

ISLAMIC POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN INDONESIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST: SEEKING COMPATIBILITY WITH THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY

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Abstract. This article aims to examine the understanding of Islam in relation to the Western democratic system. A number of Islamic authors question the compatibility of Islam with Western democratic ideas. This research demonstrates that numerous Islamic concepts are in line with the tenets of Western democracy. While certain principles exhibit similarities, others provide contrasting characteristics. This research typically employs case studies conducted in Indonesia and the Middle East in general rather than adopting an individual country-centric approach. The research methodology employed in this paper is a descriptive qualitative approach, which entails the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data gathered. The primary goal of the data collection process is to gather qualitative data on how Islamic political parties, Islamic organizations and political Islam perceive democracy. Islamic political parties implement democracy using a methodology akin to that of Western democracy. Political Islam, in contrast, tends to favour a more uncompromising approach and may resort to violence when Western democracy is seen as conflicting with Islamic political beliefs.

Keywords: *Indonesia, The Middle East, democracy, Islamic political party, Political Islam.*

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1. Introduction

Given the significant correlation between Islam and politics, it is logical to deduce that Islam often exerts influence on politics and policy-making in Muslim countries or in nations where Islam is the major religion, particularly in Arab-Islamic states. Considering that Islam is the predominant system of internal values in numerous nations (Sukma, 2013). The goal of Islamic politics is to strive to make Islamic law or sharia law, the highest source of law in the national legal system. All the prevailing rules and laws of the country would then be required to refer to sharia law as the highest source of law. If an existing law was found to be in conflict with sharia law, it would then be deemed imperfect. Politics that do not have this mission can not be categorized as Islamic politics. Noorhaidi Hasan states that the term Islamic politics is used as an alternative term to "Islamic fundamentalism since a large number of scholars are uncomfortable with the use of the latter, which places emphasis on scripturalistic essentialism in the thoughts, actions and movements of contemporary Islam. This term has also been applied to Protestant fundamentalists who believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible (Hasan, 2012).

Following the 1998 reform, Indonesia has emerged as one of the top three democratic countries in the world, alongside India and the US. Given the relatively recent

establishment of political democracy in Indonesia, which has been in place for approximately 26 years, it is evident that the process of democratization in Indonesia is still lacking in terms of both structural and cultural aspects. Undoubtedly, several political rules in Indonesia can be characterized as democratic; but culturally, the execution of the democratic system is deficient (Azhar *et al.*, 2020).

The historical record of Indonesia demonstrates that since gaining independence, the Indonesian populace has been acquainted with democracy from both a Western and Islamic standpoint. In Indonesian politics, democratic institutions are named using Islamic terminology. For example, the People's Consultative Assembly is referred to as "Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat", the People's Representative Council as "Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat" and the representative's seat in Parliament as "Kursi". Additionally, terms such as "Musyawarah" (dialogue) and "Adl" (justice) are also commonly used. The diverse Indonesian community acknowledges and embraces these titles inside the Indonesian political system.

Certain Muslim intellectuals seek to establish a common ground between Islam and democracy by striving for consistency in the fundamental ideas and structures of societal organization. Islam is deemed compatible with democracy due to the alignment of values between Islam and democratic principles. The approach of contextualization in classical Islamic thought. Muslim traditionalists employ this methodology to address certain contemporary issues. Classical Islamic thinking has developed a comprehensive framework of ideas to address a wide range of human issues, drawing from diverse historical and cultural contexts. These ideas are derived from religious thought that is widely accepted as valid (Muwaiqillah, 2020).

The Arab Spring in 2011 demonstrated that Islamic nations in the Middle East desired an open and democratic administration. After Zain Abidin bin Ali's 22-year reign in Tunisia, the political renewal movement swiftly overthrew Hosni Mubarak, the president of Egypt, who had been in office for nearly 30 years, Bashar al-Assad and the president of Syria since 2000. Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh has held the position of authority since 1990 and Muamar Gadhafi had been in power since 1969, while King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa has been in power since 2002. The Arab uprisings showcased the capacity for public pressure to lead to democratic reforms. The initial tendency to resist authority and the resulting absence of democratic transitions have prompted renewed debates on the process of democratization, modernization and the durability of authoritarian regimes (Tety *et al.*, 2019).

Nevertheless, after the passage of 12 years, the Arab Spring has failed to exhibit any indications of enhancing democracy in the Middle East. Tunisia is the only Arab country among those that went through the Arab Spring that has successfully achieved democratic consolidation (Khondher, 2019). The objective of this article does not involve the examination of the implementation of democracy in Islamic nations, such as contemporary Indonesia. This article will primarily examine Islamic teachings concerning democracy in order to address the question of why Islamic countries are frequently perceived as anti-democratic nations from a Western standpoint.

2. Methodology

The research method used in this paper is a descriptive qualitative method that involves analysing and interpreting the qualitative data collected (Creswell, 2013). It involved gathering primarily qualitative information about Islamic principles relating to

democracy and religious beliefs as well as liberal values used to criticize political Islam. Utilizing data that has already been gathered by other researchers or for non-research objectives is known as secondary data. This process includes official statistics, administrative records and other archive items. The main focal points of data collection in this study revolve around three fundamental themes:

1. Democracy from the Western perspective;
2. Islamic political parties, Islamic organizations and political Islam;
3. The incorporation of Islamic ideas in the Islamic government.

Employing secondary data provides a cost-effective approach to accessing this material, which may be easily obtained through technologies like the internet. The research has used academic journal articles, textbooks, eBooks and social media sites like YouTube and Instagram to access crucial information and data, which has then undergone data reduction, data display and data verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The research procedure involved leveraging resources such as Google Scholar and Science Direct, as well as other relevant databases pertaining to the topic of public diplomacy and soft power.

3. The Term of Politics in Arabic

Politics was defined quite simply but accurately by Harold Laswell as “Who gets what, when, how?” (Lasswell, 1935; 1965; Budiardjo, 1998). In Arabic, politics is referred to as *siyāsah* (سياسة) and the word *siyāsah* has been adopted into the Indonesian language in the form *siasat*, which means “tactics” or “strategy”. Hence, if we combine the Indonesian word with the Arabic word, politics can be defined as the ‘tactics’ or ‘strategy’ used for gaining power. Originally, the meaning of the word politics was applied to the field of handling and training in shepherding. The word subsequently developed in its use to be applied to the regulation of human concerns and the ‘person taking care of these human concerns’ was given the name of politician (*siyāsiyun*). In Arabic, the term *ulil amri* ‘taking care of’ the people (*yasūsu*), is the same word that is used to mean looking after, organizing and guarding. Some Arabs have a saying, “How can the people be taken care of (*ma’sūrah*) if the person taking care of them is a ‘moth’ (*sūrah*)”, which means ‘how can the condition of the people possibly be good if their leader’s morality is damaged, comparing the leader to a moth that destroys a piece of wood. Thus, politics means taking care of (*ri’āyah*), improving (*ishlāh*), straightening (*taqwīm*), providing direction and guidance (*irsyād*) and educating (*ta’dīb*) (Tubuliyak, 1998; Martin & Barzegar 2009; Fuller, 2003).

The prophet Muhammad used the word politics (*siyāsah*) in his message: “They are Bani Israil, their affairs are taken care of by the prophets (*tasūsumul anbiyā*’). When one prophet dies, another prophet comes to replace him. There will be no more prophets after myself but there will be many caliphs” (HR. Bukhari & Muslim). It is clear that the meaning of politics or *siyāsah* is ‘to take care of people’s affairs or concerns’. Becoming involved in politics, therefore, means ‘paying attention to the condition of Muslims by eradicating the tyranny of those in powers towards Muslims and protecting them from the crimes of unbelievers. This means it is necessary to know what leaders are doing to take care of the concerns of Muslims, to disown their wickedness, to advise leaders who treat their people badly and to eradicate unbelief, as emphasized in many well-known parts of the Hadith. This is the instruction of Allah through the prophet Muhammad.

In connection with this, the prophet Muhammad said: “Whosoever does not direct his heart towards Allah, from the time he wakes up in the morning, is not Allah’s servant,

and whosoever fails to pay attention to the concerns of other Muslims, from the time he wakes up in the morning, is not one of them (a Muslim - writer)” (HR. Al-Hakim).

However, the reality of such politics has begun to fade now that people-both Muslims and non-Muslims-have adopted the habit of deviating from the truth, both in word and deed and adhering to the ideology of secularism. That is why politics has become known as a ‘strategy’ that is accompanied by lies, trickery and misdirection, practiced by both politicians and political leaders. The lapse of politicians from the truth of Islam, their tyranny towards the people and their reckless attitudes and actions in the way they take care of the people have deflected the real meaning of politics. Furthermore, with this kind of outlook, leaders have become the enemies of their people, treating them with hostility rather than acting as a God-fearing government that treats its people well. This has led to a rise in propaganda from secular groups that calls for politics to be kept away from religion (Islam), because anyone who understands his religion well will be afraid of Allah and as such, is not suited for the world of politics that is filled with lies, ruthlessness, betrayal and trickery. Unfortunately, these views, whether consciously or otherwise, have influenced some Muslims who in fact have a genuine wish to fight for Islam, when such propaganda can be described as truth that is used for false purposes (Samih ‘Athief Az-Zain, *As-Siyasah wa As-Siyasah Ad-Dauliyyah*). Hence, in short, it is impossible to separate Islam from politics (Tubuliyak, 1997)

Many people would say that politics equals power. According to Budiardjo, “power” is the ability of a person or a group to influence another person or group in accordance with their wishes (Ibid, Budiardjo). Budiardjo (1998) goes on to say that intellectuals view power as the essence of politics and also believe politics to be all activities concerning the problem of seizing and holding onto power, in which the goal is concerned with the interests of all the people. On the other hand, it has also been said that politics is the process of forming and sharing power in society, which includes creating a process for making decisions, especially in a country. This understanding of politics endeavours to combine a number of different definitions about the true essence of politics that are recognized in the field of political science. Politics is both the art and the science of seizing power by constitutional or non-constitutional means. In addition, politics can be viewed from several other different points of view:

- a. Politics is an endeavour pursued by a citizen of a country for the common good of the people (classical theory of Aristotle);
- b. Politics is something that is related to a country’s governance;
- c. Politics is an activity directed towards gaining and maintaining power in society;
- d. Politics is all that concerns the process of formulation and implementation of public policy ;
- e. Politics is the making of collective decisions or general policies for the whole of society (Joyce Mitchell);
- f. Politics is the making of decisions by public means (Efriza, 2008). A decision means a general action or the values connected with a government activity.

4. Islamic Ideology

Ideology is a set of ideas that people use to position, explain and define their goals and a method for organized social action, whether the action aims to maintain, improve, revoke or reconstruct a particular social idea. This definition does not necessarily mean

that an ideology is something that is good or bad, right or wrong, freeing or repressive, since it may contain all of these things (Efriza, 2008).

Ideology (as a science - writer) was first introduced at the time of the French Revolution by Antoine Destutt de Tracy and was introduced to the public for the first time in 1796. Tracy believed that ideology was “the science of ideas”, which it was hoped would be able to reveal the origins of ideas and become a new branch of knowledge. However, the meaning of ideology changed at the hands of Karl Marx through his early work which led to a new book entitled *The German Ideology*, written together with F. Engels. As Frank Beasley explains, nowadays ideology is understood more as a universal thought system through which people explain their condition, in relation to the historical process and dynamic, in the hope of striving towards a better future (MPS & PKS, 2007). Furthermore, it can be stated here that ideology can be understood as an individual belief system about a better world and as such, it appears as the mind-set of its followers. Ideology can be seen as the worldview of its followers for evaluating or judging their daily situations (Ibid. p. 9). There is a certain phrase, adopted from Chinese jargon, about ideology, which states “it is of no importance whether the cat is black or grey, the important thing is that it catches mice” (Ibid, p. 11).

Mir Zuhair Husain (1997) describes Islamic ideology as follows:

The “ideologization of Islam” is the reaffirmation of Islam as a political idiom in which Islamic symbols, ideas and ideals are cultivated by practitioners – Islamic revivalists or Islamists – both enlightened and misguided, reactionary and revolutionary, pacifist and violent, rulers and opposition groups. The ideologization of Islam, whereby Islam becomes a comprehensive political ideology, has been referred to in the scholarly literature and in the popular mass media as Islamic revivalism, Islamic reassertion, Islamic resurgence, political Islam, Islamic fundamentalism, Islamism and in a myriad other ways.

5. Typology of Islamic Movements

Ideally, the perfect Islamic teachings are a reflection of the al-Quran and the al-Hadith, but in reality the Islamic teachings (the product of thought) that are practiced by Muslims are sometimes the same and sometimes exhibit striking differences, leading to numerous variations of thoughts and ideas about Islam, as described by *Al-Jāmi’ah* (2001).

Islamic ideality which is reflected in a Holy Book (al-Qur’an) and Prophetic Tradition (al-Hadith) is often very contrast to Islamic reality which is implemented by Muslim community. The gap between these two is sometimes similar to that of heaven and earth. The case in point is that Islam ideally appreciates variety of opinions.

The various ways of looking at a particular teaching about Islam lead to a necessity for theory. Religion can be viewed from three different perspectives: 1) The study of religion in order to acquire a deep understanding of the real truth about God and the person’s religion, known as a theological study; 2) The study of religion from the perspective of the adherent, which is a normative study and 3) Religion from a cultural perspective and the perspective of social order (Suparlan, 1981; 1982). According to Parsudi Suparlan, religion is an eternal and absolute truth that was sent down through a

divine revelation to the Prophet and can be seen as a culture and social order or a set of symbols for communication in social life, dependent upon the problem of its methodological approach (Suparlan, 1981; 1982). The last type of Islamic study mentioned above can be included in the field of knowledge known as Classical Humanities and for this reason, a special set of epistemological tools of analysis are required for addressing Islamic thoughts and ideas (Abdullah, 2001).

Amin Abdullah agrees that the set of theories applied to Islamic studies uses the theories of Muhammad Abid al-Jabiry, with the epistemology *Bayāny*, *Irfāny* and *Burhāny* (Ibid, 371). According to Al-Jabiri, 1) the epistemology *Bayāny* is a thought pattern which views religious teachings from the point of view of *fiqh* or Islamic jurisprudence and *kalam* or the science of discourse (and as such, is inclined to be textual and somewhat inflexible in nature, as well as dependent on the authority of the ideas of the *salaf* (early Muslims) – writer). This school of thought is adhered to by Islamic puritans and fundamentalists; the epistemology *Irfāny* is a school of thought which is intuitive and mixed to a certain extent with superstition and *bid'ah* (religious innovation). This group includes followers of tasawwuf or Sufism and Islamic mysticism and 3) the epistemology *Burhāny* is an Islamic school of thought which is characterized by logic or rational thought. This group tends to have a more scientific outlook and is willing to accept Western theories and culture, although at times it has been labelled as secular and liberal (Abdullah, 2000; Abdullah, 2001). See the diagram below!

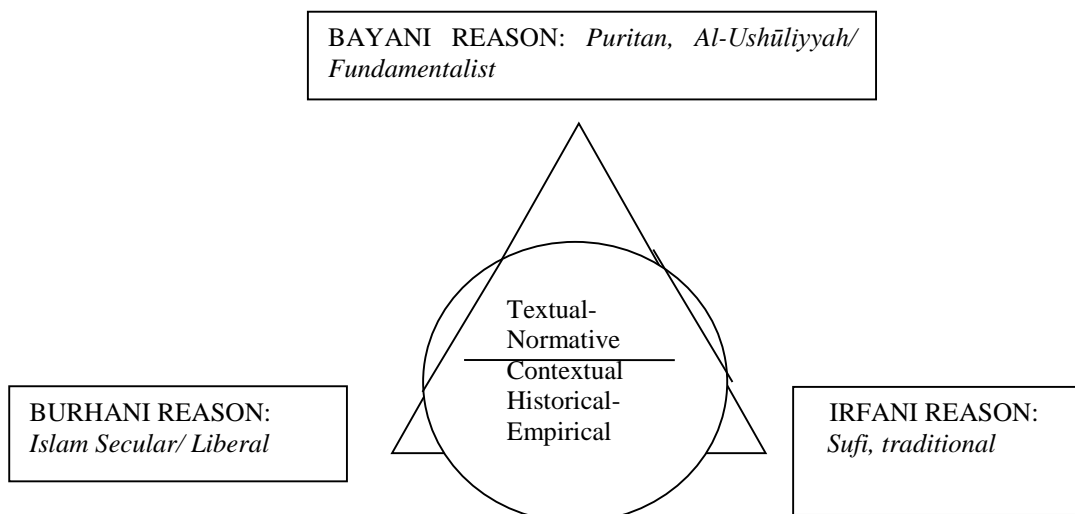


Diagram 1. Pattern of *Bayāny*, *Irfāny* and *Burhāny*

(See Amin Abdullah, 2001).

These different Islamic perspectives of thought characterize the ideology of Islamic movements and in turn, the ideology of Islamic movements influences the nature of Islamic political movements, since political movements are founded based on the background of a particular group of society.

In part 1 of the Introduction of Joel Beinin and Joe Storks' book entitled *Political Islam: Essays From Middle East Report*, they discuss the theory of causes that have led to the emergence of Islamic fundamentalist movements, namely: 1) National leaders with secular tendencies; 2) (Government – writer) leaders who do not make Islam state ideology or give it political legitimacy; 3) Discrimination of leaders towards Islamic groups; 4) Christianization may also cause the growth of radical Islamic groups; 5) Western political

concepts which conflict with Islamic politics (1997). This was also the case with the emergence of the *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* movement in Egypt, for example. This is an ideological movement which fights for the implementation of sharia law in various aspects of life, including the life of the country. This movement first appeared at the time when Egypt was a British colony. Egypt became a British colony after the failed Arabic Revolution on 14 September 1882, which was the first day Cairo fell into the hands of Great Britain (Aziz, 2005). Zakariya Sulaiman Bayumi, in his dissertation on *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn wa Al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah fī 'l-Hayāh al-Siyāsiyyah al-Mishriyyah*, written while studying at the University of Ain Syams, Egypt, states that the British colonization of Egypt and all its consequences was (one of – writer) the trigger(s) which led to the birth of *Ikhwanul Muslimin* (hereon referred to as *Al-Ikhwan*), since the presence of the British colonial government in Egypt generated a strong religious sentiment among the Egyptian people and encouraged them to oppose all that came from the British colonialists (Azis, 2005). In addition, the birth of *Al-Ikhwan* was due to the fact that most of the political parties that already existed at that time in Egypt failed to accommodate the thoughts and ideas of the Egyptian people, instead promoting Western liberal ideas (Azis, 2005) and abandoning Islamic sharia.

Up to the present day, the activities of *Al-Ikhwan* in Egypt are highly restricted. During the month of Ramadan 1430 H/2009, an Indonesian student in Egypt accessed the *Al-Ikhwan* website from his dormitory room and was subsequently arrested and tortured by the police because the *Al-Ikhwan* political movement is considered to be a threat to the Egyptian government. In Egypt, the majority of *Al-Ikhwan* sympathizers are students and well-known intellectuals/scholars (during the month of Ramadan 1430 H, one of the writer was in Egypt: in a lecture there was a brief discussion about the incident mentioned above) (Istadiyantha, 2009).

On the other hand, the ideology of *Al-Ikhwan* that has developed in Indonesia has been packaged in such a way as to remain within a constitutional corridor. While it was still using the name *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*, this organization was unable to develop well in Indonesia, but after changing its name but continuing to preserve the ideology of *Al-Ikhwan*, it began to thrive. Organizations such as *Tarbiyah Islamiyah*, Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (KAMMI) and Partai Keadilan Sejahtera are three of the main social organizations/political parties that promote the same ideology as *Al-Ikhwan* in Egypt (Istadiyantha, 2009).

Islamic politics refers to political activities that are based on the values or principles of Islam, in which the starting point, program, agenda, goal, medium and other aspects must all be in accordance with Islamic instruction. Therefore, in the field, Islamic politics must appear different from non-Islamic politics. If conventional politics may use any ways or means to achieve a particular goal, Islamic politics are not allowed to do so. There are also other variables that should be paid attention to, such as Islamic ethics, Islamic rule of law etc. (Rasyid, 1998). Rasyid goes on to explain that in principle, the goal of Islamic politics is to succeed in making sharia law the highest source of law in the national legal system.

All the prevailing rules and laws of a country would then refer to sharia law as the highest source of law. If an existing law was found to be conflicting with sharia law, it would then be annulled. Politics that do not have this mission cannot be categorized as Islamic politics. The goal of politics is to gain power. Rasyid also says that what Islamic politics is striving to achieve is to enforce the power of Islam to function as a tool for implementing Islamic sharia law, since many sharia laws would be unable to be implemented without the power of the authorities. For example: fixed penalties (*Hudud*),

criminal provisions regarding Islam and marriage in general cannot take place without the involvement of the authorities. In connection with this, the presence of those in power is urgently required. As an example of the importance of power, in the Hadith it states that “a leader or ruler (*sulthān*) is the guardian of a woman who has no guardian”. This is also the case with various other aspects of the law, including civil law, trade laws, laws of government etc. The matter of urgency for power cannot be denied by anyone who has an understanding of sharia law (Rasyid, 1998).

In the early years of the 21st century there has been a surge of passion amongst Muslims about the belief in the possibility of the rise of Islam throughout the world. Some even believe that the pattern of international politics in the future will change. One representative from the Russian parliament by the name of Michael Buriyev has said that in the future there will be 5 new large countries: America, Russia, China, the Islamic Caliphate and India (Al-Wa’ie, 2010). Al-Wa’ie (2010) also writes that there is a possibility that India may become one the 5 largest countries if it can manage to overcome the problems it currently faces, in connection with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Bangladesh (Al-Wa’ie, 2010). On the other hand, in 1952 an Islamic movement by the name of *Hizbut Tahrir* was founded by Syeh Taqiyud-din An-Nabhani in Al-Quds Palestine (now based in Jordan) which calls for the establishment of an international Islamic government or an Islamic Caliphate (*Khilafah Islamiyah*) (Azra, 2001).

Abdurrahman Wahid, in his book “Ilusi Negara Islam”, Islamic State illusion (Wahid, 2009), believes that the concept of an Islamic State is impossible. He states that the expansion of a transnational Islamic movement in Indonesia is being driven by Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS), Hizbu Tahrir Indoneia (HTI), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), and FPI (Front Pembela Islam Indonesia) (*The Jakarta Post*, 2009). There is something of a mystery surrounding the book “Ilusi Negara Islam”, since it has been said that the person whose name is stated as the author – Abdurrahman Wahid, and the person who wrote the Foreword – Ahmad Syafii Maarif, deny having written such an account, although the book was published in Australia and can be found on the internet.

Furthermore, Hassan Hanafi (Hanafi, 1989), in his book *Al-Ushūliyah al-Islāmiyah*, states that Islamic fundamentalism is the prototype of the Salafiyah movement, led first by Ahmad bin Hanbal and later by Ibnu Taimiyah, Ibnul Qayyim and Jamaludin al-Afghani (Hanafi, 1989). In recent years, a more prominent role of the Islamic fundamentalist movement has been played by Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), which is persistent in its activities throughout Southeast Asia in particular, as well as in the rest of the world.

The effort to enforce sharia law may be done in various ways, not always through control of power or by political means and in some cases the method of Islamic proselytizing or *da’wah*, is used. In connection with this, it is necessary to have a degree of knowledge about the different characteristics or types of groups in a Muslim society, since this has a strong influence on the mind-set of Islamic politics. Islamic social groups can be divided into 3 types: (1) *traditionalists*; (2) *modernists* and (3) *mujahideen*. The first group, the *traditionalists*, can be divided further into two groups, namely the traditionalists who are dynamic and those who are static. Both dynamic and static Islamic traditionalists practice the general teachings of Islam, including praying, fasting, making the pilgrimage to Mecca, etc.

The dynamic community is active in making innovations and developments for the advancement of society, but advancements in the field of *da’wah* are evolutionary in nature, while the static traditionalists do not practice *da’wah* and are not concerned with whether or not their teachings are in accordance with sharia. The negative side of this

group is that they tend to believe in superstition, *bid'ah* (religious innovation) and *khurafat/churafat* (dynamism and animism), which is sometimes known as TBC. The second group is the *modernists* and can also be divided into two sub-groups, namely Islamists and secularists. This group is extremely aggressive in its adoption of issues of modernization, which usually originate from the West.

Under the influence of this Western modernization, some people are inclined to remain Islamists, in the sense that they aim to preserve the principles of sharia, while others tend to become more secular, individualistic and liberal. Both traditionalists and modernists tend to practice *da'wah* as best they can or in other words, they do not have a strong passion for *da'wah* but simply practice it as a part of their regular religious routine without any innovations or breakthroughs. This is not the case, however, for the third group, the *mujahideen*. This group strives for the progress and development of Islam by focussing a great deal of their time and energy on *da'wah* so that Islam can be practiced perfectly, even it means putting their life, soul and wealth at risk. They believe that this is their true creed or ideology.

Hey, people of faith, enter into Islam with your whole being and do not follow the steps of Satan. In truth, Satan is a real enemy to you {QS 2 (Al-Baqarah: 208)}.

Let us say: Truly my prayers, my worship, my life and my death are only for Allah, God of the universe {QS 6 (Al-An'am: 162)}.

And let there be people among you who call for good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong; they are the successful ones {QS 3 (Ali Imran: 104)}.

Dekmejian states that Islamic movements can be divided into 4 types, namely: (1) Gradualist-Pragmatic groups, including *Ikhwanul Muslimin* in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and other nations of the Persian Gulf, *Harakat al-Ittihad al-Islami* in Tunisia, Salafy in Saudi Arabia; (2) Revolutionary Shi'ite groups, including *Hizbullah* Lebanon, *Hizbud-Da'wah al-Islamiyyah* in Iraq and other nations of the Persian Gulf, *Al-Islamiyyah fi Shubuh al-Jazirah al-'Arabiyyah* in Saudi Arabia; (3) Revolutionary Sunni groups, including *Hizbut Tahrir Al-Islami* in Egypt, *Ikhwanul Muslimun* in Syria; (4) Messianic-Puritanical groups, including *Jama'at al-Muslimun lit-Takfir* in Egypt, *Al-Ikhwan* (also Wahabi and Salafy – writer) in Saudi Arabia (Dekmejian, 1995).

Meanwhile, Oliver Roy writes that the ideas of Islamic movements oscillate between two poles, namely the revolutionary pole, which involves Islamization of society through the power of the state and the reformist pole, in which social and political action is primarily aimed towards re-Islamization of society from the bottom up, which will automatically lead to the creation of an Islamic State (1996). Based on the combined opinions of Dekmejian and Roy, it can be concluded that the path followed by Muslims to enforce sharia law is:

- a. Reformation: (a) Da'wah in stages; (b) Da'wah of pure Islam
- b. Revolution

On an international scale, the movements of reformists and pure Islamists can be seen in the Islamic movements *At-Takwir wal Hijrah* in Egypt and *Al-Ikhwan* in Saudi Arabia (Dekmejian, 1995), as well as in Islamic movements in Indonesia. Mulkhan carried out research on the subject of pure Islamic da'wah in rural areas which he presented in his dissertation and subsequently in a book entitled *Islam Murni: dalam Masyarakat Petani* (Mulkhan, 2000). This work by Mulkhan focuses specifically on the variant of da'wah practiced by Muhammadiyah. Other examples of pure Islamic da'wah, in addition to the Salafy group, also include the group that goes by the name Majelis

Tafsir Alquran (MTA). The revolutionary movement is mainly joined by Syi'ah Muslims and revolutionary Sunni groups, such as *Jamaah Islamiyah*.

6. Indonesian Islamic Political Parties

In the contemporary era, students are provided with comprehensive knowledge on the political state of the nation, with the intention of fostering their ability to engage in critical thinking about the country's political landscape. The constitutional conflict within Islamic politics in Indonesia has persisted since the emergence of the initial Islamic modernist factions, which advocated for democracy and opposed Sukarno's authoritarian political movement in the 1950s. Additionally, the adoption of a democratic system by Islamic boarding schools has further contributed to this struggle (Maarif, 1996). Based on data collected by Ahmad Syafii Maarif, leaders of Syarikat Islam (SI), namely Surjopranoto and Dr. Soekiman Wirjosandjojo, discussed the concepts of power and Islamic governance in the late 1920s. They expressed their belief that the objective of achieving independence was to establish an Islamic government (Maarif, 1996).

Following that, in the 1955 general election, Islamic parties secured 45% of the vote. According to the Provisional Constitution of 1950, by which the general election was regulated, a law could only be passed if the bill was approved by at least 2/3 of all the members of parliament present at the meeting. Therefore, it is clear that constitutionally, the struggle to form an Islamic state would be impossible. Initially, the Constituent Assembly possessed 3 drafts for the national principles on which the constitution should be based, proposed by the existing 3 factions, these being: *Pancasila*, *Islam* and *Social-economy*.

The debate about these national principles continued until the Constituent Assembly was finally dissolved by President Sukarno in July 1959, in an attempt to create a new political order known as Guided Democracy (1959-1965) (Maarif, 1996). On 9 April 1945, the Japanese formed an Investigating Body for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (Badan Persiapan Usaha Kemerdekaan Indonesia, BPUPKI), with 68 members. This organization discussed the form, limits, and philosophical principles that the Indonesian nation would adopt. The concept of Islam as a national principle was discussed by this organization, but of the 68 members of BPUPKI, only 15 supported the aspirations of Islamic groups while the rest belonged to other nationalist groups (Maarif, 1996). On 18 August 1945, a change was made to the clause in the first moral principle of the official philosophical theory Pancasila, "Belief in Almighty God with the obligation of its Muslim adherents to carry out the Islamic law/Syari'ah", which became "A Divinity that is an ultimate unity", an important indication that Muslim representatives had agreed to replace the clause. "With the obligation of its Muslim adherents to carry out the Islamic law/Syari'ah" with the new wording (Maarif, 1996), which meant that efforts to establish a nation based on Islamic law had constitutionally been brought to an end in Indonesia.

A revolutionary struggle was at one time led by the movement known as DI (Darul Islam – House of Islam)/TII (Tentara Islam Indonesia – Islamic Armed Forces of Indonesia), primarily in South Sulawesi, under the command of Abdul Qahhar Muzakkar, but this movement was quashed in 1965 by the Indonesian government under the leadership of A.M. Yusuf (Ramly *et al.*, 2006). However, it is evident that the spirit of Qahhar Muzakkar's movement has never been extinguished and another community in South Sulawesi has continued the struggle, with the same goal of sharia law, under an

organization known as the Committee for the Preparation of Enforcing Sharia Law (Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariat Islam, KPPSI), founded in 2000, in an effort to implement sharia law in the country and specifically in South Sulawesi (Ramly *et al.*, 2006). KPPSI is a local movement with a global orientation (Ibid, p.137-138), led by the son of Qahhar Muzakkar, Abdul Azis Qahhar Muzakkar, (who holds a postgraduate degree), born on 15 December 1964, in Palopo, South Sulawesi (Ibid: 20). Cornelis van Dijk also writes at length about the struggle of DI/TII in a book entitled *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam (The Darul Islam in Indonesia)*, translated by Grafiti Press with the title *Darul Islam: Sebuah Pemberontakan* (Dijk, 1983).

After a Presidential Decree was issued in 1959, the country implemented a system known as “guided democracy”. The position of Islamic politics, after the establishment of this guided democracy, was pushed aside (Jurdi, 2008). During the New Order (1965-1998), Islamic political movements in Indonesia also received a large amount of pressure from government leaders (Dijk, 1996). Syarifuddin Jurdi goes on to explain that the uniformity of ideology enforced by the government with the implementation of the Sole Principle of Pancasila for all political parties (1980) and mass organizations (1985) closed the door to any attempt to legalize or formalize Islam in the state constitution (Ibid, p.265-266).

Post reformation era there were activities of Islamic political parties, such as the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or PPP), the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or PKS) and the Star and Moon Party (Partai Bulan Bintang or PBB), can be referred to as “Islamic politics”, while the activities of organizations such as Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), Lasyklar Jihad (LJ), etc. are categorized as “political Islam”.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (President of the Republic of Indonesia 2005-2010; 2010-2015) stated that he did not agree with religion being exploited for political purposes: “My stance is clear. Religions should not be exploited for the sake of political competition. Our democracy and politics will encounter setbacks if we involve ethnic, religious and racial issues in those competitions (*The Jakarta Post*, 2009).

7. Leadership of the Prophet Muhammad with the Charter of Medina

The concept of an Islamic government as reflected in the Charter of Medina was an experiment which shows the experience of statehood in Islam (Azra, 2000). In the al-Quran, there is a principle which states that an Islamic State must be based on *syūra* (discussion or deliberation), but it is up to us how we interpret the meaning of *syūra*, whether as representational democracy or direct democracy (Azra, 2000).

The Charter of Media is the Constitution of the State of Medina that was established at the start of the classical era of Islam (622 AD). As a state constitution that was created by a prophet, it is filled with values of transcendental truth, morality and manmade laws (Sukardja, 1995). In accordance with its name, the Charter of Medina is a document drafted by the Prophet Muhammad concerning government regulations, made in Medina, a city in Saudi Arabia which is situated approximately 485 km to the north of Mecca.

The Charter of Medina presents us with an extremely valuable historical experience, about how to build a country whose citizens are not only Muslim but also Jewish, since the Prophet lays out principles of equality for all citizens (Azra, 2000). The Prophet respects the rights of all citizens to live with freedom to own property, freedom to practice their own religious beliefs, upholding the Human Rights of all people and

these principles were later adopted by the Western world, since the 20th century (Azra, 2000). According to Azra, there is no such thing as a standardized concept and form of a country or state in Islam. The important thing to take from the Charter of Medina is its basic framework (Azra, 2000).

In the Hadith Al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud, it explains that when the Prophet Muhammad arrived in Medina, there were 3 main groups of people living there: (1) Muslims (Anshar and Muhajirin); (2) Idolaters (pagans); (3) Jews (Arabic migrants). In the Charter of Medina, the Prophet Muhammad: (1) unites Muslim immigrants with native inhabitants of Medina; (2) creates peace for all Muslims, Idolaters and Jews to live in harmony with each other; (3) establishes a number of rules of law (Sukardja, 1995). According to W. Montgomery Watt, "The Charter of Media" documents is generally recognized as authentic (1972). Thus, the Charter of Medina is a concept of thought which believes that Muslims can live in harmony with people of other faiths, as long as those people are willing to live in peace alongside the Muslims. The principle of Islam is to help non-believers who live in peace and do no harm (kafir Dzimmi) but to react firmly to dissidents or aggressors (kafir Harbi).

8. Islamic perspective on Sovereignty

Sovereignty is the highest level of power that can unite different powers and groups in a society (Hasanah *et al.*, 2002). There are four theories of sovereignty in a country: (1) sovereignty of God; (2) sovereignty of the state; (3) sovereignty of the law and (4) sovereignty of the people (Soehino, 1986).

(1) *Sovereignty of God (Gods-souvereiniteit)*, also known as divine sovereignty (Syamsudin, 1999) is the oldest theory and was developed during the period from the 5th to the 15th century AD. Originally, this theory was closely related to the development of the new religion at that time, namely Christianity, under the leadership of the Pope. At that time, the Christian religion had a complete range of facilities, similar to those of the state. This was initially met with strong opposition from the people because they considered it to conflict with the religion that most people adhered to at that time, namely pantheism and polytheism. However, due to the determination and tenacity of the Christians in defending their ideology, the governmental system was able to be maintained (Soehino, 1986). Some people, including Augustinus, believed that the Pope was God's representative on earth and at the same time had power over the state. Thomas Aquinas stated that the king and the Pope had the same duties, the only difference being that the king was in charge of worldly affairs while the Pope was in charge of religious matters. Marsilius believed that the king was the representative of God who held and implemented sovereignty in the world. During the Renaissance era, this theory was refuted by another theory, namely the theory of Niccolo Machiavelli, which states that the highest sovereignty is held by the state and therefore the state has the authority to determine the law. This theory of divine sovereignty was ultimately opposed by the majority of society, especially after learning that religious leaders often acted in a tyrannical and abhorrent manner, leading to the theory of state sovereignty (Soehino, 1986).

(2) *Sovereignty of the State* is regarded as a form of unity that creates rules of law. Thus, laws exist because a state exists and no law can prevail if it is not so desired by the state. According to this theory, the highest power is in the hands of the state. In absolute power of the state (*Staats-absolutisme*), the state has absolute power over all aspects of

people's lives and as a result, citizens are unable to possess any kind of individuality. In limited power of the state (*Staats-souvereiniteit*), however, the power of the government is limited and the result tends towards liberalism.

(3) *Sovereignty of Law (Rechts-souvereiniteit)* is a theory which states that the highest power of a country is the law. The state, as well as its leaders and all its citizens must abide by the law. According to Krabbe, the source of law is the sense of law found in society itself. In its more simple form, or in its primitive state or lowest level, this sense of law is referred to as *legal instinct*. In a broader form or on a higher level, it is referred to as *legal awareness* (Soehino, 1986).

(4) *Sovereignty of the People*, according to Johannes Althusius, is a theory that originally involved a process in which individuals surrendered their power to the king in a community agreement and the king then accepted the power from the people (Ibid, 1986). Individuals gain power naturally, in accordance with the laws of nature. Subsequently, since the power of the king is given by the people, it is also limited by the people and that is why it is referred to as sovereignty of the people. One important figure in this theory is J.J. Rousseau (Soehini, 1986).

The implementation of forms of sovereignty in Islam can be seen as follows. The paradigm followed by Syi'ah Muslims is that power is in the hands of God (a theocratic belief). Imam Khomaini said: "In an Islamic State, the authorities believe that the law is in the hands of God, so no-one has the right to determine the law, except for God (Syamsudin, 1999). There is a well-known Iranian slogan: *Nab syarq, nab gharb, faqat jumhūri-I Islāmi*, which means 'There is no East and no West, only the Islamic Republic' (Rais, 1990). According to Abu 'l-A'la Maududi, an Islamic State that is based on sharia must be founded on 4 principles: (1) recognition of the sovereignty of God; (2) acceptance of the authority (*sunnah*, writer) of the prophet Muhammad; (3) having the status of "representative of God/caliphate" and (4) implementation of discussion and deliberation/*syūrā* (Ibid, 1999).

9. Is Democracy Compatible to Islam?

The term democracy was originally introduced by the people of Athens, Greece, who invented the word "*demokratis*" or "*demokratia*", which comes from the word *demos*, meaning 'people' and *kratos*, meaning 'government' (Efriza, 2008). Robert Dahl describes a democratic political system as one which "is genuinely or almost completely responsible for all its citizens (Samuel *et al.*, 1996). If the meaning of democracy is the same as discussion and deliberation, then the following religious verses can be cited as being related to the importance of deliberating or conferring.

So by mercy from Allah, (O Muhammad), you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude in speech and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely upon Him {QS 3 (Ali Imran, p. 159)}. And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer and their rule is to take counsel among themselves and who spend out of what we have given them {QS 42 (Asy-Syura: 38)}.

In recent times, a new idea has emerged, namely that Islamization must be carried out in totality, including the terminology used in Islam. This school of thought wishes only to use Islamic terms that the Prophet used and if there is no instance of the Prophet using a particular term, they will not use it. This group tends to be bound to the text and

their way of thought is textual and for this reason, they are often referred to as the *textual group*. On the other hand, there is another group that will use any kind of term for their Islamic activities, as long as the content or substance of the message or teaching is the same as that conveyed by the Prophet.

This group is sometimes known as the *substantial group*. The textual group is inclined to make improvements or corrections in society by Islamic means, beginning from the outside or concerning the labels and external appearance or packaging. The substantial group, meanwhile, attempts to understand the content of a message or the inner meaning of the substance in the message of the Prophet. In connection with this, there is a group of Muslims who oppose the democratic system because they believe it was never exemplified by the Prophet. Other groups, however, are ready to accept and not dispute the term democracy, because democracy is carried out through discussion and deliberation, in accordance with the term *syūrā* which appears in the al-Quran. In reality, however, the democracy practiced in some countries is still weak and fails to reflect the system of *syūrā* that appears in the al-Quran and as implemented by the Prophet, because the system of *syūrā* in these countries can more accurately be described as *ijma'*, which means 'a consensus reached by scholars who are moral and wise, broadminded, and well-intentioned in making decisions'. *Ijma'* will not be trapped by an evil and wrongful majority, but instead is inclined to determine what is good or beneficial for all people, and avoid what is bad or harmful.

Muslims have an obligation to merge the essence of their religion with the realm of politics. Din Syamsudin asserts that the primary purpose of Islamic politics is to align the objectives and ambitions of their faith with the practicalities of political affairs (Syamsudin, 1999). Furthermore, this association can be extended to form a correlation between religion and governance. Historical evidence has consistently demonstrated the presence of disparities and conflicts between the two. There are two primary factors contributing to this: (1) The inherent distinction between "religion" and "politics" poses challenges when attempting to integrate them in reality; (2) practical politics frequently diverge from the ethical and moral principles of religion (Ibid: 46). Additionally, the author introduces a third rationale: (3) The Islamic brotherhood, known as *ukhuwwah Islamiyyah*, is still deficient among political parties and Islamic groups.

10. Ideology of Islamic Political Movements

According to Bassam Tibi, the term Islamic fundamentalism (*al-Ushuliyyah al-Islamiyyah*) is often used synonymously with the term "political Islam". In the Arabic world, the term political Islam is more commonly referred to as *al-Islam as-Siyaasi*. This group understands Islam not (only – writer) as a faith or system of ethics but more as a political ideology (Tibi, 2003; Syaikh, 2012). Advocates and followers of political Islam are called Islamists, which means Muslims who are committed to political action for the implementation of what they consider to be an Islamic agenda. This opinion, voiced by Hasan, is in line with that of James Piscatori (Hasan, 2012). Some Islamists may have a democratic outlook while others may be authoritarian. Not all Islamists are terrorists but all (Muslim) terrorists are Islamists (Fuller, 2009). Islamism tends to be perceived as portraying a negative image and is often accused of being radical, intolerant towards plurality, anti-democratic and unwilling to adapt to the changing times. Ali explains that post-Islamism has emerged as a semantic endeavour to affix a new label to the Islamism that has begun to voice issues related to democracy, human rights and freedom of choice.

Ali adds that post-Islamism is an attempt to correct the image of Islamism that is associated with the anti-democratic stereotype (Panghegar, 2011).

The term “fundamentalism” as a concept is loaded with the Western stereotype and Christian construct of thought which implies a monolithic threat that does not actually exist (Yunanto *et al.*, 2003). Yunanto also states that Esposito subsequently proposed the use of a more general term, Political Islam, or Islamism. The term proposed by Esposito in the context of Indonesia is more suitably applied to Islamic movements that promote Islamic values with the goal of changing the norms that prevail in a society in a way that is not oppositional to the authorities but uses peaceful methods (Yunanto *et al.*, 2003). However, on the other hand, Indonesian political experts have reached a consensus that what Yunanto is referring to is actually “Islamic Politics”, while the term used in place of Islamic Fundamentalism or Islamic Militancy is “Political Islam” (Roy, 1996). Youssef Choueir, on the other hand, writes, in Hamzawi (2012), that Islamic Politics can be defined as a political theory within an Islamic outlook or the symbols and *nashes* of Islam that are concerned with social order, power and authority.

In other words, Islamic Politics is a form of political identity that views Islam as *din* and *daulah* (religion and state), while Political Islam is a political institution, the orientation of which is to promote Islam as a precept for the life of society as well as a political system for the country and which strives to implement Islamic or sharia law in countries where the majority of the population is Muslim or to establish an Islamic state both legally and formally, as well as substantially, based on the interpretation of the al-Quran, the Sunnah and the history of the Islamic Caliphate after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. On this basis, the label Political Islam covers all political powers that have an orientation and goal of ensuring that Islam as a religion is not separated from the political system of a country or the life of society or to go even further, is not separated from the political system in the entire Islamic world (countries with a Muslim majority) (Hamzawi, 2012).

The ideology of Islamic political movements includes 4 aspects and it can be affirmed that every Islamic political movement in the Middle East has at least 2 or 3 of these aspects in its ideology:

- 1) To establish an Islamic State or a state founded on sharia law;
- 2) To enforce sharia law or the puritanization of Islamic teachings;
- 3) To carry out acts of solidarity with other Muslims and to carry out acts of jihad to oppose evil and the West;
- 4) To puritanize and strive for aspirations and political rights by peaceful means or through violence (Fuller, 2009; Syarkhun & Ghorara, 2004; Yunanto, 2003; Mubarak, 2008; Hasan, 2012; Istadiyantha, 2014).

11. Conclusion

Islam was revealed on earth with the purpose of not only controlling the connection between mankind and Allah, but also governing the interaction between individuals. These interactions require utmost dedication and exertion in order to transform the Islamic religion into rahmatan lil-‘alamin (a source of blessings and prosperity for all). It is important to effectively govern people's lives within a structured framework and whenever feasible, this framework should align with the principles established by God. Implementing a system based on the will of a small group of people might be challenging in the context of a nation's life. Hence, for the governance structure of a nation to align

with divine intentions, Muslims must exert significant effort in accordance with their capabilities and the existing regulations of sharia law. Sharia law acknowledges many lawful methods for pursuing this endeavour, such as the phases of da'wah and within the framework of the constitution. Power can be acquired either by constitutional measures or through agitation and revolutionary tactics.

During the Arab Spring in 2011, it became evident that numerous Islamic nations in the Middle East aspired to adopt the Western model of democracy. In a similar vein, Indonesia had a Reformation in 1998, resulting in the overthrow of President Suharto's long-standing rule that had lasted for 32 years. If democracy is often understood as the governance of a system that distributes, restricts and oversees authority, then this principle is applicable worldwide. However, if democracy is seen as the expression of the will of the majority in society, it can potentially clash with Islamic teachings. Islam is inherently intertwined with politics as it encompasses both religious beliefs and the governance of society, with the aim of implementing Sharia law in predominantly Muslim regions. If we categorize political Islam into Political Parties, Islamic Organizations and Islamic Political Movements, it is evident that each group holds a distinct viewpoint on democracy. Islamic Political Parties and Islamic Organizations in Indonesia and the Middle East are inclined to incorporate Islamic principles into the framework of Western Democracy. Meanwhile, Islamic Political Movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood do not typically make concessions on Western Democratic traditions and aim to consistently and thoroughly implement Islamic teachings with kaffah.

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