Transformation of Islamic Nationalism into Pancasila Nationalism: Dynamics of Islamic Unity Nationalist Thought

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Abstract

This study explores the dynamics between Islamic Unity (Persatuan Islam/ PERSIS) and Pancasila nationalism within the context of Indonesia's sociopolitical landscape. Islamic unity, or Persatuan Islam, represents a movement aiming to consolidate and strengthen the Muslim community's identity and influence within the nation. In contrast, Pancasila nationalism is rooted in Indonesia's state ideology, emphasizing unity in diversity and promoting the harmony of various ethnic, religious, and cultural groups under a secular-national framework. This research analyzes how these two ideologies interact, sometimes converging in their pursuit of national cohesion and, at other times, clashing due to differing visions of identity and governance. The study employs a comprehensive literature review, examining historical, political, and sociocultural sources to understand the evolving relationship between Islamic unity and Pancasila nationalism. It finds that while both ideologies aim for national unity, their approaches and underlying principles can lead to tensions and negotiations in the quest for a cohesive national identity.

Keyword: Islamic Unity, Pancasila Nationalism, Indonesia, National Identity, Secularism, Religious Integration.

INTRODUCTION

Nationalism is an ideology that highlights the interests and identity of a nation or state. It often encompasses a desire for sovereignty or independence, as well as a sense of solidarity among individuals who share a common identity (Anderson, 2006). One of the main challenges posed by nationalism in the context of increasing globalization is that some individuals feel threatened by outside influences that may jeopardize their national identity. This situation can lead to conflicts between local nationalism and broader global interactions (Held, 2002).

Additionally, nationalism has the potential to exacerbate ethnic and sectarian conflicts, particularly when a group perceives that its identity is under threat or being overlooked. Such conflicts frequently involve exclusive claims to territory, political power, or resources (Smith, 1998), as seen in the violent ethnic nationalism that contributed to the conflicts in Yugoslavia during the late 20th century. Furthermore, nationalism is often linked to the formation of deep political identities, which can serve as tools for political mobilization or as foundations for government policy (Gellner, 1983). This raises questions about how political parties may use nationalist rhetoric to gain support and how countries might shape their foreign policies based on nationalist principles. There is ongoing debate regarding the role of nationalism in a democratic context. On one hand, nationalism can foster social solidarity and bolster democracy; on the other hand, it can also support exclusionary or authoritarian policies (Kohn, 1957). This discussion encompasses how nationalism can impact minority rights and the principles of liberal democracy.

The PERSIS phenomenon is rooted in ethnic and sectarian contexts. The organization advocates for issues related to identity and ideology, which are likely to be absorbed by nationalist ideologies prevalent at that time. This integration is inevitable, as PERSIS has become part of Indonesia as a nation. The leaders of Indonesia have their own perspectives on nationalism, presenting a challenge for PERSIS in maintaining its distinct identity and ideology.

This study aims to explore the historical dynamics of PERSIS nationalism from its inception to the present day. By examining these dynamics, we will assess whether PERSIS remains consistent with its identity and ideology. Additionally, we will evaluate how the

nationalism embraced by PERSIS aligns with the principles of nationalism as articulated in Pancasila.

RESEARCH METHOD

The methodology employed in this study is a comprehensive literature review. This approach requires the researcher to examine various relevant sources in depth to understand the relationship between Islamic unity and Pancasila nationalism. The researcher collects and analyzes literature that encompasses both classical and contemporary perspectives on this relationship, which aids in understanding the evolution of thought and the changing dynamics over time. The researcher synthesizes information from multiple sources to create a coherent picture of how Islamic unity and Pancasila nationalism interact. This process involves identifying key patterns and trends in the literature. Based on the analysis, the researcher interprets the findings to explain how Islamic unity and Pancasila nationalism influence and develop each other. Additionally, the researcher identifies the implications of this relationship for a deeper understanding of Islamic nationalism and identity in Indonesia.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The History of PERSIS

Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) was established on 1 Shafar 1342 H, which corresponds to 12 September 1923, in Bandung (Anas, 2015). PERSIS is a modernist Islamic organization founded by a group of Muslim traders interested in religious studies. Its movement is similar to that of Muhammadiyah. The idea for PERSIS originated from discussions among traders of Palembang descent who lived in Bandung. These traders had extensive connections with other regions, and some had even studied in Mecca. They engaged with reformist magazines such as Al-Munir from Padang and Al-Manar from Egypt, and they were in contact with Ahmad Surkati, the founder of Al-Irsyad. The organization was led by a reformist religious teacher named Haji Mohamad Zamzam. Additionally, Haji Mohamad Yunus, a Palembang trader residing in Bandung, supported PERSIS activities to further develop his da'wah (Islamic missionary work) (Noer, 1985).

In 1924, Ahmad Hassan, a Singaporean-born Indian-Indonesian, joined PERSIS. Ahmad Hassan was a well-known reformer recognized for his radical and rational explanations of religion and interpretations of Islamic law. The declining state of Islam

served as a strong motivation for the establishment of PERSIS. At that time, the conditions of Muslims in Indonesia were characterized by practices involving superstition, bid'ah (innovations), and mystical rituals, leading to a tendency to accept beliefs without question (Risalah, 1990).

PERSIS directed the spirit of ijtihad and jihad to achieve the organization's goals: the unity of Islamic thought, feeling, efforts, and expression. The primary aim of establishing PERSIS was to ensure that religious life aligned with Islamic teachings in their truest sense. To accomplish this, PERSIS established schools, polyclinics, orphanages, and other supportive institutions. During the Dutch colonial period, PERSIS engaged in a dual struggle. Internally, the organization actively called for the purification of Islam from ideologies not rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith. Externally, PERSIS opposed and fought against any anti-Islamic movements and ideologies. Consequently, PERSIS's activities and efforts consistently focused on broadcasting, spreading, and developing an understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In the realm of formal education, PERSIS established a Kindergarten and Elementary School (HIS) in 1930, followed by a MULO School in 1931 and a Teachers' School in 1932, all located in West Java (Federspiel, 2009). Alongside general education, PERSIS also founded Islamic Boarding Schools. In 1935, the Persatuan Islam Boarding School was created in Bandung, under the guidance of Hasan Hamid and E. Abdurrahman. This boarding school offered two levels of education: a Small Boarding School for children, which was held in the afternoon, and a Large Boarding School specifically designed for teenagers (Risalah, 1990).

Throughout its history, PERSIS published the magazine "Pembela Islam", which served as the voice of the Islamic puritanization movement from 1929 to 1933. The magazine focused on religious affairs and emphasized the correct practice of religious rituals. Additionally, PERSIS circulated an Indonesian-language magazine in Jawi script called "Al-Fatawa," featuring specialized articles on Islamic issues that addressed community problems and raised concerns related to non-Muslim groups (Federspiel, 2004).

In addition to these two magazines, PERSIS also launched Al-Lisan as a successor to "Pembela Islam," but this publication ceased during the Japanese occupation. Another magazine, "At-Taqwa," was published in 1930. Through these publications, PERSIS's influence grew across Indonesia, even though the organization's branches were limited to

Sumatra and Kalimantan (Abdullah, 2012). Although PERSIS did not have as many members as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or Muhammadiyah, it significantly influenced the reform of Indonesian Muslim thought.

PERSIS disseminated its renewal ideas primarily through print media, including periodicals, magazines, books, and pamphlets. The organization's establishment as a reform-oriented Islamic group was inspired by the thoughts of Muhammad Abduh. PERSIS adopted a confrontational approach, both culturally and intellectually, in contrast to other organizations that tended to preserve syncretic religious practices rooted in traditional thinking. PERSIS aimed to eliminate these perspectives and promote a rational and puritanical approach to Islam.

Historical Dynamics of PERSIS's Nationalist Views

Since its founding, PERSIS has undergone various historical dynamics that reflect shifts in the ideology of Islamic nationalism in Indonesia. During its early years (1923-1945), PERSIS emphasized the renewal of Islamic thought and sought to unite Muslims under reformist Islamic principles. In the context of colonialism, PERSIS adopted a modernist approach that intertwined Islamic nationalism with the struggle for independence from Dutch colonial rule (Shihab, 2019). Several prominent figures emerged during this period to articulate nationalist views. Muhammad Zamzam, the first chairman of PERSIS (1923-1949), held a distinctive perspective on nationalism. He connected nationalism with Islamic principles, stressing the significance of national unity and identity within the framework of religious teachings. Muhammad Zamzam viewed nationalism as not only a love for one's homeland but also as a reflection of Islamic teachings that promote unity and integrity among people. He believed that nationalism should align with Islamic principles, which emphasize justice, equality, and concern for others. Zamzam stressed that nationalism should not contradict religion; rather, nationalism grounded in Islamic values fosters unity rather than division and conflict.

In the context of Indonesia, Zamzam argued that nationalism should be translated into policies and actions that enhance public welfare and strengthen unity in diversity. This involves efforts to bring together various societal groups with principles of justice and compassion, consistent with Islamic teachings. Ahmad Hassan, a contemporary of Muhammad Zamzam, also opposed certain forms of nationalism. He supported Islamic

nationalism, contrasting it with the nationalism promoted by Soekarno in Indonesia, which he saw as secular and influenced by Turkish nationalism. For Ahmad Hassan, Islamic nationalism requires governance to be based on fundamental Islamic principles and the laws of Islam. His opposition to secular nationalism stemmed from the belief that it disregards the laws of God and the Prophet, substituting them with human desires. He argued that while Indonesia may achieve independence and function as a sovereign nation, it should not consider independence an ultimate goal unless its governance remains rooted in Islamic principles.

According to H. Abdul Karim Amrullah, a PERSIS activist in West Sumatra, nationalism is closely integrated with the principles of Islamic teachings. He views nationalism as a tool for achieving independence and social justice (Junaidi, 2023) and believes that the unity of Muslims and adaptation to political change are essential to this struggle (Kurniawan, 2020). This perspective reflects an effort to combine Islamic principles with the spirit of the nationalist struggle during Indonesia's fight for independence.

In the post-independence period and during consolidation (1945-1990), PERSIS faced new challenges in integrating Islamic values into the new state system (Anshori, 2018). The organization focused on consolidating the ideology of Islamic nationalism within the framework of Pancasila and played a significant role in shaping public policies that reflect Islamic values. During Isa Anshary's leadership (1949-1962), he strongly opposed nationalism, especially the form promoted by Soekarno, known as NASAKOM (Nationalist, Religion, and Communist). Although Soekarno remained committed to the goal of national unity, PERSIS displayed a strong anti-nationalist stance. Isa Anshary conducted two main campaigns: the first aimed to promote Islamic ideology, while the second firmly declared that any form of nationalism that was neutral regarding religion in politics was heretical.

The Relevance of Pancasila Nationalism to Contemporary Nationalism PERSIS

Pancasila Nationalism is a nationalist ideology rooted in the Pancasila principles, which serve as the foundation of the Indonesian state. This ideology emphasizes national unity by highlighting the noble values of Pancasila in both the life of the nation and governance (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). The values of Pancasila are based on five principles: 1). Belief in the One and Only God: this principle recognizes God as the fundamental basis of national life and promotes respect for various religions in Indonesia (Budiardjo, 2014). 2). Just and Civilized Humanity: This principle

reflects the commitment to fair treatment for all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, religion, race, or class (Soekarno, 2011). 3). Unity of Indonesia: this principle encourages a spirit of unity among people despite societal differences (Sutrisno, 2017). 4). Democracy Guided by Deliberation and Representation: this principle emphasizes the importance of deliberation in reaching a consensus during decision-making processes (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). 5). Social Justice for All Indonesian People: this principle focuses on ensuring social justice and equitable distribution of welfare throughout society (Budiardjo, 2014).

The implementation of Pancasila nationalism can be observed in public policies, education, and social development that align with the principles of Pancasila, aiming to create a just and prosperous society (Soekarno, 2011). However, Pancasila nationalism faces several challenges, including social polarization and economic disparities. Despite these challenges, the consistent application of Pancasila's principles presents opportunities to foster a harmonious and prosperous society (Sutrisno, 2017).

Pancasila nationalism and contemporary PERSIS nationalism hold interesting relevance and exhibit relationships, despite their differing approaches and focuses. Philosophical and Ideological Basis of Pancasila Nationalism: Pancasila serves as the foundation of the Indonesian state, emphasizing five key principles: belief in the One Almighty God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the wisdom of deliberation and representation, and social justice for all Indonesian people. Pancasila integrates religious, humanitarian, and democratic values. Contemporary PERSIS Nationalism: Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) emphasizes Islamic principles in all aspects of life, including nationalism. This form of nationalism focuses on applying Islamic values within the context of national identity and society, striving to integrate Islamic teachings with everyday life. Integration of Religion and Nationality in Pancasila Nationalism: While Pancasila acknowledges the principle of belief in the One Almighty God, it adopts a pluralistic and inclusive approach that respects Indonesia's diverse religions and beliefs. Pancasila nationalism seeks to balance national identity with religious plurality. Contemporary PERSIS Nationalism: this movement places a greater emphasis on intertwining Islamic teachings with national life. PERSIS nationalism aims to connect national identity with Islamic principles, which may result in a stronger focus on Islamic values in social and political spheres.

Social justice and prosperity Pancasila nationalism: Focuses on achieving social justice and the welfare of all Indonesian people. Pancasila encourages the government to work towards economic and social equality. PERSIS contemporary nationalism: Shares the same concern for social justice and prosperity, but perhaps with a more focused approach on Islamic values and principles. PERSIS emphasizes that social welfare must be in line with Islamic teachings.

Unity and integrity Pancasila nationalism: Provides a foundation for promoting the unity and integrity of the diverse Indonesian nation. The principle of Indonesian unity in Pancasila encourages harmony between ethnic, cultural, and religious groups. PERSIS contemporary nationalism: Also supports unity, but with an emphasis on how Islamic values can support and strengthen social cohesion. PERSIS nationalism sees unity as part of the application of Islamic teachings in everyday life.

Acceptance of diversity Pancasila nationalism: Recognizes and accepts diversity as part of Indonesia's national identity. This is reflected in the Pancasila principles that support tolerance and harmony. Contemporary nationalism PERSIS: May have a more selective view of diversity, focusing on how diversity can be accepted and managed within the framework of Islamic teachings. However, PERSIS still supports harmony within the context of Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

PERSIS has demonstrated a consistent commitment to its identity and ideology, as seen in its decision-making, although these choices are not as extreme as those made during its early years. The connection between Pancasila nationalism and PERSIS's contemporary nationalism lies in their shared goal of creating a just and prosperous society. While Pancasila nationalism emphasizes inclusivity and pluralism within the diverse context of Indonesia, PERSIS nationalism aims to align Islamic principles with national life. Both perspectives are dedicated to social justice and unity, though they adopt different approaches to integrating religious values with national ideology.

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