Abdulkader H. Sinno and Ahmed Khomeini, “Of Opportunities and Organization,” in *Interpreting Islamic Political Parties*, ed. M. A. Mohamed Salih (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2009), 16, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230100770_2.

¹⁷ Mozaffari, “What Is Islamism?,” 25–26.

¹⁸ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 48.

¹⁹ Mozaffari, “What Is Islamism?,” 29–30.

Indeed, the most widely taken approach is political but social, cultural, and economic approaches are no less important. As mentioned earlier, the initial motive for the birth of the Islamism movement was not only political conditions but also economic and social situations that experienced inequality. Even the historical approach cannot be ignored. One of the elements that motivate Islamists is a collection of the history of the glory of Islam that cannot be forgotten. Thus, it makes sense when Ernest Gellner mentions that Islamism is a continuation of history. Although different, the point is to restore the glory of Islam.²⁰

Historical motives are undeniably one of the strong impetuses in the creation of the Islamist movement. But on the other hand, environmental factors made by local governments play a big role. Lisa Anderson considers that cultural production has a close relationship with economic transformation in this regard. In the 20th century, there has been a commodification of religious books and various works that use religious symbols. The political economy approach to Islamism often ignores the cultural aspects because it focuses only on macro matters. Whereas things like everyday life also have a role in shaping the conditions for the emergence of the Islamism movement. Using this cultural approach, Islamism does not arise as an expression of historical continuity but is shaped as a political force by socio-economic and political contexts.²¹

Context has its way that abstract theory lacks when faced with practice. For example, what goes well in Egypt does not necessarily go well in Indonesia, and vice versa. This also makes the manifestation of political Islam as part of the Islamist movement diverse based on the local context. Not only that, but even within the same location, diversity always occurs. This can be seen from the groupings of various Muslim communities under the banner of different Islamic parties in a country.²²

Party Islam is the most visible institutional manifestation of a diverse school of political Islam, ranging from the most militant to moderate. It should be noted that since the colonial period, not all Muslims have been hostile to modernization, and some have even been cooperative with colonial policies. Some parties were limited to social welfare activities that were considered apolitical to avoid something that the colonial government did not want such as rebellion. At this time, some Islamic parties chose to share the stage with secular nationalist parties for the same purpose, and some remained on the original principle of establishing an Islamic state.²³ The term Islamic state itself is a term created by modern Islamic political thinkers to reconcile their romantic vision with the existence of European model sovereign states.²⁴

In discussing the political diversity of Muslims in various regions, usually, countries such as Iran, Egypt, Pakistan, and Indonesia are the most often used as examples. Not because other countries do not have their uniqueness, but maybe because the conditions of the four countries are quite representative as examples,

²⁰ E. Gellner, *Muslim Society*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 88, <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=bLnUyrlpCDsC>.

²¹ Lisa Anderson, "1 Fulfilling Prophecies: State Policy and Islamist Radicalism," in *Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform?*, ed. John L. Esposito (Boulder, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), 17, <https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/9781685856182-003>.

²² Salih, *Interpreting Islamic Political Parties*, 16.

²³ Salih, 15.

²⁴ Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality," 2.

especially Iran. The Iranian revolution of 1979 is believed by many researchers to have influenced the fighting spirit of Islamist movements elsewhere. The Islamist movement in Iran is considered quite successful because it succeeded in overthrowing the Pahlavi dynasty which had been in power for a long time. From the beginning, the Islamist movement in Iran aimed its goal of establishing a constitutional Islamic government through revolution. Khomeini, as the leader of the Iranian revolution and one of the pioneers of Islamism, gained much support by calling for the establishment of an Islamic government that opposed monarchy, tyranny, and absolutism. Although in practice, the element of tyranny remains.²⁵

In the Egyptian context, quite a lot of well-known figures are considered to have contributed greatly to the thought of Islamism. Jamaluddin Al-Afghani called for a movement to challenge Western domination known as Pan-Islamism. At the same time, Muhammad Abduh was known as a pioneer of modern Islamists in Egypt who prioritized his thoughts on educational reform. In addition, there is also Hassān al-Banā who is the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and Sayyid Qutb who is also a member of the Muslim Brotherhood who originally placed his main goal on the unification of the Arab region regionally under Islamic rule with Egypt as its leader.²⁶ In his thinking, Qutb was considered very radical and fundamental and encouraged many militant jihadist movements.²⁷ Qutb's thought has also inspired the Indian-Pakistani thinker Abū al-A'ālā al-Mawdudī who contributed to the founding of the state of Pakistan which was a breakaway from India.²⁸

Different experiences occur in Indonesia. Although initially Islamic movements in Indonesia were influenced by Islamist movements from some of the countries mentioned earlier, in its development, there were obvious differences. Starting from a movement with the spirit of decolonization to the emergence of several other movements that demanded the establishment of an Islamic state through acts of terrorism, now many Islamist movements in Indonesia have manifested into political parties and Islamic organizations that are cooperative and involved in open electoral politics. Even in Indonesia, political will is significant in advancing women through *affirmative legislation* provisions that determine the representation of women in political parties that are not found in other Muslim countries.²⁹ The concept of democracy in Indonesia, which was originally always debated, has been quite widely accepted. This is inseparable from the contribution of modern thinkers who conclude that democracy is compatible with Sharia if democracy is understood as democracy whose concept and implementation do not contradict Sharia considering democracy itself is a concept that is still debated and there is no consensus on it. Today, the efforts of most Islamist groups in Indonesia are more about demanding the implementation

²⁵ Liu and Fan, "On the Three Pivotal Doctrines of Islamism," 298.

²⁶ Elizabeth Iskander Monier and Annette Ranko, "The Fall of the Muslim Brotherhood: Implications for Egypt," *Middle East Policy* 20, no. 4 (December 2013): 112–14, <https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12050>.

²⁷ Shahram Akbarzadeh, ed., "Sayyid Qutb: Founder of Radical Islamic Political Ideology," in *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2012), 9, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203154144-7>.

²⁸ Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 99–102.

²⁹ Salih, *Interpreting Islamic Political Parties*, 20.

and public recognition of Sharia without having to establish an Islamic government.³⁰

Unlike Indonesia, the Islamist movement in Palestine until now still involves military movements due to the Israeli occupation. Initially, the movement was jointly carried out by Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, but since 1987 the Muslim Brotherhood has focused more on social services, education, and charity. Should Israel end its occupation of Palestine, observers predict that Hamas will most likely change course by no longer prioritizing military movements.³¹ In addition to the conditions of the previously mentioned countries, another unique case can be found in Sudan where one of the thinkers, Hassan Turabi suggested quite a unique thought. Turabi suggested a platform that binds Muslims in the world, even involving Judaism and Christianity for the restoration of God's power. According to him, the rise of Islam means the awakening of the world. In addition, he also proposed a separation between limited loyalty to the state and unlimited loyalty to Islam which shows flexibility in Islamism because it coordinates between national identity and religious identity.³² Based on the examples already mentioned, it can be underlined that it is the local context and individual experience that largely determine the development and transformation of Islamic movements in a particular national environment.³³

Meeting Points among Diversity

Many earlier works focused more on exploring Islamism as a political Muslim based on its diversity. They do not go into much detail in discussing what makes a movement Islamism, that is, the meeting point among diversity. Since the death of the Prophet Muhammad, diversity and differences of opinion have often colored Islamic history. At that time there were differences of opinion about government affairs, about who had the right to continue the leadership of the Islamic government after the death of the prophet. Since the Sharia did not provide a blueprint on how to run the government, eventually this became a matter of *ijtihad* among the companions.³⁴

The question of government and state is very little discussed in the main sources of Islam. The government that existed after the death of the prophet was a form of improvisation consequently later generations had difficulty in determining whether improvisation was a description or prescription in the existing literature. Therefore, political Islam can be said to be a new discovery and does not represent any situation that existed in the past. What is preserved from the past is solely a juridical tradition linking politics and religion. Eventually, however, the formalistic and symbolic relationship that jurists interpreted between politics and religion became a real bond through the Islamist movement. Islamists generally

³⁰ R.W. Hefner, *Shari'a Politics: Islamic Law and Society in the Modern World* (Indiana University Press, 2011), 9, <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=qSooY04FxzYC>.

³¹ Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality," 7.

³² Liu and Fan, "On the Three Pivotal Doctrines of Islamism," 298.

³³ Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality," 6.

³⁴ Hefner, *Shari'a Politics: Islamic Law and Society in the Modern World*, 16.

want politics to be subservient to religion, not the other way around as it has been historically.³⁵

Earlier Muslim leaders after the death of the Prophet continued to maintain the tradition of not separating religion and power, especially to legitimize dynastic rule. One could argue that religion can be a marker of one's politics and Islam is the most easily politicized religion compared to other religions. The simple answer to the uniqueness of political Islam compared to the politics of other religions is the difficulty of political Islam to compromise and accept the current division of power. Even non-violent Islamic movements always tend to oppose the *status quo* not only at the domestic level but also at the international level. It is quite difficult for Islamists to accept defeat from conquests carried out by Western powers, especially after the Mediaeval.³⁶

Without neglecting the diversity based on sectarian politics and other differences among Islamist groups, there is a meeting point that gathers all Islamist movements. First, the point of departure that motivates all Islamist movements is the doctrine of the religion they believe in. There is no difference in the view that there is an inherent relationship between religion and government, although in positioning it there is debate. Some remain adamant about establishing an Islamic state, while others accept the concept of a modern state provided that fundamental Islamic sharia can be implemented because it views the unification of all Muslims under one government as a utopian expectation.³⁷ Second, there is the same ultimate goal, which is to regain the supremacy of Islam as it was in its golden age. Even if not, Islam seeks not to submit to any power and occupy a separate position and be recognized for its existence. In addition, there is the concept of *umma* that can unite all Muslim communities around the world regardless of politics. This concept is considered an ideological attempt to overcome the state of disintegration of Islamic power.³⁸

Islamic Political Parties in Indonesia

A new chapter has colored the world of Indonesian politics since the fall of Suharto's new order regime in 1998. It seems inaccurate to say that the beginning of the emergence of Islamic parties in Indonesia began with the fall of the New Order regime. Because Islamic political parties in Indonesia have existed since the colonial period. In 1912 two Islamic organizations were established, namely Muhammadiyah and Sarekat Islam (The Islamic Union). Nahdhatul Ulama (The Revival of Religious Scholars/NU) was formed in 1926. Although at first, the three organizations did not declare themselves as political parties, each was involved in various political activities. Sarekat Islam became the first Islamic organization that dared to oppose Dutch colonial policies. While NU and Muhammadiyah are more engaged in community welfare, culture, various social services and education, especially through *pesantren* ³⁹.

³⁵ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 6.

³⁶ Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality," 10.

³⁷ Mozaffari, "What Is Islamism?," 24.

³⁸ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 5–6.

³⁹ Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 14.

During the Japanese colonial period, the Japanese government established a policy that required all Islamic organizations and parties to be united into one party to facilitate control. The coalition of parties was named Majelis Syuro Muslim Indonesia (The Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council/Masyumi) which was also involved in the war at the beginning of Indonesian independence against colonial. In its implementation, NU prefers to separate from Masyumi led by Muhammadiyah members. At the beginning of Indonesia's independence, conservative Masyumi members tried to make Islam the official state religion by including the Islamic principles in the first precept of Pancasila. Although in the end, these attempts were unsuccessful. The inability to make Islam the official state religion became the forerunner of the establishment of the Darul Islam group (Realm of Islam / DI) in 1947 which also formed the Indonesian Islamic Army (TII) by Kartosuwirjo to establish the Indonesian Islamic State (NII) ⁴⁰.

During President Sukarno's tenure, NU and Masyumi became the Islamic parties that participated in the first parliamentary elections in 1955 and obtained 18 and 20 percent of the vote respectively. Later in the Suharto regime, after the dissolution of Masyumi, NU and Muhammadiyah were again active using different approaches. NU seeks to gain a role in the status quo, whereas Muhammadiyah adopts a policy of non-cooperation with the government. The Soeharto government implemented a policy that limited the activities of Islamic parties using Pancasila as a political tool. In addition, Islamic groups that are considered radical continue to be suppressed and various activities using Islamic religious symbols are restricted. Although by the end of his reign, the Suharto regime began to be lenient on religious activities. Even various regulations related to Sharia began to be promulgated ⁴¹.

With the end of the Soeharto regime through reformation, Indonesia entered a new direction of democracy. A government that provides more freedom of expression which did not exist under Suharto was used by many people to plan their various agendas including political agendas carried out by Islamic groups. During this period, many political parties emerged including political parties that used Islamic identity such as The Nation Awakening Party (PKB), The National Mandate Party (PAN), Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and others ⁴². All these Islamic parties are vying for positions in the seat of government to pursue their respective political agendas. On the one hand, the presence of these diverse political parties is seen as democratic progress, but on the other hand, it is also seen solely as a political tool for the elite group which in this case is the Muslim elite ⁴³.

⁴⁰ Abuza, 15.

⁴¹ Umi Qodarsasi and Abdul Ghofur, "The Dynamics of Islamic Political Parties Amid Indonesian Multicultural Society," *POLITEA* 3, no. 1 (May 25, 2020): 41, <https://doi.org/10.21043/politea.v3i1.7288>.

⁴² Colm A Fox and Jeremy Menchik, "Islamic Political Parties and Election Campaigns in Indonesia," *Party Politics* 29, no. 4 (July 2023): 626, <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688221091656>.

⁴³ Rudi Santoso, Khairuddin, and Abdul Qodir Zaelani, "Islamic Legal Analysis on the Role and Functions of Islamic Political Parties in Indonesia:" (1st Raden Intan International Conference on Muslim Societies and Social Sciences (RIICMuSSS 2019), Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, 2020), 200, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201113.038>.

If we do categorization, Islamic political parties in Indonesia can be divided into two groups. One group tends to be more open like PKB and another group tends to be stricter, especially on moral and moral issues such as PKS⁴⁴. Indeed, these groupings do not represent the overall more varied political stances of Muslims. But in general, Muslim political attitudes are grouped into three, namely, moderate, liberal, and radical. Recently, moderate groups received more support than other groups. Meanwhile, radical groups, especially those that tend to move through violence, do not seem to have a good vision of the future. So, it can be said that Islamic political parties in Indonesia as characteristic of Muslim politics are very diverse. From the various characters and groups that exist, Islamic political parties that represent moderate groups seem to have a good future compared to others⁴⁵.

Conclusion

The understanding of Islamism, which is limited to the context of Muslim politics, dominates because of the factors of historical tradition and experience. But do not let this restriction make other references taboo because basically, Islamism covers many aspects that are political, including social, cultural, and economic. Concerning the political context, the character of political Muslims is very diverse in its manifestations and cannot be reduced to one type. The most influential factors in shaping this diversity are local context and experience at the national level. The local context and experiences in each region make Muslim politics manifested differently both in the form of social groups and political parties that each have their agenda, strategy, vision, and mission. In the Indonesian context, political parties as one of the institutions that accommodate Muslim political attitudes have various characteristics of Muslim politics. Islamic political parties in Indonesia can simply be categorized into more open parties such as PKB and stricter ones, especially on moral and moral issues such as PKS. Based on the current conditions in Indonesia, parties that voice moderation are more likely to have a good vision, while attitudes that lead to radicalism are starting to be abandoned. This indicates that the development of moderation of Indonesian Muslims at the level of Islamic political parties is more dominant than others. To justify the result of this analysis, further study might be needed.

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⁴⁴ Fox and Menchik, "Islamic Political Parties and Election Campaigns in Indonesia."

⁴⁵ Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "THE RISE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS-POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN INDONESIA: The Background, Present Situation and Future," *JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAM* 2, no. 2 (December 1, 2008): 374, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2008.2.2.336-378>.

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