Challenging Secularism:
Considering Islam and State in Indonesia[1]

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Abstract

This paper discussed the encounter of Indonesian Muslims toward the idea of secularism. Secularism since its rise in Europe in the 18th century has spread all over the world. Supporters of secularism have assumed that secularism is undeniable. People eventually will hold it and apply it in their life, including in the public space. However, in the context of the relationship between Islam and state in Indonesia, secularism thesis has been proven failed. During the Indonesian history, the relationship between Islam and state has been a hot discourse even until recently. Yet, this paper concluded that one thing is clear; Indonesian people, especially Indonesian Muslims, have rejected secularism. In the meantime, some have rejected theocratic state either. Muslims then have endlessly endeavored to reformulate a viable synthesis on the relationship between Islam and state in Indonesia. What Indonesia has now is among the efforts of Indonesian Muslims to have a better formulation on how Islam plays its role in the public space, including in the political sphere.

Key words: Islam state, secularism, theocracy, Jakarta Charter.

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Introduction: General Framework

Generally speaking, there are two different intellectual discourses in contemporary Islamic political thinking about Islam and the state. While both recognize the importance of Islamic principles in all spheres of life, their interpretation to modern situation and their applicability in the real world are different. On one hand, some argue that Islam should be the basis of the state; that *shari'a* ought to be adopted as the state constitution; that political sovereignty rests in the hand of the Divine; that the idea of the modern nation state is contradictory to the concept of *umma* (Islamic community), which recognizes no political boundary; and while recognizing the principle of *shura* (consultation), its realization is different from the contemporary notion of democracy. In other words, according to this perspective, the modern political system contradicts to Islamic teachings.[3]

On the other hand, others argue that Islam does not lay down any clear form of state theory (or political theory) that must be followed by the *umma*. Islam as a religion has not specified a particular system of government for Muslims, because, according to this view, there will be always changes and development of situation in this world that makes Islam should be suitable for all times and places. Therefore, the form of government, among others, is decided based on the rational human mind and to be shaped according to the public interest, yet still within the framework of Islamic general precepts.[4] Furthermore, the term "state" (*dawla*) in fact cannot be found in the Qur'an.[5] Nonetheless, it is important to note that this position recognizes the fact that the Qur'an does contain ethical values and injunction on human socio-political activities that include the principles of "justice, equality, brotherhood, and freedom." For them, therefore, as long as the state adheres to such principles, it conforms to Islamic teachings.[6]

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[3] Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam and the State in Indonesia,* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003), p. 6. The proponents of this view, among others are Rashid Ridha, Sayyid Qutb and Abu A'la al-Mawdudi.

[4] *Ibid*. p. 7.

[5] Qamaruddin Khan, *Political Concepts in the Qur'an*, (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1982), p. 3.

[6] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

Based on the above exploration, the first Islamic theoretical model reflects the tendency to emphasize the legal and formal aspect of Islamic political idealism. On the other hand, the second model stresses substance rather than the formal and legal aspect of the state. The second model that has substantialist character, that is emphasizing values such as justice, equality, consultation, and participation that do not contradict Islamic principles, thus has the potential to serve as a viable approach to relate Islam with modern politics in which the nation state is its major component.[7]

Within this general precept, I would like to discuss how Islam and the state in Indonesia encounter each other in formulating the form of government, especially before the 1998 reformation. I will also explore it in the new understanding of the relationship between religion and politics in the light of theory of secularization. However, my paper will not elaborate all elements of society, nor does it provide historical details of Islam encounters with modern Indonesian society. Historical facts will be surveyed to give a glimpse overview, although it remains importance to discuss it as an entirely process of the encounter.

Islam and the State in Indonesia: Historical Survey

The discourse of the formal role of Islam in the state has been one of the most divisive issues in Indonesia's political and constitutional history.[8] The debate, in particular, is about the question of whether to recognize the Islamic *shari'a* in the constitution. Much of this debate usually begins with the so-called Jakarta Charter, an agreement made between Muslim and nationalist leaders on June 22, 1945 as part of the preparations for Indonesia's independence. The most controversial part of the charter was a seven-word clause "*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syari'at Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*" (with the obligation to practice Islamic law for adherents of Islam). There are two different legal interpretation and implications of the clause. The minimalist interpretation is that the obligation to

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[7] *Ibid*. Advocates of this view include Muhammad Husayn Haykal, Fazlur Rahman and Qamaruddin Khan.

[8] Greg Fealy, "Divided Majority: Limits of Indonesian Political System", in *Islam and Political Legitimacy*, edited by Shahram Akbarzadeh and Abdullah Saeed (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 155.

follow Islamic law lay with individual Muslims, not to the state. The maximalist position states that the state must ensure adherence to the *shari'a* and that the charter would provide the constitutional basis for extensive legislation giving effect to Islamic law.[9]

In the beginning of the formation of Indonesian state, the seven members of committee charged with finalizing the constitution initially agreed to the Jakarta Charter's inclusion as the preamble, but at a meeting on August 18, 1945, the day after the independence was proclaimed, pro-charter Muslim leaders came under strong pressure from "secular" Muslims, nationalists and religious minorities to drop the seven words. Seven members of the committee were Abikusno Tjokrosuyoso, A. Kahar Muzakkar, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, A. Wachid Hasjim, Soekarno[10], Muhammad Hatta[11], Achmad Subardjo, Muhammad Yamin and A.A. Maramis. The first four were Muslims who committed to the inclusion of Islam into the constitution. The second four were Muslims who favor secular state. The ninth was a Christian. The main argument from the nationalist faction was that the predominantly non-Muslim regions in eastern part of Indonesia might break away from the republic if an Islamically inclined state was declared. Finally, Muslim leaders agreed to exclude the charter in the interests of national unity. They also dropped the clause that requires the president to be Muslim. However, the exclusion of the charter emerges a bitter reaction from many sections of the Islamic community. They felt that the charter's opponents had been alarmist and that Muslims had been forced into making greater sacrifices in establishing the new state than had non-Muslims. Instead, some people say that this is the greatest gift from Muslims to Indonesia. In turn, Islamic political leaders expected that they would later win large majorities in the parliament and Constituent Assembly and could implement the *shari'a* through legislation and constitutional amendments.[12]

The discourse about the Jakarta Charter re-emerged as a polarizing issue in the late 1950s. The Constituent Assembly as the

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[9] *Ibid*.

[10] He was appointed as the first president of Indonesia. He served the office from 1945-1966.

[11] He was appointed as the first vice president, but he then resigned in 1957 as a result of political dispute with Sukarno.

[12] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit*, pp. 32-3.

result of the 1955 General Election, which began drafting a new constitution in 1956, became deadlocked in early 1959 over the issue of whether or not the charter should form the preamble. The result of election was that Islamic group controlled 114 out of 257 seats (43.5 per cent of the votes) in the parliament, which did not make them as an absolute majority faction[13]. Nationalists and non-Muslim parties, with the backing of President Sukarno and increasingly influential army leadership, opposed the charter's inclusion.

Muslim parties strived to include it by a series of votes in May and June 1959 but fell short of the necessary two-thirds majority. Given this situation, on July 5, 1959, President Sukarno dissolved the assembly and decreed the return of Indonesia's founding 1945 Constitution without the charter. The only concession to Muslim interest was the insertion of an imprecise clause stating that the charter "gave soul" (*menjiwai*) and "connecting totality" (*rangkaian-kesatuan*) to the constitution. Yet, the word *shari'ah* was not mentioned in the body of the constitution and the vague acknowledgement of the charter carried no legal force.[14] The charter was effectively buried as a serious political issue for the next forty years. Sukarno discouraged further debate on that issue and the New Order (1966-1998) under President Suharto stigmatized efforts to implement *shari'a* contrary to Pancasila and inimical to national stability.[15]

Some Considerations on the Failure of Political Islam

Muslim political leaders of the 1950s and 1960s, when viewing the multiple failures of Islamic parties, were given to regretting that Indonesia's *umma* as a majority with a minority mentality. The assumption that Indonesians who shared the same Islamic faith also had the same political views was incorrect. Indeed, the ideal of a politically united *umma* has been often invoked in Indonesian Islam, but seldom realized. The starting, and perhaps the main, point to understanding why Islam has not enjoyed greater power as an autonomous legitimating force lies in an examination of the internal

[13] The complete result of the 1955 General Election can be seen in Zachary Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 16.

[14] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

[15] Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, p. 156.

disagreements and rivalries within the *umma* for much of the past century.[16]

According to the 1990 census, 87 percent of the Indonesian population is Muslim. On 2002 population estimates, this would mean about 185 million Muslims, by far the largest of any nation in the world. However, there are several grounds for regarding these figures with caution. As an effect of the communist coup in 1965, all Indonesian citizens must profess adherence to one of five officially recognized religions: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism. This is to ensure no one is atheist and anticipate the resurgence of communism in Indonesia. A significant number of those who describe themselves as Muslim are only nominally so, or may not be Muslim at all. Many unrecognized religious minorities find it less troublesome to be regarded as Muslims rather than as adherents of an official minority faith.

The description about Indonesian population becomes more complex if one looks at the major sub-cultures within Indonesian Islam. Historically, scholars have drawn a distinction between the devout and less pious Muslims. The most widely used typology was that of *santri* and *abangan*, popularized by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, in the early 1960s to describe Javanese Islam.[17] *Santri* were the pious Muslims, those who adhere strictly to the tenets of the faith such as praying five times daily, fasting during the holy month of Ramadhan, giving alms and avoiding alcohol or gambling as well. *Abangan* covered a broad category of Muslims ranging from the nominal or lax to the religiously active but syncretistic.

The distinguishing quality of *abangan* was that they practiced their faith either irregularly or in a way which deviates from ritual prescription set out in scripture. Though aware of the basic principles and devotions of the faith, *abangan* may choose not to pray or fast or are concerned about breaking the prohibitions of Islamic law, such as eating pork or drinking wine. The more syncretistic *abangan* can have highly developed religious lives in which a variety of Hindus and Buddhis practices are blended with Islamic ritual. *Abangan* do not necessarily themselves as less pious than their *santri* counterparts,

[16] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit*., p. 212.

[17] For the detail discussion about this grouping, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java,* (Chicago and London: Collier-MacMillen, 1960).

even though this is the way they are portrayed in much of the scholarly literature. Importantly, when considering their political orientations, *santri* of the 1950s and 1960s Indonesia would usually vote for Islamic parties and endorse explicitly Islamic agendas, whereas *abangan* supported nationalist, socialist and communist parties and opposed concepts such as an Islamic state. One historical indicator of the size of the *santri* community was Indonesia's first general election in 1955, at which the total vote for Islamic parties was 16.6 million or 43.9 per cent of votes cast.[18]

However, scholars of Indonesian Islam increasingly have debated the dichotomy of *santri* and *abangan*.[19] It is commonly accepted that the proportion of *santri* Muslims, particularly in urban areas, has increased markedly since the late 1970s. This process, often referred to as *santri*-isation is evident in the increasing prevalence of Islamic attire such as headdress and flowing gowns for women, the greater number of Muslims praying at mosques and taking pilgrimage to Mecca, the growth in Islamic publishing, and the proliferation of programs with Islamic themes on television and radio. The result is that far greater numbers of Muslim appear devout in their practice of the faith and Islamic symbols and idioms now feature more prominently in social and political discourse than ever before. At the same time, the number of *abangan* has fallen sharply, leading some observers to question whether the category is any longer valid.[20]

Within *santri* Islam itself, two major sub-variants exist: traditionalist and modernist (or reformist)[21], which almost likely cannot be reconciled.[22] Doctrinally, traditionalists are to be distinguished from modernists largely by their strict adherence to one of the four main Sunni law schools (*mazhab*) –almost invariably the Shafi'i school- and also by their more eclectic approach to non-Islamic religious and cultural practices. Traditionalist *ulama* claim to

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[18] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

[19] Another categorization of Indonesian Muslims that to some extent revises Geertz' thesis is the one by Mark R. Woodword in his *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1989).

[20] Bahtiar Effency, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

[21] The term "modernism" is commonly used in the literature on Indonesian Islam to mean both "reformism" –that is, the movement to internally reform Islam as a faith by, among others, purging it of impure practices- and "modernism" –the process of making Islam relevant to the modern world.

[22] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

be sensitive to the rich local tradition of religious life and are inclined to tolerate or adopt non-Islamic practices that are not specifically prohibited by Islamic law. Modernists tend to base their Islamic law and ritual on the Qur'an and the *Sunna* and reject non-Islamic religious and cultural practices. They do not adhere solely to any law school but allow selective adoption or rejection of *mazhab* teachings. In addition there is often a socio-economic and demographic divide between traditionalists and modernists. Traditionalists predominate in rural areas, tend to be poorer and less educated, with many working as farmers, laborers or small traders; modernists are concentrated in urban areas, are better educated and more likely to be professionals, public servants or well-to-do private entrepreneurs.

The main traditionalist organization is Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or Revival of the Islamic Scholars. Established in 1926, NU now claims a membership of over 35 million, based predominantly in East and Central Java. As its name implies, *ulama* play a central role in the organization. Prominent *ulama*, who are usually heads of large Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren* (place of *santri*), command reverence and loyalty from their *santri* followers and have extensive decision-making power within NU at both the national and regional levels. The largest modernist organization is Muhammadiyah, which claims a membership of 25 million. Founded in 1912, Muhammadiyah's membership is more widely distributed than that of NU, with a strong branch structure in outer islands such as Sumatera, Kalimantan and Sulawesi as well as across the towns and cities of Java. Muhammadiyah has a Majelis Tarjih comprising experts in Islamic law, whose function is to issue *fatwa*, providing guidance to members on *shari'a*-related matters. In general, however, *ulama* are less dominant than in the NU, and professionals, academics and public servants have traditionally been prominent in the organization's leadership.[23]

In the past, there were several elements underlying this contrasting political behavior of traditionalists and modernists. To begin with, both parties tended to see themselves as direct competititors for a similar *santri* constituency and both competed for control of the Department of Religious Affairs with its lucrative

[23] The standard book on various Islamic movements in Indonesia is still Deliar Noor's *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

patronage opportunities and capacity to influence grassroots Islamic activities.[24] Religious affairs were especially critical to NU as it is the only section of the bureaucracy accessible to *ulama* and party cadre with a traditional Islamic education. Modernists tended to have state or modern Islamic educational backgrounds and thus were better able to compete for positions across the public service. Accordingly, modernists had a technocratic and economically rationalist approach. Problems were analyzed and solutions were formulated with only limited reference to public opinion; professional expertise and "rationality" were seen as the key ingredients to solving problems. Traditionalists were more popular in orientation. They saw themselves representing the interests and values of ordinary Muslims and believed that the community had the spirit and instincts needed to solve the nation's problems. Policies that caused suffering among grassroots communities were resisted, regardless of their "technical" merit.

In the field of politics, traditionalists tended to adopt a more pragmatic and accommodative approach to politics than did modernists. NU used politics as a means of securing or protecting its sectional interests, particularly insofar as access to government patronage and the religious bureaucracy were concerned. In pursuing these interests, flexibility, moderation and a capacity for compromise became defining features of NU's behavior. Traditionalist *ulama* drew on classical Sunni principles of political quietism in support of this approach, often citing jurisprudential maxims such as: "avoiding danger takes precedence over seeking benefit" (in Arabic: *dar'u al-mafāsid muqaddam 'alā jalb al-maṣalīh*). Underlying this was a view that upholding the authority of (traditionalist) *ulama* and the schools of law as well as ensuring order and piety in the *umma* were paramount.[25] The modernists by contrast emphasized resoluteness and consistency in their approach to politics. They were reluctant to compromise on core matters of policy and frequently quoted passages from the Qur'an and *ḥadits* enjoining steadfastness and commitment to what is deemed right. In practical, these differences inclined NU party, the largest vehicle of traditionalists, and Masyumi, regarded

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[24] Bahtiar Effendy, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

[25] Donald J. Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia,* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), p. 41.

as modernist Muslim party,[26] towards alliances with non-Islamic parties rather than with each other. NU was drawn to the Indonesian Nationalist party (PNI/*Partai Nasional Indonesia*), with its populist, Java-centric orientation; Masyumi founded cooperation with the technocratic Socialist Party (PSI/*Partai Sosialis Indonesia*) and outer islands-based Christian parties more congenial. [27]

A Challenge to Secularism: Indonesian Context

Based on the historical facts above, then, it is wrong to say that Indonesia is totally secular. In regard to the theory of secularization, Indonesia is not a "secular" state. According to the theory of secularization, a secular state is a state or country that is officially neutral in matters of religion, neither supporting nor opposing any particular religious beliefs or practices. A secular state also treats all its citizens equally regardless of religion, and does not give preferential treatment for a citizen from a particular religion over other religions. Most often it has no state religion or equivalent. If there is a state religion, this should have only a symbolic meaning, not affecting the ordinary life of its citizens, and especially not making any distinction based on someone's religion. A secular state is defined as protecting freedom of religion as pursued in state secularism. It is also described to be a state that prevents religion from interfering with state affairs, and prevents religion from controlling government or exercising political power. Laws protect each individual including religious minorities from discrimination on the basis of religion.

Yet, Indonesia is not a theocratic state either. Theocratic state is a form of government in which a *god* or *deity* is recognized as the supreme civil ruler. For believers, theocracy is a form of government in which divine power governs an earthly human state, either in a personal incarnation or, more often, via religious institutional representatives (i.e.: a church), replacing or dominating civil government. Theocratic governments enact *theonomic* laws.

[26] Muhammadiyah never became a political party. Nonetheless, it was one of the most important backbones of the Masyumi party. With the banning of Masyumi by President Sukarno in 1960, and the fusion of all Islamic parties into PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/ United Development Party) by President Suharto in 1973, Muhammadiyah decided to focus its activities on socio-religious programs.

[27] Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, pp. 152-3.

Theocracy should be distinguished from other secular forms of government that have a state religion, or are merely influenced by theological or moral concepts, and monarchies held "By the Grace of God". A theocracy may be monist in form, where the administrative hierarchy of the government is identical with the administrative hierarchy of the religion, or it may have two 'arms', but with the state administrative hierarchy subordinate to the religious hierarchy.

Likewise, it is also arguable that Islam is totally excluded in the affair of Indonesian politics. For, despite the exclusion of the Jakarta Charter, the state has nonetheless played an active role in the religious life of the nation, and Islam in particular. This has been evident in the existence and functions of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Since January 1946, Indonesia has had a Ministry of Religious Affairs to administer matters of religious law, ritual and education. The decision to establish the ministry was in part an attempt to appease Muslim groups aggrieved at the omission of the Jakarta Charter.[28] Though formally serving Indonesia's six officially recognized religions, the ministry is largely devoted to Islamic affairs. Its Islamic orientation is evident in its logo, which depicts a Qur'an resting on a *rehal* (folding book stand), and its Arabic motto: *ikhlas beramal* (sincere commitment to service). The ministry is currently responsible for over 40,000 Islamic educational institutions, administers marriage law for Muslims, oversees the organization of pilgrimages to Mecca, and manages ritual issues such as the timing of Ramadhan fasting, 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adh and other major celebrations in the Muslim calendar. [29]

A major element of its educational program is administering the network of State Islamic Institutes (IAIN/*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*). First established in 1960, there are now fourteen IAINs spread all over Indonesia, offering undergraduate and graduate studies in a range of Islamic-related sciences. There is no equivalent state-run institution for any other four official religions: Protestant, Catholic, Hinduism and Buddhism. Some of these IAINs have currently transformed into State Islamic University (UIN/*Universitas Islam*

[28] This department initially was called the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, but eventually the government chose to a multi-religious function. B.J. Bolland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia,* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 105-12.

[29] *Ibid.*

Negeri), offering not only related-Islamic sciences, but also 'secular' sciences such as communication, psychology, sociology, political sciences, technology and health sciences. The department's authority in matters of marriage and family law also had an impact on the personal lives on Muslims. Department officials register marriages and disputes over marriages, divorces, inheritance and religious bequests (*waqf*) involving Muslims can be brought before religious courts.[30]

The New Order's own stance towards Islam also began to change from the late 1980s. A series of legislative and institutional concessions to Islamic sentiment provided tangible evidence of this. Prominent among them were the passing of education law that obliges religious education in public and private schools as well in 1988, the expansion of the authority of religious courts in 1989, the establishment of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI/*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*) in 1990, lifting of a ban on female state school students wearing headdress (*jilbab*) in 1991, the compilation of Islamic law in 1991, the upgrading of government involvement in alms collection and distribution in 1991, the founding of an Islamic bank (BMI/*Bank Muamalat Indonesia*) in 1992, and the abolition of the state lottery (SDSB/*Sumbangan Dana Sosial Berhadiah*) in 1993.[31] ICMI proved especially significant. Led by Soeharto's favorite and then Minister for Research and Technology, B.J. Habibie[32], a German-trained of aeronautics, ICMI became a major vehicle for patronage and rapid career advancement for senior Muslim bureaucrats, intellectuals and professionals. In contrast to the preceding two decades, Soeharto now appeared set on pursuing a proportionality policy whereby the number of Muslims in cabinet and senior military and bureaucratic positions would roughly reflect the percentage of Muslims in society.[33]

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[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Bahtiar Effendy, *op.cit.*, p. 196.

[32] Habibie served in this ministry from 1978-1998. In 1998, he was appointed as the vice president to Suharto's administration. However, he only served for two months. As Suharto was forced by people power to resign from his 32-year presidency in the 1998 reformation movement, Habibie became the third president of Indonesia.

[33] Proportionality has become one of major issues among Muslims in Indonesia's politics. The New Order regime that came to power in 1966 proved antagonistic towards Islam as a political force. Former President Soeharto was strongly *abangan* and innately suspicious of *santri*, as well as many key figures in the regime. Few *santri* enjoyed high office, while Christians and *abangan* commanded disproportionate influence within

Indonesia then is formally described as a state based on religion. The first principle of Pancasila, the five principles constitute national ideology, enshrines "Belief in One God" (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa). This first principle is said to be the basis of four other principles.[34] The first principle in effect was a compromise among the founding fathers between those who wanted a secular state and those who favored an Islamic state. While there is no official state religion or formal acknowledgement of the authority of religious law in the Constitution, the use of the term "One God", however, implies mono-theism, which is considered as a concession to Muslim sentiment. [35]

From this point of view, Islam in Indonesian context seems to be in accordance with Jose Casanova's research written in his *Public Religion in the Modern World.* His main argument is that, in the past three decades, the supposedly inevitability of progressive secularization, which would lead to a steady decline in the social importance of religion, has been challenged and roundly criticized on both theoretical and empirical grounds. The proponent of the theory of secularization commonly believe that in the modern world, which is characterized by industrialized, highly educated, professionally specialized, and technologically advanced societies, religion will inevitably decline. The word secularization denotes, in its broad and general sense, a decline in the importance of religion both on the level of institutions and on the level of individual consciousness. Not only are sectors of society and culture such as arts, philosophy, literature, and science removed from religious domination, but secularization also affects human consciousness,

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government. Many of government policies were produced by CSIS (Center for Strategic International Studies), a think-tank group of largely Chinese-Catholic intellectuals established by Amir Moertopo, the close adviser of President Soeharto and his main strategist.

[34] Pancasila, literally means five principles, is the ideology of Indonesian state. It consists of *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa* (Belief in One God), *Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab* (Just and Civilized Humanity), *Persatuan Indonesia* (The Unity of Indonesia), *Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh HikmatKebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan* (Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom in the Unanimity Arising Out of Deliberations among Representatives), *Keadilan Sosial bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia* (Social Justice for the Whole People of Indonesia).

[35] In term of religious study, there is always a question about Buddhism, which is one of the religions acknowledged by the state, since Buddhism does not have any concept of personal God as other religions. Hinduism, although mostly regarded as polytheist religion, however, still has the Almighty God in Brahma.

which in turn influences more individuals to retreat from religion.[36]

Secularization is usually related to other results of Enlightenment such as development, modernization, rationalization, and progress, which each has its origin in the European historical experience. In this historical context, Jose Casanova describes that secularization refers to:

> …the massive expropriation and appropriation, usually by the state, of monasteries, landholdings, and the mortmain wealth of the church… Thus, it has become customary to designate as secularization the appropriation, whether forcibly or by default, by secular institutions of functions that traditionally had been in the hands of ecclesiastical institutions.[37]

This results in a newly differentiated system in which religious institutions see their influence over other spheres in the social structure diminish. The world as a whole is now constituted as a secular world in which religion had to find its own distinct space.[38] The decline of religious beliefs and practices, thus, is seen as a necessary and inevitable consequence of the secularization process. Furthermore, religion would not be able to survive the challenges posed by modern science and would inevitably loose its social relevance or even vanish entirely, resulting in a beneficial privatization and decline of religious beliefs and practices. While progressive secularization is seen as central to modernity, progress, and emancipation, religious belief and practice are confidently predicted to become obsolete.

Instead of fading away and disappearing in the modern world, however, many areas of the world have witnessed strong movements of religious revival. The recognition of religion's continuing vitality around the world has disrupted the consensus about the universality and certainty of the secularization process and eventually prompted Peter L. Berger, who was once a champion of secularization, to correct convictions written in his earlier works. As a result, Berger states in a recent publication examining the turnaround in the debate over

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[36] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy; Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion,* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), p. 107.

[37] Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 13

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

secularization, that is "a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labeled 'secularization theory' is essentially mistaken".[39]

The awareness of the renewed assertiveness and growing public and political relevance of many religious movements throughout the decades of the 1970s and 1980s induces the acknowledgement of inconsistencies in the secularization theory for describing social reality and the need to re-evaluate its claims. Based on actual examples of the role and influence of religion in several regions, among others, the 1979 Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions, the visit of the Polish Pope to Poland and Salman Rushdie's affair,[40] Jose Casanova describes these instances in which religion abandoned its allocated space in the private realm of modern societies and asserted itself in the public sphere in political and moral debates as "the deprivatization of religion".[41]

Berger himself acknowledges that modernity does not actually succeed in secularizing the world. The assumption that modernization leads to the decline role of religion in human enterprise, thus, is not totally correct. Modernization, however, did bring about secularization that has effects in some places, yet contra-secularization movements also occur in other places. Modernity reduces the role of religious institutions and thoughts, yet it also provokes the emergence of other institutions strengthening religions.[42]

Yet, unlike Casanova's argument, Islam is never privatized in the context of Indonesian politics. Casanova's argument, to my understanding, emphasizes the resurgence of religions, religious institution, and religiously motivated movements toward a secular or secularized state. Indonesia is never totally a secular or secularized

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[39] Peter L. Berger, "The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview", in *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, edited by Peter L. Berger, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Ethics and Public Policy Center and Eerdmans, 1999), p. 2.

[40] Jose Casanova, *op.cit.*, pp. 3-4

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[42] Peter L. Berger, "Desecularization…, p. 3. There are several others scholars who criticize the "old" theory of secularization, among others: R. Stephen Warner, Rodney Stark and Roger Finke. On Warner, see R. Stephen Warner, "Work in Progress Toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion." *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1993) and "More Progress on the New Paradigm." In Ted G. Jelen (ed.), *Sacred Markets, Sacred Canopies*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002). About Stark and Finke, see Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

state, neither is it an Islamic state as well. The efforts to make it a secular or Islamic state have always been unpopular and challenged by adherents of both parties. However, even though Indonesia never chooses the state's religion, religions in Indonesia, especially Islam, play important role in the state's affair and, to some extent, in determining public policies.

Conclusion

It seems fair to conclude that the relationship between Islam and the state in Indonesia goes beyond the dichotomous old paradigm between the strict separation of religion and the state and the religion-based state. Another falsely dichotomous question whether Islam is compatible with political development does not also work in Indonesian context. Indonesia is not a secular state, not is it theocratic state. Indonesia, although predominated by Muslim population that is even the largest among Muslim countries, is not an Islam-based state either. Yet, from the beginning of the formation of Indonesia, Islam is eventually regarded as, in Sukarno's words, "flame" or "spirit" of the state. To accommodate Islamic sentiment to apply the *shari'a*, the state established the Department of Religious Affairs. Although this department includes all five major and official religions in Indonesia, most of its works deal with the matters of Islam and Muslims in Indonesia. The establishment of this department makes somewhat difficult to determine whether Indonesia is a religious or secular state.

However, it is clear that the secularization theory does not apply in Indonesian context. Echoing Warner, it only applies in Europe. To some extent, Islam in Indonesia follows Casanova's deprivatization of religion, even though Islam is never totally privatized. Furthermore, the question on Islam and state in Indonesia is, thus, how much and what kinds of Islam (in the interpretive sense) are compatible with or necessary for political development.), or what kinds of Islamic political ideas and practices are capable of building a better relationship with the nation state in Indonesia. Having said this, the uncomfortable political relationship between Islam and the nation state does not stem from the doctrines of Islam *per se*. Rather, it derives from the way Islam is articulated socio-culturally, economically, and politically in Indonesia. The legalistic or formalistic

conception of Islam, because of its exclusive tendency, is likely to breed tensions in a socio-religiously and culturally heterogeneous society. On the other hand, what might be called a substantial conception –that is, one that favors justice, equality, participation, and consultation- of Islam can lay the necessary groundwork for establishing a viable synthesis between Islam and the state to reshape the terms of their political relationship.[]

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