

# **The rejection of religious nationalism towards the secular state and the Islamic caliphate: Indonesian religious figures perspective**

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## **Abstract**

Religious nationalism is interpreted differently in its application in various countries. The purpose of this study is to explore the development of the meaning of religious nationalism values according to religious figures in Indonesia. The research method used to analyze social phenomena is a qualitative approach, using direct interviews and observations as the main data collection instruments. The essential results of this study are the values of religious nationalism must be preserved as a binder of social harmony since the formation of the Indonesian state. Religious figures view that the values of religious nationalism in Indonesia reject the secular state and the idea of an Islamic state (caliphate). The critical

implication of this research is that religious figures promote the implementation of universal religious values in the public sphere and urge freedom of expression of religious activities democratically without discrimination for adherents of all religions.

Nasionalisme religius ditafsirkan secara berbeda dalam penerapannya di berbagai negara. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi perkembangan makna nilai-nilai nasionalisme religius menurut tokoh agama di Indonesia. Metode penelitian yang digunakan untuk menganalisis fenomena sosial adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan menggunakan wawancara langsung dan observasi sebagai instrumen utama dalam pengumpulan data. Temuan penting dari hasil penelitian ini bahwa nilai-nilai nasionalisme religius harus dilestarikan sebagai pengikat kerukunan masyarakat sejak pembentukan negara Indonesia. Para tokoh agama berpandangan bahwa nilai-nilai nasionalisme religius dalam negara Indonesia menolak negara sekuler dan gagasan *Islamic state* (khilafah). Implikasi penting penelitian ini, para tokoh agama mempromosikan implementasi nilai-nilai universal agama di ruang publik dan mendesak kebebasan ekspresi aktivitas keagamaan secara demokratis tanpa diskriminasi bagi pemeluk semua agama.

**Keywords:** *Religious nationalism; Secular state; Caliphate; Religious figures; Universal values of religions*

## **Introduction**

The religious dynamics in the 21st century are marked by the emergence of anti-secular groups, dissatisfaction with the secular state,<sup>1</sup> and criticizing political stuttering in serving the demands of their social life. Extensive developments have not stopped the intrinsic power of religion coloring politics in public. The rise of religious nationalism against secular nationalism<sup>2</sup> was applied differently in different countries. Despite being

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1Sumantra Bose, *Secular State, Religious Politics: India, Turkey, and the Future of Secularism*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, 27.

<sup>2</sup>The important questions: Why did secular nationalism fail? Why is religion used as an alternative? See Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the*

a secular state, India promotes Hindu nationalist political hegemony,<sup>3</sup> Buddhist nationalism in Burma,<sup>4</sup> Christian nationalism in America,<sup>5</sup> Catholicism as national identity in Poland,<sup>6</sup> Islamization of Malaysia,<sup>7</sup> and Muslim nationalism in Turkey.<sup>8</sup>

The topic of religious nationalism was inspired by Juergensmeyer's research. Juergensmeyer divides ethnic religious nationalism and ideological religious nationalism<sup>9</sup> and he still hesitates whether religious nationalism values are compatible with virtues of secular Western democracy.<sup>10</sup> Brubaker divides four distinct ways of studying the connection between religion and nationalism: the first is to treat religion and nationalism as

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*Secular State Comparative Studies in Religion and Society*, New York: University of California Press, 1994, 6.

<sup>3</sup>Edward Anderson and Arkotong Longkumer, "Neo-Hindutva': Evolving Forms, Spaces, and Expressions of Hindu Nationalism", *Contemporary South Asia*, Volume 26, Number 4 (2018), 371. <http://doi:10.1080/09584935.2018.1548576>; Sneha Annavarapu, "Religious Nationalism in a Global Age the Case of Hindu Nationalism", *Journal of Developing Societies*, Volume 31, Number 1 (2015), 133. <http://doi:10.1177/0169796X14562943>

<sup>4</sup>Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Three Faces of the Rohingya Crisis: Religious Nationalism, Asian Islamophobia, and Delegitimizing Citizenship", *Studia Islamika*, Volume 25, Number 3 (2018), 505; Emilie Biver, "Religious Nationalism: Myanmar and the Role of Buddhism in Anti-Muslim Narratives an Analysis of Myanmar's Ethnic Conflicts through the Lens of Buddhist Nationalism", 21. Retrieved from <https://bd.b-ok.as/book/3579264/a89fdb?dsouce=recommend>

<sup>5</sup>Scott W. Hibbard, *Religious Politics and Secular States Egypt, India, and the United States*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, 177.

<sup>6</sup>Kyriaki Topidi, "Religious freedom, National Identity, and the Polish Catholic Church: Converging Visions of Nation and God", *Religions*, Volume 10, Number 5 (2019), 16. <http://doi:10.3390/rel10050293>

<sup>7</sup>Khairudin Aljunied, *Islam in Malaysia: An Entwined History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019, 213; Michael D. Barr and Anantha R. Govindasamy, "The Islamisation of Malaysia: Religious Nationalism in the Service of Ethnonationalism", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 64, Number 3 (June 2010), 297. <http://doi:10.1080/10357711003736469>

<sup>8</sup>Jenny White, *Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014, 9.

<sup>9</sup>Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Worldwide Rise of Religious Nationalism", *Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 50, Number 1 (1996): 4-5. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24357402>

<sup>10</sup>Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War ...*, xiv.

analogous phenomena; the second is to specify ways in which religion helps explain things about nationalism; the third is to treat religion as part of nationalism, and the fourth is to posit a distinctively religious form of nationalism.<sup>11</sup>

Indonesia is predominantly Muslim but has never been part of the Islamic empire<sup>12</sup> and is not claimed as an Islamic state. Since its independence, Indonesia has established Pancasila (The five-principles) as a philosophical and ideological basis for the state which is seen as capable of uniting all segments of society as a nation, regardless of religion, political background, ethnicity, and culture.<sup>13</sup> According to Katjasungkana, Indonesia is a secular state, not a religious state.<sup>14</sup> Al Makin writes the uniqueness of secularization in Indonesia which does not deny the role of religion.<sup>15</sup>

Indonesia is known as a large country with a multi-ethnic and Muslim majority. Although groups identify themselves in different ethnicities, languages, and religions, these differences do not become a source of conflict.<sup>16</sup> This idea of 'Islamic nationality' has contributed to forging Indonesian Islam and religious nationalism, which also remains part of the politico-religion vocabulary in postcolonial Indonesia.<sup>17</sup> Menchik

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<sup>11</sup>Rogers Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (2012), 3. DOI: 10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00486.x

<sup>12</sup>Edward Schneier, *Muslim Democracy: Politics, Religion and Society in Indonesia, Turkey and the Islamic World*, New York: Routledge, 2016, 212.

<sup>13</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Islam and Pancasila: Indonesian Politics 1945-1995*, Jakarta: Badan Litbang Agama dan Diklat Keagamaan, 2001, 5; Jimly Asshiddiqie, "Ideologi, Pancasila, dan Konstitusi", <https://jakarta45.wordpress.com/2009/08/08/konstitusi-ideologi-pancasila-dan-konstitusi/> accessed August 8, 2019.

<sup>14</sup>Satrio Arismunandar (ed.), *NKRI Bersyariah atau Ruang Publik yang Manusiawi? Tanggapan 21 Pakar Terhadap Gagasan Denny J.A.*, Jakarta: Ceraf Budaya Indonesia, 2019, 153.

<sup>15</sup>Al Makin, "Not a Religious State", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, Volume 46, Number 135 (2017), 110. doi:10.1080/13639811.2017.1380279

<sup>16</sup>Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 214.

<sup>17</sup>Carol Kersten, *A History of Islam in Indonesia: Unity in Diversity*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017, 92.

uses the term “godly nationalism” to describe Indonesia as occupying a middle position between religious nationalism and secular nationalism. Indonesian nationalism is rooted in religious solidarity even though it is not an Islamic state.<sup>18</sup> Referring to the results of the 2005-2017 LSI survey, Denny JA sees the cultural fact that religion in the mind of the Indonesian public is very profound. Their understanding of religious teachings will characterize orientation, choices, and behavior guidelines.<sup>19</sup>

For Bourchier, religious nationalism is increasingly taking a central position in Indonesian politics.<sup>20</sup> Religious nationalism makes religion the basis for the collective identity of the nation and the source of the highest values and goals on this earth.<sup>21</sup> The focus of this current research has distinguishing features from previous research, specifically to understand the views of religious leaders regarding the values of religious nationalism.

In general, something “secular” has more to do with worldly affairs than religious matters.<sup>22</sup> The characteristics of the two worlds can be distinguished: the religious spiritual-sacred world and the secular-temporal-profane world.”<sup>23</sup> Matters relating to the end are the area of religion, while matters relating to the world (here and now) are the area of secular. In Gellners’ opinion, the strong religious constitution of society provides rules for living life but does not

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<sup>18</sup>Jeremy Menchik, *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 71-72.

<sup>19</sup>Anick HT., *Mewacanakan Kembali Demokrasi Pancasila yang Diperbarui*, Jakarta: Inspirasi.co Book Project, 2017, 22.

<sup>20</sup>David M. Bourchier, “Two Decades of Ideological Contestation in Indonesia: From Democratic Cosmopolitanism to Religious Nationalism”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Volume 49, Number 5 (2019), 713. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2019.1590620>

<sup>21</sup>Friedland, Roger, “Religious Nationalism and the Problem of Collective Representation”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Volume 27, Number 1 (2001), 138. DOI:10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.125

<sup>22</sup>Phill Zuckerman and John R. Shook (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 5.

<sup>23</sup>Phill Zuckerman, Luke W. Galen, and Frank L. Pasquale, *The Nonreligious: Understanding Secular People and Societies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, 51.

offer a blueprint for organizing power.<sup>24</sup> It illustrates the strength of the secular view in managing the social system by ignoring the involvement of religion. Secularism delegitimizes religious authorities' claims to control the production of knowledge and creates the conditions for the rejection of ontological claims found in sacred narratives in favor of a scientifically orientated ontology.<sup>25</sup> In this context, secularism limits the problems directly faced by individuals in society, not interfering with beliefs that are the realm of religion.

For an extended period, the discourse of religious involvement has been marginalized by secular magnets and modernization, but globalization has changed the way of seeing religion. The deification of religious secularization and privatization must be changed, as Walsh argues, "Approaches to peace that remain religiously illiterate will fail to yield either accurate assessments or fruitful outcomes."<sup>26</sup> Democratization and liberalization do not always require the rejection or privatization of religion, but what they do need is a reinterpretation of religious ideas concerning the moral basis of legitimate political authority and individual rights.<sup>27</sup> Religion in this context is not just a matter of privacy but has a broader meaning as a view of life and a way of life.<sup>28</sup>

Religion is often accused of being incompatible with modern democracy, so the question arises of how a system of life will be applied to a religious community that is incompatible with its owner's values. Jurgen

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<sup>24</sup>Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983, 30. Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?", in Ronald Grigor Suny and Geoff Eley (eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 51; Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" in Homi K. Bhaba (ed.), *Nation and Narration*, London: Routledge, 1990, 19.

<sup>25</sup>Salman Sayyid, *Recalling the Caliphate: Decolonisation and World Order*, London: Hurst and Company, 2014, 33.

<sup>26</sup>Thomas G. Walsh, "Religion, Peace and the Post-Secular Public Sphere", *International Journal on World Peace*, Volume 29, Number 2 (2012), 35. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23266664>

<sup>27</sup>Nader Hashemi, *Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy toward a Democratic Theory for Muslim Societies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 16.

<sup>28</sup>John Valk, Halis Albayrak, and Mualla Selçuk, *An Islamic Worldview from Turkey Religion in a Modern, Secular and Democratic State*, California: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 4.

Habermas provides a middle ground:

In democratic discourse, secular and religious citizens stand in a complementary relation. Both are involved in an interaction that is constitutive for a democratic process springing from the soil of civil society and developing through the informal communication networks of the public sphere.<sup>29</sup>

The experts on nation, nationalism, secularism, and religion (Anderson, Gellner, and Hobsbawm), according to Rieffer, discuss the development of nationalism, marginalizing the role that religion plays in various nationalist movements.<sup>30</sup> Norris and Inglehart assume “that secularization is advancing at a rapid pace, and that religion will eventually disappear worldwide is a grave mistake.”<sup>31</sup>

The 1945 State Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Article 9 Chapter XI (Religion) article 9 explicitly states that “The Nation is based on the belief in God.”<sup>32</sup> Indonesia and Vietnam did not make majority religion the basis of religion, “Sukarno proclaimed that faith in God was one of Pancasila’s five principles at the core of Indonesian nationalism. The first president did not declare Islam as a state religion, as well as, Ngô Đình Diệm did not make Catholicism or Buddhism as Vietnam’s national religion.”<sup>33</sup>

Sartono Kartodirdjo reports that, “the religious principle was recognized,

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<sup>29</sup>Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (eds.), *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011, 27.

<sup>30</sup>Barbara-Ann J. Rieffer, “Religion and Nationalism: Understanding the Consequences of a Complex Relationship”, *Ethnicities*, Volume 3, Number 2 (2003), 222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796803003002003>

<sup>31</sup>Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sekularisasi Ditinjau Kembali: Agama dan Politik Dewasa Ini*, translated by Zaim Rofiqi Jakarta: Pustaka Alvabet, Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina & PT Newmont Pacific Nusantara, 2009, 32.

<sup>32</sup>Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945. Retrieved from <https://luk.staff.ugm.ac.id/atur/UUD1945.pdf>

<sup>33</sup>Phi-Vân Nguyen, “A Secular State for a Religious Nation: The Republic of Vietnam and Religious Nationalism, 1946–1963”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Volume 77, Number 03 (2018), 741. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0021911818000505>

but as a basis, no single religion was chosen.”<sup>34</sup> The dangerous atmosphere in the formation of the foundation of the Indonesian state did not lead to physical war, but the willingness of all the figures to sit together to find an agreement that supported Indonesian independence. Our hypothesis is the values of religious nationalism in Indonesia guarantee the growth of harmony and non-violence, in contrast to the developments in other Muslim countries which tend to be dominated by the majority. The values of religious nationalism have transcended the boundaries of their respective religions and prioritized the interests of all citizens.

This research used a qualitative approach, ranging from the choice of research themes, pre-field planning, type of data, the method used, researcher position, informant selection, and analysis model. The choice of qualitative approach was in accordance with the data needed for the researcher to understand in detail the respondents’ perspective in addressing the social issues. The topic that the researchers want to explore is the views of religious figures on the meaning of the religious nationalism values among the Indonesian society. The views of religious figures in religion and social life are a reflection or representation of the community’s behavior. Researchers interviewed eighteen religious figures who are members of the Interfaith Religious Forum in Salatiga, Singkawang, and Manado as the most tolerant cities in Indonesia.

### **Religious nationalism: the view of the religious figures**

Based on the Setara Institute’s study of 94 cities in Indonesia, the ten most tolerant cities were selected, including Singkawang, Salatiga, and Manado, which met the criteria of maintaining a harmonious life in a

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<sup>34</sup>Sartono Kartodirdjo, “Some Problems on the Genesis of Nationalism in Indonesia”, *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Volume 3, Number 1 (1962), 84. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20067368>



plural society.<sup>35</sup> Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB = Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) is a forum formed by the community and facilitated by the Government to build, maintain, and empower religious communities for harmony and prosperity.<sup>36</sup> The Interfaith Harmony Forum is a forum for representatives of six religions (Islam, Christianity, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian) in all districts in Indonesia. Religious leaders in three cities (Singkawang, Salatiga, and Manado) who are members of the Interfaith Harmony Forum were selected as research samples.

The city of Manado is predominantly Christian but does not unify based on religion. The diversity of people with various religions and ethnicities is united with the values of nationalism. The Christian religious figure stated:

For the Manado people, religious values are one breath with the values of nationalism. We cannot give up religion. The Indonesian nation can unite in the framework of nationalism, love for the nation and its homeland. Love for Indonesia, even though there are different ethnicities and religions, is the essence of the value of nationalism. Bung Karno (the first president) was a nationalist figure who respected religious values.<sup>37</sup>

The Hindu religious figures have the view that the value of religious nationalism must be returned to the primary state of the 1945 Constitution and Pancasila (The Five Principles). This historical approach refers to the beginning of the Indonesian state's formation and refers to the authentic juridical sources. Religious values refer to the value of the first Pancasila

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<sup>35</sup>Halili, *Indeks Kota Toleran (IKT) Tahun 2018*, Jakarta: Pustaka Masyarakat Setara, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332607576> Indeks Kota\_Toleran\_IKT Tahun\_2018

<sup>36</sup>Bab I Pasal 1 ayat 6, Peraturan Bersama Menteri Agama dan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor 9 Tahun 2006 Nomor 8 Tahun 2006 Tanggal 21 Maret 2006 tentang *Pedoman Pelaksanaan Tugas Kepala Daerah/Wakil Kepala Daerah dalam Pemeliharaan Kerukunan Umat Beragama, Pemberdayaan Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama, dan Pendirian Rumah Ibadat*. Jakarta: Puslitbang Kehidupan Keagamaan Badan Litbang dan Diklat Departemen Agama, 2016.

<sup>37</sup>Interview with AT, Christian religious figure in Manado City, 23 August 2019.

(*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa, Believe in the One and Only God*).<sup>38</sup> The Confucian figures have the view that nationalism is part of love for their ancestors who have struggled to defend their homeland.<sup>39</sup> If citizens do not have nationalistic values, who else do we ask for protection? Religious values are essential to care for, to be guarded, based on love.

The main strength of keeping Manado City as a tolerant city is “tolerance,” the willingness of each individual to protect the feelings of others as he wants to be treated. Manado City has the motto “Torang Samua Basudara” (we are all brothers),<sup>40</sup> which is now widely emblazoned in large banners in various strategic places as the icon of a tolerant city. Singkawang Islamic leaders argue that Indonesia will be destroyed if nationalism and religion are separated.<sup>41</sup> Religious diversity in Indonesia according to the view of Hindu figures:

Like a garden with various types, colors, and smells of flowers, they all live together in their differences. Flowers look beautiful because the variety of types and colors they have is free to grow according to their nature. There is no claim that one is “the best” or “the most beautiful” and the other is in the category of “less beautiful” because each flower has its power.<sup>42</sup>

Understanding the social life of humanity with the analogy of a flower garden is very relevant to modern life that promotes existential freedom. Religious leaders argue that the value of religious nationalism is the founding fathers’ commitment at the beginning of the formation of the Indonesian state. They are jointly responsible for defending the homeland as well as a commitment to safeguarding the moral values of the nation. Soepomo’s

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<sup>38</sup>Interview with AJ, Hindus religious figure in Manado, August 24, 2019.

<sup>39</sup>Interview with SE, a Confucian religious figure in Manado, August 24, 2019.

<sup>40</sup>Frangky Suleman, “Keberagaman Budaya dan Agama di Kota Manado”, *Endogami: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Antropologi*, Volume 1, Number 1 (December 2017), 55. <https://doi.org/10.14710/endogami.1.1.55-62>

<sup>41</sup>Interview with IR, Islamic religious figure in Singkawang, July 18, 2019.

<sup>42</sup>Interview with UK, Hindus religious figure in Salatiga, August 5, 2019.

speech at The Investigation Agency for Preparatory Efforts for Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI: Badan Penyelidik Usaha-Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia), "A united National State will maintain the noble human character and uphold the noble moral ideals of the people."<sup>43</sup>

### **Religious figures refuse the secular state**

The terms secular, secularization, and secularism are debatable, but for the religious leaders who are the subject of this study, the definition of secular is understood as the concept that the state ignores the role of religion. The Salatiga Catholic religious figure said, "Indonesia is not a secular country. Pancasila and NKRI are undisputed."<sup>44</sup> According to the Confucian religious figure, "It is difficult to say that Indonesia is a secular state in the sense of being devoid of religion because the Indonesian state is based on Pancasila."<sup>45</sup> All religions are given freedom of development, and there are no obstacles for the *dai* (religious preacher) to spread their religion. The Islamic figure of Singkawang argued, "I do not agree that Indonesia is called a secular state because religious activities are given great attention."<sup>46</sup> The Salatiga Christian religious figure stated:

Indonesia is not a secular country nor a religious state. It appears in the Indonesian constitution. Even now, the government has not led to a secular or religious state.<sup>47</sup>

Since the inception of the Indonesian state, President Sukarno decided not to include Islam as the ideological basis of the state explicitly, but also

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<sup>43</sup>Soegito. A.T., *Prof. Mr. Dr. R. Supomo*, Jakarta: Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, Pusat Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1980, 49. Retrieved from <http://repositori.kemdikbud.go.id/7412/1/Prof.Mr.Dr.R.SUPOMO.pdf>

<sup>44</sup>Interview with OS, Catholic religious figure in Salatiga, August 6, 2019.

<sup>45</sup>Interview with ON, Confucian religious figure in Salatiga, August 5, 2019.

<sup>46</sup>Interview with BA, Islamic religious figure in Singkawang, July 17, 2019.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with LE, Christian religious figure in Salatiga, August 6, 2019.

not to use the name of a secular state either.<sup>48</sup> Freedom of worship for the activities of all religions and religious holidays received state legitimacy as a national holiday, and it is even open to accommodate the demands of social organizations, such as the Silent Day (for Hindus), the Christmas, and Chinese New Year. Sam Haselby summarized three processes of secularization, namely: religion being separated from the state; religion was privatized and decreasing religious belief and activity.<sup>49</sup> In the case of Indonesia, all three of them are not enforced. Even in government, there is a ministry that explicitly handles religious affairs. The government does not explicitly claim Indonesia as a secular state as part of an effort to accommodate religious groups' viewpoints. The Muslim community's rejection of the idea of secularism is stiffer, even though its government cannot escape the bonds of secularization.

### **Caliphate (Islamic State): Indonesia dissolved**

Economic and political globalization has increased the tension, threat, and uncertainty globally and aroused religious nationalism. Along with the emergence of globalization, religious nationalism is an idea that continues to develop in public discourse.<sup>50</sup> The propaganda of radical Islamic movements in the Middle East through the media entered Indonesia.<sup>51</sup> The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group not only creates terror and economic tensions in Iraq and Syria but also challenges other world communities.<sup>52</sup> The publication of the massive ISIS movement has spread

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<sup>48</sup>Patrick Ziegenhain, "Islam and Nation-Building in Indonesia and Malaysia", *ASIEN*, 146 (2018), 91.

<sup>49</sup>Sam Haselby, *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 26-27.

<sup>50</sup>Mark Juergensmeyer, "Religious Nationalism in a Global World", *Religions*, Volume 10, Number 2/97 (2019), 1-8 <http://doi:10.3390/rel10020097>

<sup>51</sup>Herdi Sahrasad and Al Chaidar, *Fundamentalisme, Radikalisme, Terorisme: Perspektif atas Agama, Masyarakat dan Negara*, Jakarta: CSS-UI, Freedom Foundation, 2017, 200.

<sup>52</sup>Alam Khan and Mario Arturo Ruiz Estrada, "The Effects of Terrorism on Economic

to various parts of the world, including Indonesia.<sup>53</sup> The narrative of Islamophobia abroad has spread to Indonesia as new merchandise worth selling to overthrow political opponents in a contest of power.<sup>54</sup>

Social media is busy with the issue of the caliphate, an agenda to offer Islamic sharia as an alternative to replace Pancasila because it is considered a failure in the welfare of society. The issue was made framing in social media as a precarious condition for Indonesia's condition. The main problem of religious diversity in Indonesia today is Muslim activists who are willing to commit terrorism against adherents of other religions.<sup>55</sup> Three organizations (Hizbut Tahrir, Islamic Defenders Front, Indonesian Mujahedeen Council) are quite popular in narrating Islamic doctrine suspected of being opposed to the government.<sup>56</sup> Islamophobic fever plagued social media, and society was overshadowed by a movement that wants to replace Pancasila.

The Indonesian Hizbut Tahrir Organization (HTI) was disbanded because it was seen as incompatible with the Pancasila state<sup>57</sup> and other mass organizations that were very thick with acts of violence in overcoming religious problems under the pretext of “*nahyu ‘an almunkar*” (preventing evil). Liddle noted four significant threats in Indonesia: radicalism,

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Performance: The Case of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)”, *Quality & Quantity*, Volume 50, Number 4 (2016), 1646. Retrieved from <http://doi: 10.1007/s11135-015-0226-9>

<sup>53</sup>Poltak Partogi Nainggolan, *Ancaman ISIS di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2018, 9.

<sup>54</sup>Zainuddin Syarif, Syafiq A. Mughni, and Abd Hannan, “Post-Truth and Islamophobia in the Contestation of Contemporary Indonesian Politics”, *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, Volume 10, Number 2 (2020), 216. DOI: 10.18326/ijims.v10i2. 199-225

<sup>55</sup>Gary D. Bouma, Rod Ling, and Douglas Pratt, *Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific*, New York: Springer, 2010, 74.

<sup>56</sup>Julie C. Hwang, *Umat Bergerak: Mobilisasi Damai Kaum Islamis di Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Turki*, translated by Samsudin Berlian, Jakarta: Freedom Institute, 2011, 84.

<sup>57</sup>Ahmad Najib Burhani, “The Banning of Hizbut Tahrir and the Consolidation of Democracy in Indonesia”, *ISEAS Perspective* Vol. 7 (September 2017), 5.

communism, separatism, and corruption,<sup>58</sup> which have been proven. The government's agenda is aggressively campaigning for de-radicalism to inhibit the pace of social movements that lead to acts of violence under cover of religion.

The Salatiga Catholic figure expressed his view, "I disagree with the idea of a caliphate. For people who feel that they are too religious, it is more dangerous to kill others in the name of God. They feel more religious than others."<sup>59</sup> It is a process of positive personality maturity, but the hardened religious spirit and rejecting different understandings indicate immature religious experience.

The issue of the caliphate or efforts to form a government based on Islamic Sharia does not develop in Manado. The majority of Manado's population is Christian, so the caliphate issue is not a severe problem. The Singkawang Islamic figure stated, "The Islamic Caliphate is busy on social media. There is no discussion of the caliphate in the grassroots."<sup>60</sup> This view is the same as the Salatiga religious leaders who agree that HTI and FPI live in the capital, for Salatiga as a small city is enough with existing religious organizations.

There are indeed many issues of the caliphate, but they are very limited in the media. As a discourse only, maybe. It is tried not to allow the organization that led to the Salatiga community's breakdown because it could disturb the well-established atmosphere of tolerance in Salatiga. The era of freedom of information and freedom of association should not threaten religious harmony.<sup>61</sup>

National observers concerned about the growing culture of violence played by small groups in overcoming social problems in the name of

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<sup>58</sup>R. William Liddle, "Empat Ancaman Demokrasi", *Kompas* (October 19, 2019), 6.

<sup>59</sup>Interview with OS, Catholic religious figure in Salatiga, August 5, 2019.

<sup>60</sup>Interview with NI, Muslim religious figure in Singkawang, July 17, 2019.

<sup>61</sup>Interview with KI, Muslim religious figure in Salatiga, 5 August, 2019.

religion. The risk that the nation must bear with the Islamic Caliphate is the dissolution of Indonesia based on Pancasila. Countries with more than 250 million will be divided into small pieces that want to be independent and form their state. Two cases of the west (Aceh) and the east (Papuan nationalism),<sup>62</sup> which repeatedly wanted independence, have become a severe problem for the Indonesian government.

The energy of the people is wastefully drained when arguing about Pancasila as the basis of the state. There will be a big shock: the Indonesian state will dissolve, break up into a new state in the name of religion (Christianity, Hinduism, and others), or based on ethnicity. The fear of secular groups with religious activities is often overshadowed by an Islamic state (caliphate). The majority of Indonesian Muslims are not moved to change the state's shape, only a small group (playing in the realm of publication) who dream of reviving the Ottoman Caliphate in the 21st century. In 76 year journeys (the old order, the new order, and the reformation), Pancasila has faced challenges and interpretations according to the dynamics of its era, but now it is still maintained as the symbolic soul of the state.<sup>63</sup>

### **Universal values of religion**

Every religious community has its point of view in formulating "the ideal image of the world" so that friction and open conflicts between people of different religions are inevitable. In certain groups, religious militancy changes its face in the form of acts of violence and radicalism. People are easily provoked by their emotions by committing acts of violence under the pretext of maintaining a group, ethnic or religious identity. Komarudin Hidayat's study found that when the state has arrived and entered global

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<sup>62</sup>Charles E. Farhadian, *Christianity, Islam, and Nationalism in Indonesia*, New York: Routledge, 2005, 29.

<sup>63</sup>David M. Bourchier, "Two Decades...", 727.

relations and competition, the existing government must further strengthen the nationalist-religious quality.<sup>64</sup> The majority-minority paradigm is still prevalent. Indonesian Muslims are considered less tolerant of minority groups (Ahmadiyah, Shia, and non-Muslims). Most American Christians tend to be intolerant and anti-Muslim<sup>65</sup>, and American Christian Zionists believe Islam “as the biblical evil hordes of Gog and Magog.”<sup>66</sup>

Plural society requires commitment from citizens who care about living in peace, unity, and mutual respect. “Hate speech, such as a lecture by a national preacher who is very popular in the media, has little respect for other religions,” explained religious figures from the city of Manado and Salatiga. The preachers should refrain from discussing sensitive issues, which can cause hurt feelings for people of other religions. The sophistication of social media has changed once very private, and now they can be exposed to the public. There should be efforts to instill supportive moral values for the basis of a healthy and dynamic plural community life. The Islamic leader of Salatiga stated, “Narrow nationalism creates a break in harmony. Religious leaders must try to eliminate the internal tensions of their respective followers, and later the grassroots will follow suit.”<sup>67</sup>

The big problem of Indonesian society is the effort to realize justice that can directly touch all citizens’ lives, primarily to protect the marginalized poor’s rights. Economic limitations and limited knowledge insights prevent citizens from adequately obtaining access to just legal information and services. The formation of permanent social stratification, worker-employer,

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<sup>64</sup>Komaruddin Hidayat, “Nasionalisme-Religius”, *Kompas* (August 10, 2019): 6.

<sup>65</sup>Allyson F. Shortle and Ronald Keith Gaddie, “Religious Nationalism and Perceptions of Muslims and Islam”, *Politics and Religion*, Volume 8, Number 3 (2015), 438. <http://doi:10.1017/S17550483150003221755-0483/15>

<sup>66</sup>Tristan Sturm, “Religion as Nationalism: The Religious Nationalism of American Christian Zionists”, *National Identities*, Volume 20, Number 3 (2017), 312. <https://doi:10.1080/14608944.2016.1255187>

<sup>67</sup>Interview with IQ, Muslim religious figure in Salatiga, August 6, 2019.



king-people also often triggers unfair behavior. The forms of injustice that the ruling class or group evenly carries out have taken away the rights of the victims. The oppression carried out by the colonizers has destroyed the individual's freedom to fight for the betterment of his destiny. The small scope of injustice can be observed from the family life space (the husband takes away the wife's rights or vice versa).

Social cohesion between religious believers has been widely practiced in specific communities in religious activities based on a sense of togetherness in one community. The word tolerance is the central jargon to avoid horizontal conflicts between religious believers. Tolerance is the attitude of a person's willingness to accept other people with different interests to live together in one community. In practical application, it allows and gives freedom to other people of different beliefs and cultures in living together.

Justice must be applied without discrimination. The examples are giving freedom to take action with social obligations, providing equal opportunities for all parties without being hindered by differences in gender, color, skin, religion, or ethnicity. The keyword of justice is the recognition of individual rights along with their social obligations. Justice in the context of religion is a facility provided by the government to all citizens without discrimination to perform worship in a comfortable, safe manner, free from threats or terrors from other groups. Religious leaders emphasized the need for security guarantees from the government to all religious believers in carrying out their worship freely.

The government should accommodate the strengthening of universal religious values in the public sphere that is the hope of religious leaders as a form of democratic policy implementation. The religious leaders agreed to translate the essential values of religion (justice, honesty, tolerance) into real life in society. The value of justice can be elaborated in concrete life. The community is protected by law, and it does not become a tool

of the authorities to oppress society. The value of honesty means that the government can refrain from corruption so that state financial resources can be used for the common prosperity of the people. The value of tolerance is the primary basis for inter-ethnic and religious interactions. Ramage calls Pancasila an ideology of tolerance for the life of a plural society.<sup>68</sup>

The word “religious nationalism,” as understood by religious leaders who are members of the Interfaith Harmony Forum, is the establishment of bonds of solidarity, recognition, and accountability as one Indonesian nation inspired by universal religious values to create community harmony. In the language of a Catholic figure (the leader of the “Hati Tersuci” Cathedral Manado church),

Religious differences in Manado are not the first trigger for conflict but are more based on political interests and personal sentiments. When we are friends, many things can be neutralized. The most important thing in social communication is a sincere personal relationship. Personal relations with people make way for unity easier.<sup>69</sup>

## Conclusion

Secular and religious are two entities that compete to control and occupy the public space. Religious figures feel that there is a public area to be their territory, while secularists claim religious boundaries in private matters. The jargon of democracy gets stuck when each insists on claims of justification and overrides the other. The point of view of religious figures is based on moral values, so that their statements are related to the nobility of their religion, not intended to politicize religions.

Secularism as a feature of government in various parts of the world is

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<sup>68</sup>Douglas E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*, New York: Routledge, 1995, 128.

<sup>69</sup>Interview with SU, Manado Catholic religious figure on August 8, 2019.

not the right choice for the Indonesian people. Likewise, the romanticism of the Islamic caliphate was not the goal of most Muslims because of obedience to the founding fathers who had agreed with Pancasila. The need to apply the values of religious nationalism in state policies and associations to build religious harmony. Religious figures promote the implementation of universal religious values in the narrative of the public space and encourage freedom of expression of religious activities democratically for all religious adherents, without discrimination.

The results of this study theoretically open new insights that the majority of religious adherents do not necessarily demand absolute domination of power. In the empirical realm, religious figures are of the view that universal religious values have an important meaning in managing public and state affairs. Further research is still needed to identify in more detail the factors that support the strengthening value of national unity and understand the threats that damage religious harmony.

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