Religion and Politics Synergy for the Benefit of the People

Sabdono; Andri; Yohana Natassha; Sugeng Santoso; Yehuda Indra

STT Ekumene, Jakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

The strong relationship between religion and politics is not exclusively owned by Christians, and the struggle to produce a political condition for the benefit of society will bear many attributes of that purpose. This article aims to examine the relationship between religion and politics in Indonesia that have been established long before the Republic of Indonesia was born. The synergy between religion and politics in Indonesia was once constrained when the powerful regime came. So that the relationship of religion and politics can run positively and constructively. Mutual support between religion and politics must be able to convert the potential of national power into a real force so that the synergy will impact positively for the humans' problems. The study in this article used qualitative research approach with case study method. It is a series of scientific activities conducted intensively, in-depth about a program, event, and activity, whether it is conducted by individuals, groups, institutions, or organizations to obtain in-depth knowledge through observation and scientific analysis of the existing literature until the information can be obtained about the results of religion and politics synergy in Indonesia in the field of religious and political idealism, as well as politicization vs depoliticization of religion.

Keywords: *Relations; Synergy of Religions; Politics; Benefit of The People*

Introduction

In carrying out the national and religious life, people will not be separated from the occurrence of frictions, conflicts, and disputes between each other using religion labels, even though it is not all about religious doctrine. Pein in his research found an increase in intolerance and radicalism behavior among today's learners, who have entered a troubling stage in national life. Addressing these problems, the government needs to take immediate steps by planning character education programs and mental revolution movements. According to the researchers, both programs and that movement must involve the world of education to get maximum results. This research also identifies students' understanding of the importance of Christian education in the formation of national character, with efforts to shape students' understanding of the dangers of radicalism and intolerance. In addition, the importance of providing solutions in the formation of national insight character in preventing radicalism and intolerance (Peter, 2020). In the last two decades, the study of the influence of religion on politics has increased significantly. The conflict that occurs between religious people in one nation will produce a variety of

new issues that damage life and harmony and the order of life among religious people as a national community (J. T. I. and M. Breuning, 2011).

In some studies, it is explained the influence of religion on individuals and groups (M. Novalina, 2018) (Muhaemin et al., 2019). Therefore, there is no doubt that religion has become so important to people and has the capacity to influence their lives. For most people, religion can explain who they are and play most of the decisions they have taken. Even Americans who say they are a plural nation, with strong civil society experience, have proven that religion has shown its role in the exchange of ideas. Religion has a unique ability to promote civil society and social capital (Novalina, 2020). Huntington's popular 1990s work, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order could add to a long record of academics' attention in the US over the role of religion in politics. Once history ends -which marks the end of the Cold War between the U.S. and Russia - the United States' opponents in international politics are no longer Communism, but civilization, especially non-Christian ones, namely Confucianism and Islam (Huntington, 2004).

Special relationship between religion and politics in Indonesia have been established long before the republic of Indonesia was born. Especially Islam has become a unifying tool in the face of colonial forces. Even several founding figures of the republic mostly come from pesantren and Islamic movement organizations. Religion and political synergy in Indonesia was once somewhat constrained when the powerful regime came. Back then, it was as if religion was sterilized from politics. One with the other is separated and wherever possible allowed to grow as a state-controlled entity, or at least religion is exempt from politics. After the political climate changed, the strong state was replaced by a strong society, there was a rise of Islam on the political stage post the New Order (Rivera, 2018). Although Islamist parties do not dominate parliament, the nuances of Islam exist in all political parties. What Nurcholis Madjid once said in the New Order era that "Islam yes, The Islamic Party, No" seemed to be true in the early Reformation era and beyond. Although the majority of Indonesians are Muslims, their political affiliation is mostly to the Nationalist party. Instead, to maintain mass support, all Political parties declared their principle as nationalist-religious. When the role of ideology is not very significant in the political process, the color of Islam comes to the surface and dominates the discourse and practice of politics in the country (Madjid, 2008).

In its course, if the state strengthens and gets rid of the role of religion will produce demoralization in the community, which will produce anarchy resulting from the policy of religion. On the contrary, if there is a politicization of religion will create hypocorism and vigilantism in society. Religious understanding that is implemented only limited to dogmatic will be easy to use as a means of justification of its adherents, while the understanding of religion that is implemented pragmatically will make religion limited to formal symbols with minimal instrumentation as values and norms in society. This is seen in the political constellation in the nation, especially in the election of the head of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, many of whom acknowledge that Anies Baswedan's victory over the incumbent, Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama, was heavily influenced by the struggle of Islamist groups, especially the National Movement of Fatwa Guards (GNPF) which is the embryo of Alumni Association (PA) 212. Because of the strong collective memory of the mass mobilization of Islam, several supporting elements use demonstration at Monas to show its existence. In almost every political agenda, they always perform and refer to the success of GNPF 212. On November 10, 2020, identity politics (Islam) was demonstrated at Sukarno Hatta Airport by those who flocked to welcome Rizieq Shihab after 3.5 years of refugees in Saudi Arabia (Tempo.co, 2017).

The contribution of this study is the conflict that occurs among religious people in one nation will produce a variety of new issues that damage the life and harmony and order of life in religious people. How the relationship can run positively and constructively, both religious and political should be able to become a real national force, so that the synergy will have a positive implication for the problems of the people.

Method

The study in this article used qualitative research approach with case study method. It is a series of observational activities and analysis of scientific literature studies conducted intensively, in-depth about a program, event, and activity, whether it is conducted by individuals, groups, institutions or organizations to gain in-depth knowledge of the event. The chosen event is actually called an actual case in progress, not a passing one. [10]In the case study method, the selection of a selected case must have a basic priority (R. E. Stake, 2012). In addition to the analysis of case studies, the study also conducted analysis covering aspects of sociology and context reality, in addition to this study also used literature studies method, in this case, to complement, especially in the analysis section of political disciplines.

Results and Discussion

3.1 Idealization of Religion and Politics

It must be acknowledged that these days, religion and politics are often made scapegoats in every social conflict. The aftermath of the September 11, 2011 attacks after the bombing of the Trade Center Building in New York and President George Bush declaring war on Terrorism- appears to have been a turning point for critical studies on religious and political relations. Especially the perception of the Western towards Islam is somewhat changed. Because of the allegations that the perpetrator of the bombing was an Islamic terrorist, the generalization developed that Islam is synonymous with terror. In fact, many things can be used as an argument to abort the thesis above.

First, the author agreed with the view that seeing Ethnicity, Religion and Race is potential national power. "Religion is an ultimate commitment that determines individuals' highest ideas as well as their conceptions of the whole truth" Religion as well as race and ethnicity have emerged as central features of political organization and mobilization (C. Jung, 2006).

Second, it follows the mind of Sigmund Freud, with the difference between religion as a form of psychological neurosis that can be eliminated by proper treatment. So even if there is a negative element in it, as long as it is managed properly, the existence of religion and politics in addition to impossible to get rid of, can also be a social capital (Juraman, 2017).

Third, following Emile Durkheim's thinking, religion provides a sense of social order and a sense of belonging. It all depends on one's interpretation of religion. For "abangan", religion is a scientific interpretation to get perspective. While religious people see religion as it is (scriptualists). Absolutism interpreting religion will cause difficulties. Therefore, there must be an effort to define by looking at religion from the relative or scientific side (empirical) by considering culture and history. With the difference between religion and political interests, we are too easily brought to an endless feud. In fact, every religion is revealed to bring messages of peace and bring people from darkness to enlightenment (H. Samuel, 2010).

Fourth, the development of democratic thought and institutions and their moral resources should be one of the media to affirm the absolutely of religion and politics. Democracy as a formula for the legitimacy of differences gives room to so-called"modes of governance," and political participation (Offe, 2019).

Fifth, Samuel Huntington's thinking - Third Wave: Democratization in the 21st Century - further permits the practice of absolutism. The Theological Foundation of Modern Political Theory: Carl Schmitt and Joseph A Schumpeter consider modern democracy to be a 'secular version of Christian Theology'. It is not too wrong to say that the main alternative to the legitimacy of democratic power is theocratic.

While politics itself is extensive in scope, ranging from the ideal to the real. The ideal assumes that politics is not only a human trait(zoon political) but a variety of human activities aimed at making policy. While in the view of realists, politics interests, influence, authority, and power. Of the many operational definitions above, the views of the Realists are the most dominant. From the beginning of Continental European Mashab to "Mashab Tingkah laku" (behavioral), politics is defined as power, whose formulation is as follows: Politics is about power, that is about the capacity of social agents, agencies, and institutions to maintain or transform their social or physical environment (Offe, 2019). The element is "resources" and "forces" needed to move capacity. In addition, Politics as a universal dimension of human life is independent. While viewed from the institution, Politics is a state or government apparatus (world).

Marxists did not separate politics from economics, culture, and religion as the Liberals had from the beginning believed in cultural separation, from religion. Even if there has been a rivalry between countries so far, it is not due to religious differences, but because of the rivalry between Capitalism and Socialism. It is therefore not too wrong for Karl Marx to assume that religion is merely an illusion used to maintain class structures. As with any culture, it is used to control production tools (modes of production). For him, religion can function instrumentally. To maintain modes of production (power), we can use religion. That is, people use religion, not as it is, but to achieve a certain goal, namely mastery of modes of production. If the benefit of the people is the goal, then the direction of political use is also there (Kambali, 2020).

While Max Weber stressed the importance of a better understanding of the complexities of religion. In Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism, he puts religion at the center of everything. But at the same time, while behavior patterns are integrated (ingrained), the existence and role of religion are increasingly insignificant. In the current context, the role of religion becomes insignificant while bureaucracy and science replace it (M. Weber, 2010).

Back in comparison to the development of the role of religion, Tocqueville sees an indirect role in religion in democracy in the United States. In Brazil and South Korea, religion is believed to contribute positively to people's political participation. Religion is a driving factor in democratization. It does not only play a role in encouraging but becomes one of the main factors in collective action (S. Mujani, 2017). If only religion (Islam) was implemented in earnest (Kaffa), there is actually no basis for us to worry about its role in social change. The Qur'an as its main source, in addition to the Hadith, has instructed its adherents to be able to carry out Islam as Rahmatan Lil Alamein (Rakhmat for every people). Various issues of life have references there (Bakry, 2009).

Starting from "Justice must be established to ensure the security, stability of the country and the achievement of prosperity". "Deliberation is better than dictatorship", "Maintaining friendly relations". Keeping "Patient (steadfast) the point of victory", "Bad guess is not good", "Preach wisely", "Good relations with neighbors must be maintained" and "Stay away from dirty words" are other Islamic handles. Then "War is prescribed to create peace and justice" and "AlQuran advocates world peace" and "Peace must take precedence". And many others. But the last two that are very important are "Man the caliph of God on the earth" and "Amar makeup Nahi Munkar must be done". In the Indonesian context, it seems that religion and politics synergy becomes the political capital for the nation in managing diversity.

3.2 Politicization vs. Depoliticization of Religion

In the Indonesian context, the term Politicization of Religion or "selling Verses" – if borrowing herbert Feith's language, is not a new phenomenon. At the beginning of the republic, the terminology could be imposed on the debate based on State. For secular Nationalists, the principle of "The One True God" as stated in the first sila of Pancasila, is enough. With such a phrase, the state is considered to have expressed its dis profanity towards Theism, not Atheism. But for conservative Muslims, the basic matters

of the country are very important to be discussed thoroughly, and from it, he seeks deliberation and consensus. Therefore, the Jakarta Charter should be used as its Basic Value. Since the 1955 general election, there have been two main Islamist parties participating in the political contest, namely Nahdlatul Oelama Party and Masyumi Party. The so-called first represents his party of Traditional Muslims. Meanwhile, the latter became the political forum of modernist Islamist groups. In the election that Herberth Feith said was the most democratic, the two Islamist parties above became 2 out of 4 political parties that gained votes above 15%. The other two parties are the Communist Party of Indonesia and the Indonesian National Party PNI). The gain above 15% was already a big part of the number of political parties that followed the election at that time. Imagine, in the election that for the first time was done, the military was allowed to be the participant. Not to mention the mass organizations that are trying to represent this compound Indonesia. It is not too surprising that the number of votes distributed to many of the above election participants (Hadiwinata, 2006).

Returning to the question of politicization of religion referred to in the subtitle above, because it wants to win the sympathy of Muslim voters, then in his campaign, politicians compete with each other in various ways, including selling verses. For example, choosing Masyumi is mandatory. Or not infrequently some campaigned that choosing NU will be the inhabitants of Heaven. When entering the era of "Liberal" politics after the New Order, the National Mandate Party (PAN) tried to attract support from the people of most who came not from Muhammadiyah. In his campaign, PAN tried to neutralize the existence of Amien Rais in the direction of Modern Islam, by exemplifying what PAN wanted to do, namely, for example, not prohibiting the spectacle of puppets. Or, PAN is not hostile to those who use tahlil to deliver death. In an increasingly sophisticated era, of course, the level of competition is getting more sophisticated as well. The role of social media becomes very instrumental in disseminating messages and internalizing them to the less educated. The relationship between religion and politics can be explained through two perspectives. The first perspective, instrumental. Because of the large role of religion in social change, religion can be used as political resources from certain groups to achieve their goals. Especially for those whose religious understanding is very shallow, they are willing to fight and die will be faced, if religion calls it. For them even if in the struggle must be redeemed with life, his death is considered martyrdom. And according to their beliefs, martyrdom is guaranteed to enter Heaven. The number of these groups is getting bigger when added to those with very radical understandings. They believe that the war against non-Muslims is inseparable from fighting infidel forces. That is, the end of this war is to fight in the way of God. Their opponents are enemies of Allah, whose blood is lawful.

Second, a functional view that is actually embraced by almost all social writers. The phenomenon of the Politicization of Religion interferes with diversity (politically intolerance). This happens in many countries, so it needs comparative deepening. Religion influence in the lives of individuals and societies is no doubt. Religion as motivator, manipulator, and mobilizer. Religion, for a country as big as the US, can serve as a medium of exchange of ideas. The change from the Democratic Transition (1994) to The Consolidation of Democracy evokes a focus of research on various aspects that bring prosperity and security, such as income, political culture, electoral system, institutional structure, racial, ethnic, and religious homogeneity, Democracy as the only game in town due to race, ethnicity, religion has emerged as a major feature of political power and cutting-edge social mobilization (Smart, 2015).

When viewed from a paradigmatic point of view, the functional perspective is rooted in 3 (three) social think groups consisting of Group I – Religion as a conservative force that inhibits social and political change. Group II is a thought that is contacted to adhere to the theories of Religious Modernization in politics declined during the modernization process. Group III – believes that religion indirectly contributes to the modernization process. The wave of Democratization increases the importance of solidarity and political participation (political populism) that neutralizes differences between religions and classes. In addition, Religion is not seen as mere belief or belief, but rather as a forum and political power that can be used in political contests.

All well-known schools of religious thought offer room for a middle ground over Religious and Political relations. Good Thinking Group I represented by Marxian. Group II, Almond, and Verbs with their political culture also consider Religion as one of the elements of parochial (primordial) political culture.

Secularization, as Peter Berger emphasizes, stems from the power of reason, scientific development, and bureaucratic specialization. This group can be considered a spin-off of thinking that is critical of the role of religion in social change.

Conclusion

In a comparative perspective in Indonesia, it seems increasingly felt the importance of new approaches and political perspectives on the relationship between Religion and Politics (do not see religion conventionally). The so-called synergy should not only be proclaimed but should also be practiced. This is because some things need to be put forward. First, like the United States, Indonesia is a very heterogenous nation-state. Unlike homogin society, Indonesian people have a variety of views that have different views from each other. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the relationship between the different to be united into social capital.

Second, ignorance of the idea of unity will result in the increasing vulnerability of national unity. Social cleavages that have been built in this nation-state must be balanced by joint work to maintain the Republic of Indonesia and especially the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

Third, the progress that has been obtained so far will be lost meaning while not supported by the implementation of normative religious and political values. That is, both religious and political, in him contained several many noble ideals. When not converted into policy and concrete thoughts, sooner or later people will be forgotten. Even if it is retained, only the most profitable ones are chosen. That is, not a large and developed country obtained by Indonesia, but a country that cannot be guaranteed integration and national political stability.

Fourth, intolerance and hegemonic attitudes hinder the positive relationship between religion and politics. While democracy tolerates minorities vs. majorities, it should be based on deliberation and deliberation.

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