From Politics of Islam to Terrorism: Discovering the Roots of Islamophobia in Indonesia

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Abstract

Islamophobia is an issue that has affected both minority and majority Muslim communities in many countries, including Indonesia. To gain a deeper understanding of Islamophobia in Indonesia, this study focuses on two of eight components of Islamophobia identified by Sabri Ciftci (2012), namely, Islam is perceived as a political ideology and is associated with violence. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including historical-comparative and survey, the authors explore how the Indonesian government has dealt with Islamophobia since the Old and New Order periods. This research also delves into how Islamophobia has impacted minority Christians and moderate Muslims during the Reform Era, where Islam is often associated with religious intolerance and terrorism. The results indicate that Islamophobia in Indonesia has three primary root causes linked to certain Islamic societal behaviour: political tensions between Islamic fundamentalists and nationalists regarding the state ideology, religious tensions between radical Muslims and Christians resulting in intolerance, and acts of terrorism using Islamic symbols. This research concludes Islamophobia in Indonesia has switched from the government to the community level, requiring the government policy to eliminate Islamophobia in a pluralistic society.

Keywords: *Islamophobia in Indonesia, Islam Politics, Religious Intolerance, Terrorism*

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) special envoy for Freedom of Religion and Worship, Ahmed Shaheed, has warned of an increase in Islamophobia in many countries. In the 2021 report entitled *"Countering Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred to Eliminate Discrimination and Intolerance Based on Religion or Belief,"* he confirmed that this phenomenon develops into hatred and anti-Muslim sentiments, which in some countries have even triggered acts of violence supported by the government, thereby endangering religious freedom and the lives of Muslims. Turkish President Recep Tayyib Erdogan also asserts that Islamophobia has exposed approximately 35 million Muslims to threats of violence and racism in Europe. Such a phobia mainly appears in France and Austria, where both countries have enacted discriminatory laws against Muslims (Laveda, 2021).

A survey carried out by Gallup Poll in 2011 also proves that Westerners do not respect Muslims. In the United States (US), approximately 52% of the respondents stated that they do not respect Muslims in their country. Meanwhile, 48% responded similarly in Canada, and a lesser percentage of Britons, Germans, French, and Italians showed disdain and suspicion of them (Gallup, 2011). A European Union Agency demonstrated a similar fact in the Fundamental Rights Survey 2017. It involved European citizens of Turkish, South Asian, North African, and Sub-Saharan descent and reported that four out of 10 respondents (38%) felt discriminated against (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017).

Some scholars justify that the main trigger of fear and prejudice of the international community, especially the US and Westerners, towards Islam was the tragic incident in September 2001. The Al Qaeda attacks, which claimed the lives of over 3,000 US citizens in an instant, formed a negative perception against Muslims (Awan, 2010; Ciftci, 2012; Elver, 2012; Al Atom, 2014; Abbas, 2004; Kumar, 2021; Bukhari, Khan, Ali, Ali, 2019). Islamophobia also occurs in Southeast Asian countries (Green, 2013; Nawab, 2017; Majeed, 2019; Ushama, 2020; Buaban, 2020; Ramli et al., 2020; Osman, 2017; Rahman, 2021; Apriliani & Road, 2021; Amalia & Haris, 2019; Hasyim, 2021). Anti-Islam sentiment, for example, has strengthened among Buddhists in Myanmar with

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anti-Rohingya attitudes and acts of violence carried out by Buddhist monks against Muslims in Pattani, Thailand, which confirm it occurs due to political issues and majority-minority tension.

Interestingly, some observers also reported that Islamophobia appears in Indonesia, which is heavily populated by Muslims (Irpan, Widodo, and Muradi, 2021; Nugroho & Adhrianti, 2019). Some might conclude that it developed from colonialism (Zuhri, 2021; Ramli et al., 2020), and some others relate the issue to the current acts of terrorism and religious conflicts (Achmad, Srinawati & Aristianingsih, 2021; Akin & Nasrullah, 2020; Syarif, Mughini and Hannan, 2020). This is irrespective of the statement of the Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Politics, Law, and Security, Mahfud MD, where he denied the occurrence of Islamophobia in the recent Indonesian government (Humas Kemenko Polhukam, 2020). Nevertheless, Islam and Muslims are concerned at the community level, as reported by the General Secretary of the Muhammadiyah Central Executive, Abdul Mu'ti (Sakinah, 2022). Recently, Sukabdi et al. (2023) confirmed this as their survey finds that almost eight per cent of 509 Muslims experience fear and rejection towards certain Islamic symbols that relate to violence and terrorists.

Therefore, this study discusses the root causes and dynamics of Islamophobia in Indonesia since its independence days. This issue was further elaborated using the concept of Islamophobia, coupled with the characteristics and components that lead to its occurrence. It was concluded that Islamophobia in Indonesia is rooted in three attributes embedded in Islamic society: (1) Islamic political aspirations raised by the fundamentalists, contested by Islamic nationalism aspirants, which then followed by political Islamization, (2) tensions between majority Muslims and minority Christians, later manifested in intolerant acts carried out by hard-line Islamic groups and, to some extents, supported by local governments, and (3) acts of terrorism executed by terrorist groups using Islamic attributes. This research is further divided into several sub-chapters offering a detailed explanation of Islamophobia in Indonesia, starting from the appearance of Islamophobia during the Old and New Orders to the current existence in the Reform Era.

METHODS

This study employed mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative, using various data collection techniques combining primary data from surveys, focused group discussions, and secondary data from various literature pieces. A historical comparative model of qualitative research was adopted and formulated with secondary data. This primarily includes the variations in historical times and evaluates the research topic as part of the flow of history in a cultural context (Neuman, 1997). This method helps to inquire, select, and focus on specific aspects of social and political life from the vast array of events, actions, symbols, and words used to measure changes in Islamophobia from 1945 to date.

Both micro and macro levels were integrated into this study by collecting secondary data from historians, political experts, or Islamic politicians who have studied the dynamics of Indonesian politics since 1945. The other acquired information also relates to Islamic political forces. This consists of Islamic political parties, mass organizations, and movements with various characteristics that have significantly influenced the political dynamics in the country. Therefore, this study synthesizes the findings to identify the contestation that causes fear (phobia) towards Islam and Muslims.

These secondary data were further validated with the primary ones mainly acquired from focused group discussion (FGD). This was performed to enrich and triangulate the findings obtained from resourceful persons concerning Islamophobia. In addition, questions related to this phenomenon were asked and answered by the FGD participants, consisting of former terrorism convicts and foreign terrorist fighters who went to Syria. Finally, the perception of the Christian community as the largest minority group in the country concerning Islamophobia was ascertained. Therefore, a survey was carried out by collaborating with the Paritas Institute. It was aimed at Protestants from various communities residing in the country, especially in Muslim areas.

Regarding the respondents, approximately 61% reside in areas where most occupants are Muslims, while 20.4% live in regions where most residents are Christian. Meanwhile, only 18.6% reside in areas with an equal number of Muslims and Christians. Since this research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, the survey was organized online with 964 respondents. Approximately 61% are males, and 39% are females between the ages

of 19 and 80. The respondents who filled out the survey included priests, farmers, private employees, teachers, state civil servants, entrepreneurs, activists, social workers, and freelancers. Their educational background consisted of Junior and Senior High School degrees, Bachelor's in Anthropology, Language, Maritime, and Master's in Theology, Religion, Law, Literature, and Social Studies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Runnymede Trust first used Islamophobia in 1997 to denote attitudes of discrimination, harassment, and social and structural harm aimed at Muslims (Allen, 2017). It was further emphasized that this phenomenon is a fabricated fear or prejudice fueled by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structures (Allen, 2017). These fears and prejudices are directed at the perceived or actual Muslim threat through the maintenance and expansion of existing inequalities in economic, political, social, and cultural relations while rationalizing the need to use violence as a tool to achieve "civilized rehabilitation" of the target community, in this case, the Islamic society. In other words, Islamophobia is similar to an attempt to reintroduce and reaffirm the structure of global discrimination against Muslims, in which inequalities in the distribution of resources are maintained and even expanded (Allen, 2017; Mondon & Winter, 2017).

Based on the above definition, several experts stated that Islamophobia as an attitudinal process involves emotional, cognitive, evaluative, and action-oriented elements. It usually appears through perceptions, prejudices, fears, and concerns. As a form of worry and concern, Islamophobia triggers racism, which develops into discrimination, anti-Islam, and anti-Muslim sentiments. (Frost, 2008; Bleich, 2010, 2012; Ciftci, 2012; Allen, 2017; Gholami, 2021; Mondon & Winter, 2017)

In 2017, the Runnymede Trust reissued a report considering the conditions of the past two decades. It defined *Islamophobia* as "any distinction, exclusion, or restriction against, or preference to, Muslims (or those deemed Muslim)." This discriminatory attitude has a purpose and nullifies or destroys the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or other fields of public life (Allen, 2017; Rashid et al., 2023). This view is similar to Erik Bleich's (2012) thought that Islamophobia is some form of social anxiety and rejection of Islam, Muslim culture, groups, and individuals based on prejudice and stereotypes.

The phenomenon of fear or concern for Islam, with different characteristics, is also found in the Indo-Pacific countries. Interestingly, it does not only occur in countries where most of the population is non-Muslim, such as India, Thailand, South Korea, Myanmar, and the Philippines. In Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, Islamophobia occurs differently than in Western nations or where the majority are not Muslim.

In Western countries, Islamophobia has its roots in terrorist attacks by actors or organizations using Islamic symbols. Meanwhile, in Indo-Pacific countries, mainly where Muslims constitute the minority group, it is associated with the formation of the nation-state where the Islamic community is an inseparable part of its history (Green, 2013; Osman, 2017; Nawab, 2019; Buaban, 2020; Ushama, 2020). In Malaysia and Indonesia, this phenomenon is also experienced by non-Muslim minorities, as Islam is often associated with politics and majority-minority relations issues (Osman, 2017). Interestingly, in Indonesia, "Islamophobia" is not only experienced by non-Muslims but also by other Islamic groups, mainly the nationalists.

By analyzing the diverse historical and socio-political contexts between Islamophobia in Western and Asian countries, the variables of the theoretical framework developed in the West do not necessarily mean it can be used, especially where the majority of the populace are Muslims. In other words, without losing the essence of Islamophobic concepts, the frameworks developed in Western countries and other non-Muslim nations require modification. The essence is to explain this phenomenon in states like Indonesia, where most of the population is Muslim.

Therefore, this study employed the explanation and variable developed by Allen (2017), where Islamophobia is a form of perception, fear, and prejudice. In addition, it utilizes the concept of Frost (2008), Bleich (2010), Ciftci (2012), Gholami (2021), and Mondon & Winter (2017), who described this phenomenon as an emotional, cognitive, evaluative, and action-oriented process. This study mainly adopted two of the eight components

related to Islamophobia formulated by Sabri Ciftci (2012). First, Islam is perceived as a political ideology, often used for political and military gain. Second, it is associated with violence, aggressive actions, threats, and support for terrorism. Other variables and hostility towards this religious group are not suitable frameworks for analyzing Islamophobia in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In contrast to India, Myanmar, and Thailand, where Muslims are a minority group, Indonesia is the largest country in Southeast Asia, with a Muslim majority population. According to the statistics record formulated by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) and the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration, in 2020, approximately 237.53 million out of an estimated 270 million population, or 86.88%, are Muslims (Kusnandar, 2021). Interestingly, of this number, they are not perceived as a monolithic entity of Muslims, even though the majority are adherents of the Ahlussunah Wal Jamaah (Sunni) School. These Indonesian Sunni Muslims developed various schools of thought, such as traditionalists, modernists, moderates, fundamentalists, and radicals. Muslims in Indonesia also do not monolithically provide support to one Islamic party but instead to religious and nationalist political parties (Wanandi, 2002; Anwar, 2009; Damayanti, 2017; Yunanto, 2017; Toyibah, 2020).

Islamophobia in the Old Order (1945-1965): Islamic Politics and Separatism

When the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed in 1945, Islamophobia was initially discovered in the debate about the basis of the newborn state. Islamic groups, mainly from Masyumi, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the Indonesian Islamic Syarikat Party, and PERTI, were presumed to be influential after joining the Investigation Agency for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI). They proposed that Islam should be made the basis of the Indonesian state by proposing the principle of "*Belief in One Supreme God with the obligation to carry out Shariat Islam for its adherents*" be included in the first principle and later known as the Jakarta Charter (Boland, 1985; Anshari, 1997; Maarif, 2005; Solahudin, 2011). The concerns of non-Muslim and nationalist groups towards Islamic politics subsided when there was finally a consensus between Islamic, Nationalist, and Christian groups regarding the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. They agreed to place Pancasila instead of Piagam Jakarta as the basis of the state with the principle of "*Belief in One Supreme God*" (Sharif, 2016; Effendy, 2009).

After the consensus, the government was concerned about the military-political movement of the Islamic faction, which wanted to separate itself from the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). This military-political and separatist movement became known as the Darul Islam (DI), which had the military wing of the Indonesian Islamic Army (TII) and emerged in 1948. SM Kartosuwiryo led it with military branches of Hezbollah and Fisabilillah in West Java. Islamic parties in Central Java, Aceh, Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi backed the DI/TII idea and movements. They were led by Amir Fatah, Daud Beureuh, Ibnu Hajar, and Kahar Muzakar, respectively (Solahudin, 2011). Zulfikar (2021) confirmed that multiple operations by the Indonesian military finally crushed the DI/TII military-political movements, arrested and executed their leaders.

Irrespective of the fact that their operations were crushed, the ideology behind the formation of the Islamic State of Indonesia remained unchanged. These clandestine groups' followers and supporters continued their activities from the New Order period till the Reformed era. The DI faction in Central Java continued the mission by establishing Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) (Solahudin, 2011). Surprisingly, together with other organizations such as Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) and East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT), JI has been responsible for several terrorism attacks from the beginning of the Reformed era till date (BBC News, 2022).

Finally, the phobia of political Islam in the Indonesian Old Order occurred during a political conflict between President Soekarno and Masyumi concerning Masyumi's rejection of Soekarno's political views. Soekarno prohibited multi-party development, enabling the presidency to continue the revolutionary project guided by democracy. Masyumi was considered to be an enemy of Soekarno's guided democratic revolution, and this led to the annulment of the Islamic party (Ahmad, 2013). Such political conflicts continued until 1958. According to M.C Ricklelf (1991), apart from ideological differences and political lines, the Soekarno government regarded several Islamic figures who joined Masyumi in the Permesta Revolutionary Government of the Republic of

Indonesia (PRRI) in 1958 as rebels. Based on this assumption, on September 5, 1958, the presidency issued an anti-multi-party policy that banned several political organizations, including Masyumi (Warijo & Ginting, 2009; Maarif, 2021).

To conclude, since the formation of Indonesia in 1945 till the end of the Old Order, Islamophobia has emerged particularly from non-Muslims and nationalist groups, most of whom were also Muslims. This anti-Islam sentiment was rooted in three factors: first, the concern of non-Muslim and nationalist groups against Islamic parties that intend to utilize Islam as a political ideology that contested the notion of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Second, there is a concern that Islam was used as a symbol of a political and military separatist movement whose intent is to establish Islamic countries aside from the Republic of Indonesia. Third, the rejection of a prominent modernist Islamic political movement known as Masyumi to Soekarno's policy.

Islamophobia in the New Order: The Domination of Islamic Politics

The Old Order ended with the fall of Soekarno and the disallowance of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), as they were accused of organizing a coup in September 1965. This led to the role strengthening of the Indonesian Army (TNI AD) under the leadership of General Suharto. The failed coup of PKI partly boosted the cooperation between the TNI-AD, especially the special forces regiment (RPKAD), and Islamic organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, to crack down on the PKI (Akmaliah, 2017).

The political and security collaboration between the TNI AD and Islamic organizations did not necessarily eliminate Islamophobia from the New Order leaders. They remained worried that Islam would return to becoming a political power, as was the case of the DI/TII or the involvement of its figures in revolutions. The suspicion, fear, and trauma that Islam would become a military force manifested in restrictions, prohibitions, and repression of Islamic figures such as former Masyumi members who intended to establish political parties (Putra, 2008). The TNI-AD leaders even refused former Masyumi figures to rehabilitate their reputation, which was damaged during the last days of Soekarno's rule (Tamara, 1988).

In line with the direction of the New Order's development strategy, which emphasized political stability and security, the government fused political parties into three parties. First, political and military elites established the Golongan Karya (Golkar) as a political vehicle, coupled with young Islamic figures who were formerly affiliated with the Islamic Student Association (HMI), the Indonesian Student Action Union (KAMI), and Muslim bureaucrats. Secondly, Islamic parties such as NU, PSII, PERTI, and Parmusi were fused into the United Development Party (PPP). Lastly, nationalist Muslims and non-Muslim parties, namely the PNI, Parkindo, the Catholic Organization, IPKI, and the Murba, were fused into the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) (Ardanareswari, 2019; Hanggoro, 2021). President Soeharto controlled the fused parties through the Directorate of Social Politics in the Indonesian Armed Forces (Dirsospol) and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

With Golkar, PPP, and PDI as political parties, the Islamic political power in Indonesia was fragmented between the fundamentalist and nationalist (Ismail, 1999). For example, during the MPR session held in 1973, the People Consultative Assembly or MPR – which the TNI and Golkar dominated – issued a draft State Policy Outline demanding that religious education in schools be replaced with the Pancasila Moral Education (PMP). (Jam et al., 2013) The New Order continued boosting the spirit of nationalism in line with the socialization of Pancasila through the program Guidelines, Understanding and Practicing Pancasila (P4). The state budget for religious affairs was then reduced, and the belief system was included at the ministerial level in the GBHN. Thaba (1996) stated that this policy weakened Islam and its da'wah strategy, which the PPP backed.

Soeharto administration increasingly exhibited Islamophobia by implementing a policy that required all political parties, Golkar, and community organizations (Ormas) to adopt Pancasila as the only principle. It is stated in TAP MPR No. II/1983 (Article 3 Chapter IV) and confirmed by Law No. 5/1985 and Law No. 8/1985. Suharto believed that the unconditional acceptance of the Pancasila was the only means of realizing national stability and unity. It was further insinuated that until the New Order era, groups still had not accepted Pancasila and considered it a dangerous principle (Ramage, 2002).

The single principle of Pancasila has led to its acceptance, although half were forced and rejected among Muslims. At first, NU, through PPP, rejected the single principle policy. However, the lobbying carried out against the NU elite finally made it to be accepted by the most prominent Islamic organization in the country. Muhammadiyah seems to be carefully awaiting its approval in the legislative, irrespective of the internal conflicts experienced (Matanasi, 2017). Some Islamic organizations blatantly rejected this policy, such as the Indonesian Islamic Student (PII), as they insisted on establishing the movement without a government permit. Islamic hard-line groups expressed their rejection with acts of violence, such as the Tragedies of Tanjung Priok and Warsidi in Talangsari, Lampung (Matanasi, 2017). This also led to the emergence of a hard-liner group called Jemaah Islamiyah in Solo, later known as Southeast Asia's terrorist organization (Dimyati et al., 2013).

Interestingly, towards the end of the New Order, Soeharto adopted a political approach to Islamic parties. In the early 90s, he developed a "cordial" relationship by embracing the power of the middle class or modernist Islam. The presidency also approved the establishment of Indonesian Moslem Scholars (ICMI) in 1990. BJ Habibie, who was then elected as the vice president, was appointed the first leader. The emergence of ICMI has also encouraged the Islamization of bureaucracy, where its figures have started to occupy the top positions. In November 1991, President Soeharto also approved the establishment of Muamalat Bank as the first Islamic Sharia Banking Institute, and in the same year, he and his family went to Hajj (bbc.co.uk, 2008).

It was followed by the appointment of the Indonesian National Army (TNI) leaders who embraced the Islamic subculture and were close to the clerics and Islamic communities. They were also known as "Green TNI" and were identical to those headed by General Faisal Tanjung (Former Commander of TNI) and General Hartono (Former Chief of the Army). Such an approach led to two theories about Soeharto and Islam. First, Soeharto realized that, sooner or later, his political reign would end. Therefore, his approach toward Islam was interpreted as an effort to end the reign with a good image. Second, Soeharto's political strategy was to balance the TNI's weakening support for his leadership (Matanasi, 2020).

Meanwhile, as there was a sort of Islamic domination by the Green TNI and bureaucracy led by ICMI and Golkar, some modernist Islamic figures, external Muslim intellectual groups, and non-Muslim leaders established an academic community called Forum Democracy (Fordem). It was led by NU figures, such as Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) with Bondan Gunawan, Rahman Tolleng, Todung Mulya Lubis, Daniel Dhakidae, and Marsilam Simanjuntak (Rizky, 2016; Utama, 2016). At the same time, the non-Muslim intellectual community and scholars established organizations with sectarian nuances, such as the Indonesian Christian Intelligence Association (PIKI), the Indonesian Catholic Scholars Association (ISKA), the Indonesian Buddhist Scholars Family (KCBI), the Indonesian Hindu Intellectuals Association, other than the Nahdlatul Ulama Scholars Association (ISNU) (NU Online, 2018).

Islamophobia in The Reform Era: Radicalism, Intolerance, and Terrorism

Political reforms in 1998 ended the New Order. On the one hand, this new era has opened the faucet of a democratic life that offers diverse liberty, such as freedom of speech, religion, political parties, and community organizations. It also opened the faucet for political contestation, including parties that use religious symbols and nationalist ideologies. The reformation also led to the emergence of Islamic organizations with various characteristics, such as traditionalists, modernists, fundamentalists, vandalism, militant, and terrorism radicals (Yunanto, 2017).

During this period, Islamophobia re-emerged from the nationalists and non-Muslim parties, especially Christians, towards certain Islamic political groups and organizations with a fundamentalist character and categorized as radical or militant. Based on the survey carried out by the authors in collaboration with Paritas Institute, Islamophobia among Christians is characterized by four incidents. These include (1) the re-emergence of Islamic state discourse, (2) horizontal conflict between Muslims and Christians in Poso and Ambon in the late 1990s, (3) acts of intolerance and intimidation against Christians and the rejection of church construction, and (4) acts of terrorism carried out in churches, such as the Christmas Eve bombings in 2000, Surabaya bombing in 2018, and Makassar bombing in 2022.

First, the discourse on formulating laws and regulations inspired by Islamic teachings (sharia) is inseparable from the phenomenon of Islamic political revival during the Reform Era (Faiz, 2005). Two indicators measure such revival. First, the establishment of Islamic political parties was inspired by several schools of religious thought, such as traditionalism, modernism, and even fundamentalism. Islamic political parties officially utilize Islam as a symbol, with their constituent bases including NU, Muhammadiyah, the Islamic Preach Council, *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (DDII), and other groups. (Yunanto & Hamid, 2013). Second, the emergence of Islamic mass organizations with various characteristics, such as traditionalism (NU), modernism (Muhammadiyah), fundamentalism (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia; HTI), and those that execute vandalism, such as the Front for Defenders of Islam (FPI).

Interestingly, the emergence of Islamic nationalist political parties and traditionalist organizations such as NU and Modernist (Muhammadiyah) is not associated with any concern, as these factions can work with the nationalist and non-Muslim groups (Jam et al., 2010). On the other hand, the emergence of fundamentalist Islamic political parties and radical organizations involved in acts of terrorism led to the emergence of Islamophobia among these sects.

Political reforms triggered the rise of Islamic politics, creating opportunities for Muslims to participate in politics. Some of them then fought for the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter in constitutional amendments, including the hard-liner Islamic groups such as the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), HTI, FPI, and the Preparatory Committee for the Implementation of Islamic Sharia (KPPSI). They also received support from Islamic political parties: the Crescent Star Party (PBB), the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and the PPP (Nashir, 2013).

However, the struggle failed since most political forces in the parliament did not support the idea, which was dominated by nationalist parties such as PDIP and Golkar and Islamic nationalists such as PKB and PAN. This contention was also not backed by the mainstream Islamic nationalist organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah. Despite the failure in Jakarta, this movement succeeded in colouring the formation of regional regulations that have solid Islamic traditions, such as Aceh, West Sumatra (Solok), Banten, West Java (Cianjur, Tasikmalaya, Indramayu), East Java (Pamekasan), West Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, (Bulukumba, Maros, Sinjai), Gorontalo, NTB (East Lombok, Dompu, Bima). Islamic law is applied through regional regulation, for example, Muslimah clothing, zakat, reading, and writing the Quran (Nashir, 2013).

Secondly, the horizontal conflict between Muslims and Christians occurred from 1998 to 2002 in Poso and Ambon. It was caused by the vulnerability and loss of social cohesion and capital between the two groups in the region. (Kastor, 2000; Marasabessy (Ed.), 2002; Damanik, 2003; Aditjondro, 2003; Nosu, 2017; Pieris, 2004; Klinken, 2007; Yunanto, 2017). The conflicts in Poso and Ambon were also marked by the emergence of militant groups from both sides, such as Laskar Jundullah and Christ' Army in Ambon, as well as Mujahidin Indonesia Timur and Brigade Manguni in Poso (Yunanto, 2017; Haider et al., 2019; Damayanti, 2018).

When the conflicts ended, vandalism by Islamic militant groups continued. Several incidents involved FPI, such as the conflict in Ketapang, Jakarta, and attacks on entertainment venues, food stalls, and houses of worship, particularly churches and the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) office. FPI also actively participated in political and cultural activism, such as the rejection of the beauty queen in Jakarta, the disclaimer of the appointment of Governor Ahok to replace Jokowi, and resistance towards the Jokowi government (Nathaniel, 2019; Chen, 2018; El-Den et al., 2017). Such a situation provokes Islamophobia in society, particularly from the Christians to the militant groups.

Thirdly, throughout the Reform Era, acts of intolerance in banning and rejecting the establishment and closing of churches were rampant in the Muslim community. Hard-liner Islamic organizations and local governments supported these acts, mainly in Bogor, Bekasi, and Depok. The ban on churches has emerged since the Old Order, yet the number was insignificant as two churches were banned. The number of prohibitions or closures on churches increased during the New Order era, reaching 454 churches. During the Reformed era (1998 to 2020), worship bans and church establishments increased to approximately 700. Of this number, 118 churches were intimidated and rejected by the residents, 248 were attacked and damaged by Islamist hard-line groups,

the local government temporarily shut 56, and 261 were permanently closed by the local government supported by the residents and hard-liner Islamic organizations. (Damayanti & Yunanto, 2022)

Other institutions confirmed this finding using different indicators. The Setara Institute (SI) reported that in 2014, there were 177 cases of violence against minorities. In 2015 and 2016, this number increased to 236 and 270, respectively. However, in 2017 and 2018, there was a decrease to 201 and 202, respectively (Halili, 2018). In 2020, the Wahid Foundation reported that in 2019, there were 184 violations and 215 acts of violence against freedom of worship and belief. An increase was recorded in the previous year. In 2018, there were 192 violations and 276 acts of violence (Wahid Foundation, 2020). Based on the banning and closing of churches, FPI and other hard-liner Islamic communities were also involved in vandalism and attacks against Ahmadiyah groups, such as those in Tasikmalaya, Surabaya, Lombok, Makassar, and Riau (Mubarak, 2012).

Fourthly, a prominent phenomenon that contributed to the emergence of Islamophobia was the occurrence of hundreds of terror attacks. According to the report released in March 2021, from 2000 to 2021, there were 552 acts of terror in Indonesia, and the most attacks occurred in the ten years of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's leadership. These attacks were focused on three main targets: individuals or personal assets (24 per cent), police officers (17 per cent), and religious figures or places of worship (15 per cent). The rest are commercial facilities, tourism sites, military, government, and diplomatic missions (Farisa, 2021).

These attacks were carried out by either groups or individual actors using Islamic attributes and symbols, such as al Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), West Indonesia Mujahidin (MIB), and East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT). These groups have networks with Al Qaeda and ISIS, making the threat of terrorism problematic in Indonesia (Judge, 2021). Although, in the past three years (2019 to 2022), as many as 658 suspected terrorists have been arrested for allegedly committing acts of terrorism. In addition, terrorist attacks have been reduced from 13 incidents in 2020 to six in 2021 (Ramadan, 2022).

The strengthening of Islamic politics and various acts of vandalism, intolerance, and terrorism conducted by a small number of Muslim hard-liners have led to the emergence of Islamophobia among Christians and nationalist Muslims. A survey jointly carried out by the authors and the Paritas Institute on Christians reported the early occurrence of the Islamophobic phenomenon. First, only 39%, or 378 respondents, believe Islam is a tolerant religion or teaches tolerance, and 40%, or approximately 400 respondents, doubt that it is a tolerant religion or teaches tolerance. The rest consider Islam an intolerant religion. Meanwhile, only 31.3%, or 300 respondents, believe it offers freedom to people of other faiths. A total of 39%, or approximately 400 respondents, doubt that Islam is a religion that offers freedom to other religious groups, and the rest do not believe that it provides space for other believers.

Second, in the political realm, this survey has produced a result that deserves the attention of all parties and confirms previous research. The manoeuvres carried out by hard-line Islamic groups, and the support of fundamentalist political parties from modernist Islam has led to the emergence of Islamophobia in most respondents. A total of 71.8%, or approximately 700 of them, believe that certain Islamic parties intend to change the ideology of the Pancasila. However, only 47.6%, or relatively 460, presume that Muslims want Indonesia to become an Islamic state. In addition, 72.6%, or approximately 700 respondents, perceive Islam influences the government and state management system.

Third, relatively 35.7% or 344 respondents felt insecure as they had been intimidated or were oppressed by hard-liner Islamic groups. The pressure was in the form of prohibition of worship and destruction of places of worship. Some even claim to have been physically assaulted by radical persons or groups. A unique and surprising phenomenon is that 74% of the respondents, or approximately 713 people, feel insecure and doubtful when they are near a group of men and women who wear *cingkrang* pants and veils, respectively. Nevertheless, 23.7%, or 228 respondents, felt safe near such men or veiled women.

Recently, Islamophobia has also been experienced among Muslims. This concern is related to terrorist organizations that have used Islamic names and symbols. Although the phobia is less visible in the real world, it is detected in cyberspace. Such a phenomenon was experienced by Munir, a former member of JAD, and

Febri Ramdani, who was formerly associated with a foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) in Syria. During the FGD process carried out by the authors, Munir stated:

> "When I returned home (after four years in prison), there were mild ripples and rejections, and people spoke negatively about me. They must be. However, Febri had a similar experience. Yes, I realized I had made a mistake, which is the consequence I must face…. Nevertheless, Alhamdulillah, I have tried to portray myself in a better light over time, and eventually, the ripples are gradually sloping. Although the waves reappeared, especially at the beginning of November, Mr. Ganjar Pranowo invited me to his podcast. Then the problem emerged: the interview session was uploaded on TikTok and had 1.5 million viewers. That was where the negative comments started. Yes, maybe; as I said earlier, the natural and virtual worlds are different." (Munir, FGD 2021)

Febri Ramadani experienced a similar rejection. With his parents and older sister, Febri realized the lies of ISIS in Syria when they decided to support it as FTF. He and his family then returned to Indonesia and participated in the deradicalization program initiated by the Indonesian government. Unfortunately, even though Febri has realized his mistake and joined the deradicalization program, he and his family continue to experience rejection, especially from netizens on social media.

> "Alhamdullilah, after I returned from Syria and joined the deradicalization program (facilitated by the government), I was accepted by my neighbours. Only people from social media and netizens scorned my family and me. However, yeah, I think these are the consequences that I have to face because I have already left there (Syria), and the government has banned the place. Finally, I must embrace this way of life and respond gracefully" (Febri, FGD 2021).

Typology and Shifting Forms of Islamophobia in Indonesia

From the earlier explanation, it is evident that Islamophobia in Indonesia differs from that in Western countries. The fears and concerns of the US government and citizens, coupled with Canada, Britain, and France, are caused by acts of terrorism carried out by the Al Qaeda organization and, later, ISIS. Islamophobia in Indonesia also differs from that in India, Myanmar, and Thailand. Indonesian Muslims constitute the majority group and have become an essential part of the history of the State of Indonesia. Meanwhile, in those three countries, Muslims are a minority group, and Islamophobia is often associated with the majority-minority issue.

Deviating from the thoughts of Sabri Ciftci (2012) concerning the components of Islamophobia and the explanation mentioned above, it was concluded that two factors tend to cause Islamophobia in Indonesia. First, Islam is perceived as a political ideology often used for such purposes or interests. This was especially true during the Old and New Orders under Soekarno and Soeharto. The government's concern about Islam as a political power made them enact specific policies to stop or control this issue. Soekarno adopted a militaristic approach to stop the activities of Darul Islam and the Indonesian Islamic Army, and Suharto imposed restrictions on the Islamic political movement through several regulations.

Towards the end of his reign, Soeharto created opportunities for Islamic figures to express their political aspirations and placed them in specific government posts. Soeharto's successor, B.J Habibie, continued granting more significant opportunities to Islamic groups during the Reformed Era. The political system transformation to become more democratic has become the entry point for Muslims to form Islamic political parties and community organizations. It is then regulated in Law No. 2 of 1999 concerning Political Parties. The dynamics also provide an opportunity for Islamic political parties and organizations, both nationalists and fundamentalists, to play a more significant role in the socio-political life of Indonesians.

As confirmed by Bahtiar Effendy (2003), the presence of Islamic political parties and community organizations seeks solutions to economic and socio-political problems in the country. It also allows hard-liner Islamic groups to carry out their actions using Islam and its symbols. This situation triggered conflicts with religious nuances such as those in Poso and Ambon. Moreover, the Reformed Era, which promoted freedom of speech and

organization, was also marked by increasing acts of intolerance in the form of destruction, banning, and closure of worship places, especially churches.

Various acts of violence executed by hard-liner groups and terrorism using Islamic symbols triggered the emergence of the second component of Islamophobia in Indonesia. Islam is associated with violence, aggressive actions, and threats and supports terrorism. This kind of Islamophobia strongly affects minority groups, especially Christians. Interestingly, this type is also experienced by Islamic societies, which often causes them to perceive hardline Islamic groups and terrorists negatively. This sentiment is mainly exhibited through social media rather than in reality, as experienced by the ex-terrorists, including Munir and Febri (FGD 2021).

The previous explanation also shows the shifts in Islamophobia in Indonesia. During the Old and New Order periods, such a phobia was experienced mainly by the political elites, while in the Reform Era, Islamophobia occurred at the community level. This seems to have happened due to a robust political contention between Islam nationalists and fundamentalists concerning state ideology during the Old and New Order periods. However, the 1998 political reforms provided greater opportunities for Islamic groups to play a significant role in the socio-political arena as the majority groups. As a result, the phobia against Islam no longer occurs at the government level but in a pluralistic society, especially experienced by minority groups.

CONCLUSION

Islamophobia in Indonesia is not solely caused by acts of terrorism using Islamic identities and symbols, as is the case in Western countries. The lengthy history of the involvement and essential role played by Muslims as the majority group made Islamophobia in Indonesia occur long before the terrorist attacks started. It has happened since the debate about Indonesia's ideology at the beginning of its independence and continued in the New Order. Recently, it also occurred due to the creation of opportunities for these Islamic groups to play a more significant role in social and political life since the Reformed Era.

On the one hand, the change in the Indonesian political system to democracy gives people greater freedom and opportunity to participate in government and social life, including nationalist and fundamentalist Islamic groups. This condition makes the state less worried about Islamic activism in politics as it can be directed through formal channels and regulated by law. On the other hand, the role of political parties and Islamic organizations, particularly the hardline ones, has caused nationalist Muslims and non-Muslim groups to be concerned due to their incessant acts of violence, intolerance, and terrorism using the symbol of Islam.

For this reason, the Indonesian government should employ four approaches to eliminate Islamophobia in society. First, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and religious leaders need to devise a theology that motivates and educates Muslims and non-Muslims to work together in various fields of life. This collaboration should be manifested in daily social activities such as joint projects to promote the entire community's education, health, and welfare. Second, the Ministry of Religious Affairs involves religious organizations, such as the Indonesian Cleric Council (MUI), the Association of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), the Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI), Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI), Representatives of Indonesian Buddhists (Walubi) and the Indonesian Confucian High Council (Matakin) coupled with NU and Muhammadiyah to facilitating continuous and sustainable interfaith dialogue. Through this, on the one hand, non-Muslims need to clarify their fears of Muslims in the country, especially those related to establishing an Islamic state. On the other hand, nationalist Islamic groups must confirm their attitude against radicalism, terrorism, and intolerance.

Third, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, the Police, and other law enforcement agencies must implement non-discriminatory and firm policies against perpetrators of radicalism, intolerance, and terrorism. With consistent rules, non-discriminatory law enforcement, respect, and protection of human rights, Islamophobia in Indonesia can be minimized. Lastly, the Indonesian government needs to optimize the role of the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB), which is directed at building a shared understanding among religious people to overcome fear and negative sentiment toward Islam and Muslims. The perception of Islam as a religion that brings mercy and peace to all humankind and the universe should be strengthened to prevent fear and anti-Islam sentiments among religious groups and Muslims.

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Focused Group Discussion, virtually, December 10, 2021, with source persons:

1. Mr. Munir (a former JAD member who lives in Indonesia)
2. Mr. Febri Ramdani (a former foreign terrorist fighter who lives in Indonesia)