THE IDEOLOGIES OF ISLAMIC PARTIES IN INDONESIA

**Diskusi Ilmiah Dosen Tetap UIN Sunan Kalijaga
Tahun Ke -32, 2011 Tanggal 09 Maret 2012
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Sekretariat
Diskusi Ilmiah Dosen Tetap
UIN Sunan Kalijaga
Yogyakarta
2012

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The End of Ideology, the Beginning of Religious Politics

The term ideology was coined by French thinker, Destutt de Tracy, in his four volumes *Elements d'ideologie* (1801-1815), to refer to what he intended to be a 'science of ideas'. In the spirit of anti-clerical France revolution, de Tracy and his colleagues in France National Institute intended the discipline to provide a ground for reducing ideas into activities of sensations. By using this method, they wanted to render transcendent notions of philosophy and religion into criticisms with the aim at hindering the perpetuation of false abstract principles which, they believed, distorted true understanding of men, society and politics. This iconoclastic view brought the group in loggerhead with Napoleon Bonaparte who saw the group and their views undermined the political authority. The France emperor then reorganized the Institute and abolished the Moral and Political Sciences, the sanctuary of de Tracy' group, and denounced them as *'ideologues'* in pejorative as dreamers who do not understand the real political affairs. Since then the term ideology earned negative connotation (Cox, 1969).

In the hand of Karl Marx, the term ideology achieved its modern standard meaning, as a distorted way in understanding political affairs. For Marx, ideology includes all ideas that reflect the interests of a particular class at a particular time in history, but which are presented as universal and eternal. It represents human misconception to understand their true nature of relationship with economic environment and the significance of that relationship with the whole development of history. In the stage of industrial capitalism and bourgeois society, the entire cultural-superstructure—which include legal, philosophy, religion, and politics—are all forms of ideology. And for him, only Marxist social theories that understand the true nature of human history, i.e. the history of class conflicts and struggles, are free from ideological distortions. Later on, Karl Manheim proposes a more systematic conception of ideology which he defined as 'the whole outlook of a social group, conditioned by the groups political orientation, and temporally by its location in ongoing historical process. Using his definition, Manheim concludes that Marxism is itself an ideology (Manheim, 125)'

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[1] Disampaikan dalam Diskusi malam Sabtu UIN Suka, 09 Maret 2012

Negative uses of the terms ideology and ideological was also prevalent among political scientists during the first half of the twentieth century, referring to grandeur political philosophy such as Marxism, communism, Nazism and Fascism. The discourse culminated in Daniel Bell's *The End of Ideology* (1960). According to Bell, The old nineteenth-century ideologies had failed and exhausted, left behind only memories of chains of events that marked the darkest calamities of modern history: the horrors of Soviet communism, Hitler Nazism and Mussolini Fascism. By 1950, he said, the old politico-economic radicalism has lost its meaning, the ideological age has ended, and replaced by new era of capitalism and welfare state. Younger intellectuals had put an end to radical and apocalyptic. S. M. Lipset also agreed that politics is now boring, and that the fundamental political problems of the modern industrial societies were no longer give rise to ideological disputes, but how to fulfill peoples' economic interests. This very triumph of the democratic social revolution in the West ends domestic politics for those intellectuals who must have ideologies or utopias to motivate them to political action.

There was interesting development in political studies, however, after the declaration of the end of ideology in 1960s, i.e. the continuation of the usage of the term albeit in revised and hence more neutral way, and the resurgence of religion in politics that generate sort of non-rationalistic political behaviors. The first point emanated from initial findings of survey on presidential election in 1950s by Michigan political scientists, published in *The American Voter* (1960). The study found that most of the American voters cast their ballots not based on understanding of the competing political issues and policy programs parties and candidate offered, but rather based on personal and psychological identifications by which people attached to the parties or the candidates (Angus *et al*. 1960).

One member of the team, Philip Converse, who wrote a lengthy article on 'The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Public' (Converse, 1964), further developed the idea. In the article he prefer the term 'belief system' as a substitute of ideology, which he defines as "a configuration of ideas and attitude in which the element are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence." Yet, interestingly, he calls the usage of such values-attitudinal configuration 'ideological'. Studying on American voters, examining their capacity to understand political preferences, he classified them into five levels: (1) *Ideologues*, who were able to use in some active way a relatively abstract and far-reaching conceptual dimension to evaluate political preferences and policy positions. (2) *Near-Ideologues*, who mentioned such

concepts in a peripheral way and did not rely their evaluation on the concepts in explaining the political affairs, or who used such concept in a fashion that raised doubt about the accuracy of their understanding of the concepts. (3) *Group Interest*, who failed to rely upon any such far-reaching concept, yet they were able to evaluate the political parties and their candidates in terms of their expected favorable or unfavorable treatment of different social groups—e.g. they disliked Democratic Party was because it helps Negro too much. (4) *Nature of the Times*, who invoked some policy consideration in their evaluation, yet unable to put their evaluation on substantial societal or historical categories and only relate parties or candidates with momentary occurrences or personal interests. (5) *No Issue Content*, which includes people whose evaluation of parties and candidates did not provide any reference to policy preference whatsoever. Sometimes, these said that they were loyal to parties or candidates but had no idea what policy the parties or the candidates stand for.

What is significance in Converse work is in fact his treatment of the ideological judgments as evaluation of political preferences and policy positions. In doing so, he set up a new way in using the word ideology: it no longer refers to abstract, grandeur political visions, but rather to a set of policy preferences commonly in a continuum left vs. right or liberal vs. conservative. Observing the usage of the word 'ideology' in a century history of *American Political Science Review*, and especially with regard to the impact of the Converse work, Kathleen Knight summarizes:

> Although the core definition of ideology as a *coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values* has remained constant in political science over time, the connotations associated with the concept have undergone transformation. In the nineteenth century, ideology connoted attachment to values of liberal democracy, and to be an "ideologue" was to support "the rights of man" against an absolutist state. The implication of being unrealistically dedicated to those ideas was added by Napoleon and later by Marx. In the first half of the twentieth century, as the fights against fascism and communism took center stage, ideology came to connote *any* belief system. Democratic ideology was contrasted with totalitarianism, as good against evil. The image of Hitler and his followers as *ideologues extraordinaire* was imprinted in the public mind, perhaps to be resurrected at the opportune moment. But, at least as apparent in the pages of the *Review*, the connotation of *irrational* commitment to a set of ideas faded with the internal anticommunist crusade and the (academic) furor over the "end of ideology." The behavioral revolution reinforced the concept of ideology as a "belief system" and relieved the concept of remaining negative connotations (Knight, 2006: 625).

While relieving the concept of ideology from non-rational connotations, scholars observed the reemergence of irrational, uncompromised, and emotionally charged political behaviors, which were now driven by religions. The phenomenon was rather unexpected and unpredicted since on the one hand the grand-thesis of twentieth century social sciences was the prophecy of the rationality of modern civilization and the wane of myths and religions. On the other hand policy makers were in height optimist about the democratic developments and cultural secularizations that they hoped would bring a prospective world order, while on the other hand denouncing religions as among the obsolete structures remnants of bygone civilizations. However, as an astute sociologist of religious studies—who happened to be the supporter of secularization thesis—clearly shows, the accurate description of the situation is rather de-secularization of the world:

> The world today, with few exception, is as furiously religious as ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that the whole body of literature by historians and social sciences loosely labeled 'secularization theory' is essentially mistaken (Berger, 1999: 2)

Thought-provokingly, a French sociologist Gilles Kepel calls the phenomena 'the revenge of God': after being denounced as negative elements in modern human history and in many places prohibited from public spheres, religions surged out of the cold in 1970s and conquered centers of world political power from America, to Israel, to Vatican, to Iran. In 1976 America, a Baptist priest Jimmy Charter was elected president apparently to wash the sin of Watergate scandal of the previous administration, and the press did noticed that that year became the momentum of the rise of religion in the US politics. In 1977 the conservative Likud Party won election and chose Menachem Begin as prime minister, who fostered the prevail of Jewish religious ortodox in the country's politics. In 1978, Polish Cardinal Karl Wojtyla was elected Pope John Paul II, and the Catholic religion witnessed the growing dominant of the *integriste*wing that managed to overcome internal and identical uncertainty caused by 1968 protest movement. In 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini, the supreme spiritual leader returned to Tehran and initiated a first ever religious revolution in modern history (Kepel, 1994).

It is interesting to note in this point, that while political studies in general perceive ideological behaviors in politics as antinomy of the rational ones, party studies from its early

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years treated ideology as among the sources of party rational behavior. The seminal work of Anthony Downs, *The Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957), laid the ground in analyzing how party leaders use ideology rationally to articulate public political aspirations and attract their supports. Assuming that party's ultimate objective is being elected in public office, and that the voters hardly have capability to thoroughly compare policy alternatives offered by competing parties, Downs suggests that adopting ideological rhetoric is the most rational way party leaders can take in attracting public support. On the one hand, it helps the public to understand easily what the party stand for by summarizing its detail programs into general propositions; and on the other hand, it will also helps the potential voters to differentiate one party from the others (Downs, 1957: Chapter 7).

Combined with that of Converse (1964) mentioned in previous paragraph, Downs' study initiated what is known as 'spatial theory' of party ideology, which put party ideologies as positions along linier continuum, commonly referred to as left vs. right. The former indicate preferences for loose social norms combined with high state participation in politics, while the latter is the opposite position in which it prefers strict social norms and minimum state involvement in economy. With regard to rationality of party ideological behavior, scholars hold different assumptions. Some follow Downs' line assuming that party' ultimate objective is to win elections and assumed positions in public offices, therefore the party will easily change their ideological positions following changing moods of voters. In other words, these scholars believe that party ideological position is merely instrumental to other, more substantial ends, i.e. elected in public offices. Yet other scholars take different assumption, in which party ideological positions are direct results of its leaders' ideological preferences, since party leaders and activists are commonly more ideological than its followers, and it is this ideological commitment that led them into party activism in the first place. Therefore, according to this group, pursuing certain policies is the ultimate goals of political parties, while wining elections and taking public offices are merely instrumentals. Try to overcome this antagonism, Strom-Mueller proposes 'unified theory' of party behavior which takes elections as the immediate point of party objective, which then instrumental to either office orientation or policy orientation.

And what about religious parties? Do they also change policy positions arbitrarily, or pursue them consistently? Before proceeding to answer the question it worth to note that religious element play important aspect in party behaviors and competitions. In his pioneering

research on party alignments, which found that parties in Western politics are older than its actual age and rooted in old social competitions during Industrial Revolution, Lipset and Rokan also note that religion was among the factors that created political cleavages. Religions provided values and identities that influence and structure people political preferences (Lipset and Rokan, 1966:). Consistent with this notion, world wide survey by Lijphart observation on elections in four countries—Canada, Belgium, South Africa, and Switzerland—found that religion is the stronger factor in influencing political cleavage in those countries—the second one being language, and in the far behind is social class (Lijphart, 1979).

Move into ideological and policy position of religious parties, the first data available is a world-wide survey by Keneth Janda, which include around 150 parties in, in which he found that—although it is difficult to measure and only less than 50 percent of the parties were coded on religious items—when politically relevant religion is a powerful indicator for party supports. Moreover, parties with strong support from religious cleavages, although they operate in various societal and political settings, show similar pattern of behavior: they exhibit stronger opposition to secularizations in society than other political parties with non-religious base of supports (Janda, 1989). Other more specific studies on Catholic parties in Europe also support the suggestion that religious ideology structures their political behaviors. A cross-national survey provides evidence that party government in western and southern Europe Catholic countries exhibit similar pattern in pursuing welfare policies. It means that Catholicism structures their political preferences (Castles, 1994). Similarly, Kersbergen and Becker study on Christian democracy in Netherlands shows that religious ideology—and not socialism—is the strongest forces for welfare policies in the country (Kersbergen and Becker, 1988).

In this case, I follow Hinich & Munger who define political ideology as: "a worldview that explains three major topics of human collective life: *ethics* or what is good and what is bad; *economy* or how should the society's resources be distributed; and *politics* or where power appropriately resides":

IDEOLOGY	WHAT IS GOOD?	WHO GET WHAT?	WHO RULES?
CAPITALISM	Individual achievement Thorough work; Observance of property rights.	Distribution according to output	Wealthy have more control over goods, services and policy
COMMUNISM	Self-realization from role In society; Brotherhood of working class	Distribution according to need	Party represents general will; All are equal, so no politics.
FASCISM	Nationalism, Racial purity, Service of fatherland	Distribution according to contribution military/ economic might of nation	Corporatist view of military-labor industry.
NEW-DEAL DEMOCRATIC	Individual achievement Through work; Self respect; Self improvement	Distribution according to output; progressive tax structure to finance safety Net whose output is insufficient	Wealthy get disproportionate power; Experts and technocrats correct for excesses of market processes.

Mapping Post-Suharto Islamic Parties

It is rather misleading to classify Islamic parties based exclusively upon their ideological orientations or programmatic platforms (Baswedan 2004: 679-681; Ufen 2005). It is true, that in modern democracies those two elements are perhaps the most important factors that differentiate political parties from their competitors (Budge-Laver, 1996). In post-Suharto Indonesian, however, it is not the case for at least two reasons: *firstly*, Indonesian political culture has been branded as "patrimonial" in formal institutional structures do not necessarily reflect the actual behaviours, which are shaped more by informal values. Thus the determining factors in parties' actual behaviours lies not in their expressed platforms but rather in the values of communities where they are rooted (Pye 1985: 111-120). *Secondly*, most of Muslim politicians participated in post-Suharto democratic competition have no previous experience on the field, and thus they formulated their party ideology and platform based not on experience but rather by inferring from normative principles or theories of Islamic politics which are mostly derived from the middle aged Islamic history. The fact that the majority of Indonesian Muslims follow Sunnite Islam, the spectrum of interpretation is not so diverse. Thus abstract and normative formulas such as "translating Islamic values into public goods" or "advancing an Islamic Indonesia" or "endorsing good governance and law enforcement based on Islamic spirits" etc., appeared again

and again in the platforms of different Islamic parties, in only slightly different sentences (Amir 2003: 59-188; Setiawan-Nainggolan, 2004).

Writers sometimes differentiate between Islamic and Muslim-based parties, or Islamist and pluralist-Islamic parties. The former category (Islamic or Islamist) refers to political parties that officially adopt Islam as political Ideology such as PKS, PPP, PBB, and PBR; while the latter points to parties that do not officially adopt Islam as their ideology but nevertheless have main ideological inspiration as well as major constitutional supports among Muslim communities, such as PKB and PAN that in fact rooted in two biggest Islamic organizations in the country, i.e. NU and Muhammadiyah respectively. It is also widely assumed that the two categories of Islamic parties represent two distinct ideological orientations in Muslim politics regarding to the role of religion in politics. The former is believed to have a conviction that religion is inseparable and has to inform politics, while the latter is regarded to keep religion at private domain and should not interfere with public politics (Baswedan 2004: 679-681; Ufen 2005).

This categorization, in a closer inspection, apply only at basic level—such as that the latter continuously require that Islam should be inserted into the constitution, while the latter reject it consistently. Of course this is a fundamental issue, and thus the dichotomy does hit the point. However, in many other aspects it cannot explain the actual pattern of behaviour of Muslim politicians. For example, regarding the bills on National Education (2003) when Muslim politicians split not along party lines but rather along their religious backgrounds: NU politicians from whatever parties opposed the bill, while lawmakers with modernist Muslim backgrounds from various parties supported it. It also occurred during the draft of the controversial Anti Pornography law.

A more effective way to find out the dividing lines of Indonesian Islamic parties is by differentiating them based on the religious trends of its main constituents. Scholars commonly classify Indonesian Muslims into four major streams, though they call it with different terms: *Firstly*, the nominal Muslims, or non-practicing Muslims. It is very much important to note here that nominal Muslim in this category neither belong to any sort of secular religious outlook, but rather their religious values and practices are heavily influenced by pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddha traditions. Thus, sociologically and not theologically, they are as religious as other Muslim groups only with different set of religious symbolisms. *Secondly*, the traditionalists who follow

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traditional interpretations of major Muslim scholars and theologian from earlier generations and sociologically strongly recognize the special status and authority of the ulama. *Thirdly* the modernist group that follow a more rational-yet-puritan interpretations of Islam combined with a disbelief in special status of the ulama. *Fourthly*, the fundamentalist, who adopt a Qur'anic cosmological history, and believe that they live in a history that goes back to the history of the Prophet Muhammad—rather a continuation of pre-Islamic Indonesia—and they commonly have stronger psychological bond and solidarity with Muslims overseas than with non-Muslim Indonesians (Permata, 2005: 98-107; see also Geertz 1976; von der Mehden 2008: 12).

The first category of Muslim—the non-practicing—seems do not bother whether or not politics should be handled in Islamic way. Thus concern about Islamic politics begins with the second category, the traditionalist. The traditionalist common umbrella organization is *Nahdhatul Ulama* (or the awakening of the ulama) and the word "awakening" seems very substantial for the Islamic parties with traditionalist root. (a) The biggest among traditionalist Islamic party is the PKB, founded and identical with, Abdurrahman Wahid. (b) Another big party that rooted in this group is the PPP. Although initially it was a fusion of traditionalist and modernists parties (especially the NU and the Parmusi) since the reform era the traditionalist camp has become more dominant. (c) The next party of the traditionalist group is the PBR (*Partai Bintang Reformasi* or Reform Star Party) a split from the PPP founded in January 2002, and which resembles the composition of the PPP. It received 2.6% in 2004 election, but failed to pass the electoral threshold in 2009. (d) The fourth party of the traditionalists was the PNU (*Partai Nahdhatul Ummah* or Ummah Awakening Party) founded in 1998, competed in 1999 election with 1.09% but failed to pass electoral threshold in 2004. (e) The fifth party was PKU (*Partai Kebangkitan Ummah* or Ummah Awakening Party) founded by Yusuf Hasyim (Abdurrahman Wahid's uncle) in 1998, and was present in 1999 election but failed to get seats. (f) The sixth party of this group was PTII (*Partai Thariqah Islam Indonesia* or Indonesian Mystical Orders Party), and (g) the seventh party was PCD (*Partai Cinta Damai* or Love Peace Party) both of which were founded by followers mystical orders that make up a significant portion of the traditionalist Muslim group. Both were present in 1999 election but receive no seats. (h) The eighth party was PKNU (*Partai Kebangkitan Nasional Ulama* or Ulama National Awakening Party) founded in 2006 as another split of PKB. (i) The last of the Islamic traditionalist parties was PPNUI (*Partai Persatuan Nahdhatul Ummah Indonesia* or Indonesian

Ummah Awakening United Party), founded in 2004 as the replacement of the PNU that failed to pass the electoral threshold.

The second category of Islamic parties is rooted in modernist Islamic community. There are three sub-categories in this group: *Firstly*, those who identify themselves as the continuation of the Sarekat Islam, which include: (a) PSII (*Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia* or Indonesian Syarekat Islam Party) originally founded in 1927 and was present in 1955 and 1971 elections. It was revived in 1998, participated in 1999 elections and received 1 seat in the parliament, but failed in 2004. (b) The second romanticists of PSI was PSII 1905 (*Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia 1905* or Indonesian Syarikat Islam Party of 1905) the year refers to the initial foundation of the Islamic Commerce Association (SDI, *Sarekat Dagang Islam*) the embryo of the Sarekat Islam that was founded in 1911. It joined 1999 election but failed to get seat. The *second* category of modernist Islamic parties was romanticists of Masyumi party. After the Masyumi was banned, its supporters formed a loose alliance called "Crescent Star Big Family" (KBB, *Keluarga Besar Bulan Bintang*—that refers to the symbols of the party) to preserve the glorious memory of the party, and which after the regime change in 1998 founded a number of political parties: (c) The biggest one is the PBB (*Partai Bulan Bintang* or Crescent Star Party) founded by Yusril Ihza Mahendra in 1998. It received 2.8% in 1999, 2.4% in 2004, and slumped into 1.7% in 2009. (d) The second party from this sort was *Partai Masyumi Baru* or New Masyumi Party founded Ridwan Saidi in 1995, and was present in 1999 election but failed to get a seat. (e) The next party of the Masyumi romanticist was the Indonesian Islamic Party of Masyumi (*Partai Islam Indonesia Masyumi*) which was also present in 1999 but failed to send its representative to the parliament. (f) The last party from this group was PUI (Partai Ummat Islam or Islamic Ummah Party) founded by prominent scholar Deliar Noer in 1998, but also failed to get a result in 1999 election. The *third* category of modernist Islamic parties was associated with Muhammadiyah: (g) The biggest has been PAN, founded by Amien Rais who was former chairman of Muhammadiyah. (h) The next party, and a split from PAN, is PMB (*Partai Matahari Bangsa* or Nation Sun Party) founded in 2006 by younger activists of Muhammadiyah who felt disenfranchised from PAN. It competed in the last election but failed to get seat in national legislature.

The third category of Islamic parties is that of Islamist group. It is in this category where Justice Party (PK) and then Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) belong. What differentiate this last

category from the previous Islamic parties are not so much its political platforms, because parties like PPP or PBB are also pursuing Islamists agendas, but rather on its visions on international politics. In the word of a founder of the PKS, the members and supporters of the party represent a new generation of Indonesian Muslims, what he calls "global *santri*"—who see themselves as integral part of the dynamics of the Islamic world, thus they also have to participate actively in it. Hence nothing is surprising when the PKS supporters have always given special attentions to events that affected Muslims overseas, through rallies, statements, fundraising etc, typically related with three main issues: supports for the struggle of the Palestinians, condemns the political and military actions of the Israelis, and condemning the US as its allies for double standard foreign policies toward Muslim countries.

IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS OF INDONESIAN ISLAMIC PARTIES

	PKB	PAN	PKS
Dakwah	Accommodations of local cultures and traditions in religious lives	Religious purification through modernization of religious lives.	Religious purification through accommodations of local cultures in religious lives
Economy	- Economic protections toward lower income groups - Higher taxes, higher subsidies.	- Economic opportunities toward higher income groups - Lower taxes, lower subsidies.	- Global oriented small-scale economy. - Lower tax, higher subsidies.