
Contemporary Islamic Renewal in Indonesia*

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Abstrak

Pembaharuan Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia

Artikel ini memfokuskan perhatiannya pada kajian tentang kebangkitan kembali dan reinvigorasi Islam dalam kehidupan sosial dan politik di Indonesia. Sebelum membahas masalah tersebut, Azyumardi Azra mengemukakan serangkaian kebijakan Pemerintah yang 'keras' terhadap umat Islam sehingga menyebabkan terjadinya ketegangan dan konflik antara pihak yang pertama dengan pihak yang kedua. Di bidang politik, kebijakan-kebijakan Pemerintah yang sangat ketat dan keras berkaitan dengan penolakannya terhadap rehabilitasi partai Masyumi, pembersihan terhadap mereka yang diasosiasikan sebagai penganut politik gerakan Darul Islam / Tentara Islam Indonesia, penumpasan gerakan 'Komando Jihad', dan penangkapan terhadap para penentang kebijakan asas tunggal Pancasila. Kebijakan Pemerintah ini terkesan seolah-olah telah terjadi proses 'depolitisasi' Islam di Indonesia.

Di bidang kehidupan sosial keagamaan, Pemerintah juga mengambil sikap ketat dan kebijakan keras yang serupa terhadap umat Islam. Hal ini, misalnya, dapat dilihat dari kebijakan Pemerintah ketika mengajukan RUUP (Rancangan Undang-undang Perkawinan) ke DPR pada tahun 1973, yang dipandang oleh umat Islam sebagai muatan sekuler karena tidak mengindahkan nilai-nilai perkawinan yang Islami. Kebijakan lain yang diambil Pemerintah adalah mengakui secara resmi dan memasukkan aliran kepercayaan ke dalam GBHN, yang ditanggapi oleh kalangan Islam sebagai telah menempatkan aliran kepercayaan itu setingkat dengan agama.

Secara pelan tetapi pasti, keadaan tersebut di atas mulai berubah pada

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akhir tahun 1980-an menyusul penerimaan kebijakan asas tunggal oleh umat Islam. Menurut penulis, faktor-faktor internasional dan domestik telah ikut memberikan kontribusi terhadap terjadinya perubahan ini. Artikel ini lebih mengkonsentrasikan diri untuk menyoroti indikator-indikator internal bagi munculnya kembali 'Islam kultural' maupun 'Islam politik' ke pentas nasional. Indikator-indikator bagi bangkitnya kembali Islam kultural ini dapat disebut antara lain pembentukan Yayasan Amal Bhakti Muslim Pancasila, pengiriman da'i ke daerah-daerah transmigrasi, pembentukan Bank Mu' amalat, maraknya pembentukan kelompok-kelompok remaja masjid, merebaknya kajian-kajian Islam di berbagai kampus Perguruan Tinggi, meningkatnya jumlah umat Islam yang menunaikan haji dan berkembangnya aktivitas-aktivitas dakwah dan pengajian-pengajian baik di kalangan masyarakat umum maupun di kalangan para birokrat dan para eksekutif. Reinvigorasi Islam di bidang politik ditandai dengan pembentukan ICMI (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia) yang pendiriannya mendapat persetujuan dan restu dari Presiden Soeharto sendiri. Banyak tokoh-tokoh ICMI yang mendapatkan posisi-posisi penting dalam jabatan politik dan pemerintahan.

Indikator-indikator di atas, dalam pandangan penulis, merupakan tanda-tanda yang baik bagi kebangkitan kembali Islam di Tanah Air. Persoalan penting yang dihadapi umat Islam untuk menuju ke arah kebangkitan yang sebenarnya adalah bagaimana menghilangkan, paling tidak mengurangi, gap antara entusiasme agama dan praktik-praktik sosial pada dataran kehidupan nyata. Hal ini penting disadari oleh umat Islam, karena masih banyak praktik yang tidak Islami yang harus dihadapi dan ditanggulangi oleh mereka seperti korupsi, ketidakadilan, penyalahgunaan kekuasaan, dan etos serta disiplin kerja yang lemah. Oleh karena itu, menurut penulis, jika umat Islam benar-benar serius untuk membangkitkan kembali Islam dan umatnya, mereka harus membangun suatu korelasi yang lebih baik antara entusiasme agama mereka dengan kerja-kerja sosial pada dataran kehidupan nyata. Jika tidak, revivalisme Islam dalam arti yang sesungguhnya hanya akan merupakan suatu illusi.

ملخص

التجديد المعاصر في الإسلام بإندونيسيا

يتمحور هذا المقال على دراسة البعث الإسلامي وإعادة تشكيله في مجال الحياة الاجتماعية والسياسية بإندونيسيا. وقبل الخوض في هذا الأمر قدم الدكتور أزيومرضي عزرا عدة أمور تعتبر السياسة المشددة من الحكومة تجاه المسلمين، الأمر الذي أدى إلى حدوث توترات وصراعات بين الطرفين. ويتمثل موقف الحكومة في مجال السياسة المتسمة بالشدة والعنف في رفضها الصارم تجاه مسألة إعادة حياة حزب ماشومي (Masyumi)، والعمل على تصفية العناصر المشبوهة بتبنيها سياسة حركة دار الإسلام أو الجنود الإسلاميين الإندونيسيين، والقضاء على ما يسمى بحركة "قيادة الجهاد" (Komando Jihad) والإعتقالات الواسعة للخارجيين على سياسة "أساس بانجاسيلا الموحد". سياسة الحكومة هذه تعتبر وكأنها عملية في سبيل القضاء على السياسة الإسلامية بإندونيسيا.

وفي مجال الحياة الاجتماعية الدينية فإن الحكومة أيضا تقف منها موقفا صارما، وتتخذ لها سياسة مشددة تجاه المسلمين؛ وعلى سبيل المثال لا الحصر - موقف الحكومة من مشروع قانون الزواج الذي تقدمت به إلى مجلس التمثيل الشعبي عام ١٩٧٣ م. حيث اعتبر ذلك المسلمون قانونا ذا صفة علمانية لا تعبير

للقيم الإسلامية بحق الزواج وزنا. وهناك موقف آخر للحكومة كان له وقع أليم في قلوب المسلمين هو اعترافها القانوني لطائفة تيار الاعتقاديين (Aliran Kepercayaan) وإدراجها في الخطوط العريضة للدولة. وكان ردود فعل من المسلمين تجاه هذا الموقف أنهم يعتبرون الحكومة تضع هذا التيار الإعتقادي في مستوى هو أشبه بالدين.

وبعد المضي من الزمان بدأت الحال تتغير، وذلك في أواخر الثمانينات وبعد قبول المسلمين تبني "سياسة بانجا سيلا الموحد". وعند أزيومرضى أن هناك عوامل خارجية وداخلية ساهمت في حدوث هذا التغير، وقد ركز ملاحظاته على الدلالات الداخلية على عودة بروز "الإسلام الحضارة" و"الإسلام السياسة" على مسرح حياة الوطن. من الدلالات التي تنبئ بعودة البعث الإسلامي الحضاري - على سبيل المثال - تكوين مؤسسة بانجا سيلا لعمل المسلمين وخدمتهم، وإيقاد الدعوة إلى الله إلى مناطق التهجير، وإنشاء بنك المعاملات، وإنشاء مجموعات شباب المسجد، وانتشار مجموعات لدراسة الإسلام في معظم الجامعات، وازدياد عدد الحجاج الإندونيسيين لأداء فريضة الحج، وازدهار أنشطة الدعوة ومجالس التعليم بين العامة وأصحاب الوظائف والمراتب عسكريين ومدنيين. أما من ناحية التشكيل الإسلامي في مجال السياسة فيتمثل ذلك في إنشاء رابطة المثقفين المسلمين الإندونيسيين (ICMI)، حيث تم إنشاؤها بموافقة ومباركة فخامة الرئيس سوهارتو. وهناك عدد من رجال هذه الرابطة حازوا على مكانة حساسة في الدولة، ووظائف حكومية مرموقة.

هذه الدلالات - عند أزيومرضى - كانت عبارة عن مظاهر إيجابية للبعث الإسلامي في هذا الوطن العزيز. إن القضية الهامة التي تواجه المسلمين نحو استيعاد البعث الإسلامي الحقيقي هي إيجاد وسيلة للقضاء على الهوة السحيقة التي تفصل بين تلك العاطفة الدينية الجياشة في قلوب المسلمين وبين صالحات الأعمال في الحياة الاجتماعية الملموسة التي لابد أن يمارسوها. وهذا الأمر له دلالة الواضحة يجب على المسلمين أن يقدروه حق قدره؛ فهناك ممارسة من المسلمين لا تكون على منهج الإسلام السليم، مثل الإختلاس، والظلم، وسوء استخدام السلطة، والضعف في التنظيم والنظام، وفقدان الثقة بالعمل والحب له.

ولذا - كما يرى أزيومرضى - لا بد للمسلمين إذا رغبوا رغبة أكيدة في استيعاد مجد الإسلام والمسلمين أن يقوموا بعملية همزة وصل بين العاطفة الدينية والحماسة الروحية وبين ممارستهم في الأعمال حتى لا يظهر التناقض بين معايشة الدين والممارسة اليومية، في الحياة الاجتماعية الملموسة. وإذا فقد هذا الشرط فانتظارنا للبعث الإسلامي من جديد أمر مستحيل، اللهم إلا إذا شاب الغراب.

"Silent spring in Indonesia" reads the cover caption of *Impact International*¹, reporting the rise of Islam in Indonesia in contemporary years. Inside, the Islamic magazine, published in London, which is usually critical of Indonesia, gives a lengthy report under the title "Silent Spring: Javanese Style". The report begins with a strong statement runs like this:

"After almost three decades of tension and conflict between Muslims and the New Order regime of President Suharto, Indonesia appears to be going through a quiet revolution — a Javanese style! Opinions differ whether the changes that have come are good enough or even whether they represent a genuine desire to change, but there is little controversy that the political climate of Indonesia has perceptibly changed"

Then *Impact International* goes on to give some favorable opinions of prominent Indonesian Muslim leaders; many of them used to be the most outspoken critics of the Indonesian government such as Professor Anwar Harjono, now heads the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia (DDII, Indonesian Islamic Preaching Council), and A.M. Fatwa who was paroled early this year after several years of imprisonment for his involvement in "preaching subversion and plotting a campaign of mental terror against government officials".

Conflict and Tension

There is little doubt that Harjono and Fatwa represent the completion of *rapprochement* between Muslim groups and the Indonesian government. Before then, as stated in the quotation above, there were tension and conflict between the government and many Muslim groups.

Any discussion of contemporary Islamic renewal in Indonesia should include discussion of some political developments in Indonesia during the New Order government under President Soeharto. As one might know Soeharto came to power in the aftermath of the abortive coup d'etat of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) on 30 September 1965. Despite Muslims' preeminent role in mass actions against the communists, Muslims later felt that they were abandoned and even marginalized. As a result, tension and conflict between Muslims and the government began to grow. More specifically, there were several major factors which contributed to tension and conflict between these two sides.

In the political field, Muslim groups felt that some policies of the New Order government were apparently intended to uproot the influence of Islam from Indonesian politics. In other words, Muslim believed that the govern-

ment deliberately attempted to “depoliticize” Islam.

First of all, the New Order government showed its marked disapproval of the Muslim attempts during the period of 1966-68 to rehabilitate the Masjumi, a leading Islamic party which had been outlawed by the Soekarno regime. Not only that, the government also disapproved any attempt to establish a new Islamic political party. Tension exacerbated when, in 1971, the government coopted older Islamic political parties by way of their fusion into the United Development Party (PPP), and imposition of its leadership. The fusion proved only to be the beginning of the long and bitter struggles among various factions in the PPP itself, that it was unable to function as smoothly as expected. On top of this, in 1985 the government enacted a law which required all social and political organizations to adopt the state ideology Pancasila as the sole foundation of their organizations. This means that Islamic organizations had to erase the word “Islam” from their statutes. All of these policies unavoidably created strong impression among Muslims that what the government had been doing was simply to “depoliticize” Islam from Indonesian political life.

The tension ran higher when the government continued to launch political purge and surveillance on Muslims who used to be proponents of the Dār al-Islām and Indonesian Islamic Army (DI/TII) movements. This was followed by a series of military suppression of “Islamic extremists” whom had been claimed by the military to be the members of the “Komando Jihad” (Jihad Command) which allegedly plotted to overthrow the government. Several incidents, strongly colored by this background, took place between 1982 to 1985 in Bandung, Tanjung Priok, Glodok (Jakarta), Tasikmalaya, Borobudur, Aceh, and Lampung.

In more purely religious realm, the introduction of the National Marriage Bill (1972-1973) by the government soon created furor and anger among Muslims. For Muslims, most stipulations of the Bill contradicted the shari’ah (Islamic law). This was soon regarded by Muslims as a stark attempt to remove the influence of shari’ah from Indonesian legal system. As a result, groups of Muslim youth staged protests and demonstration right at the front of the parliament building. Finally, the Bill was accepted only in 1974 after significant substantive revision.²

Later, in 1978, controversy was again on air when the government officially recognized the Javanese “*aliran kebatinan*” or “*aliran kepercayaan*” as a legitimate cultural spiritual tradition. With the recognition, the *aliran*

kepercayaan deserved government's treatment as distinct groups that were different from any other religious groups. The government, however, fell short of recognizing the *aliran kepercayaan* as a religion. Despite that, for many Muslims, viewing the *aliran kepercayaan* as some kind of deviation from Islam, the recognition simply meant that the realm of influence of Islam had been reduced significantly.

Furthermore, many Muslims believed that all these policies were only a portion of a much larger plot to destroy Islam in Indonesia. Vatikiotis has confirmed this by pointing out, for instance, that there is evidence that the radical Islamic movements (such as the DI/TII) may have intisgated in the 1970s and 1980s by the state for the purpose of cementing political support. It is believed, for example, Ali Murtopo [a leading New Order mastermind] brought together former leaders of the West Javabased Dār al-Islām revolt, which had been crushed by the army in the 1960s. He actually asked them to reactivate the movement. The real reason behind this was Murtopo's desire to discredit Islamic political forces. In the next two years, hundreds of people were arrested and accused of belonging to an extremist group known as "Komando Jihad" ³. It is through such engineering that Islam and Muslims were discredited and cornered to seemingly political abyss.

Against this background, it is hard for one to imagine especially in the first half of the 1980s, that there would be a Islamic revival in contemporary Indonesia. Beyond anyone expectation, however, Islam Indonesia by the end of the 1980s began to show some convincing signs of revival. I have argued elsewhere that this Islamic revival is due to some changes at both domestic and international levels ⁴. But for the purpose of this paper, I will confine myself to some discussion on domestic changers only.

Turning Point for Reinvigoration

The fact that reinvigoration of Islam is now taking place in Indonesia has been the subject of discussion among both Indonesian and foreign scholars. Regardless of the level of that reinvigoration, they generally admit that Islam is coming back with new vigor. Reflecting on tension and conflict between Muslims and the government, Schwarz, for instance, devotes a long chapter of his book, entitled "Islam: Coming in from the Cold?" According to Schwarz, by the late 1980s, a revival of Islamic consciousness was underway in Indonesia. ⁵

The turning point of Islamic reinvigoration, it seems, was the acceptance

of Pancasila by Muslim mass organizations as the sole ideological foundation of their socio-political activities. It proved to have ended the relatively long mutual suspicion, tension, and conflict between the Muslim *ummah* in general on the one hand and the government on the other. As a result, the subsequent developments of Islamic life run more smoothly. The Muslim activities to develop and improve various aspects of Islamic life are no longer seen by the government as a threat to the state ideology and political stability.

Before providing a detailed discussion on some signs of Islamic reinvigoration in Indonesia, it is good to quote a list issued by the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), which indicates the changes of government attitude towards Islam. The list, published in the official magazine of the MUI, *Mimbar Ulama*,⁶ enumerates nineteen items of government's most significant contribution to improving Islamic life and Muslim community. 1). Law No. 2, 1989 on National Education which stipulates religious education, and guarantees the existence of Islamic educational institutions; 2). Law No. 7, 1989, on the Islamic Religious Court; 3). Presidential Instruction No. 1, 1991, on the compilation of Islamic jurisprudence; 4). Reconstruction of some 400 mosques by the Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila chaired by President Soeharto; 5). Dispatching of 1.000 Muslim preachers to remote regions of transmigration, financed by a Foundation headed by President Soeharto; 6). Construction and extension of a number of transit complexes for Indonesian haj pilgrims; 7). Construction of four haj hospitals in memory of the Indonesian victims of the 1990 tragedy in Mina, Arab Saudi; 8). Intensive training program for the *madrasah aliyah*; 9). Upgrading of the IAIN staff through postgraduate programs including overseas studies; 10). Arabic instruction program through the national television, TVRI; 11). President Instruction No. 2, 1991 on the regulation of *halal* food for Muslim; 12). Promotion of *waqf* land certification; 13). Conferences and meetings of Ministers of Religious Affairs of Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia on common Islamic calendar, etc.; 14). Full support for the Istiqlal Festival; 15). Promotion of Qur'an reading and writing movement; 16). Formation of the ICMI; 17) Establishment of Bank Muamalat (Islamic Bank); 18). Establishment of and aid to mosque libraries throughout the country; 19). Assistance to the construction and improvement of the *pesantren*.⁷

This list, clearly shows that a new course of Islam has emerged by the late 1980s. Muslim leaders from that time onwards have been and are willing to establish a sort of symbiotic relationship with the ruling élite which has

shown its favor to Islam and Muslim society. The object of this strategy is principally to further the national development of the country as well as to provide Islam with a sense of legitimacy and respectability. It is expected that, by charting this kind of course, development and improvement of Islamic life can be carried out in a more systematic way. Moreover, with this new course, the image of Islam is also changing. As Nakamura points out, Islam has become (and is becoming) something beautiful, respectable, modern relevant, fashionable, and even entertaining. Islam was [and is] rediscovered as something to be proud.⁸

It must be admitted that the new course of Islam mentioned above is more cultural than political. It is apparent that tension and conflict in the past originated mostly from government's suspicion of political Islam. In this respect it is important to note that, despite government's hostility of Muslim politics, the government provides ample room for the growth of a more cultural and spiritual expression of Islam. Though all this is not without political implications, especially since 1990s when many observers begin to talk about the return of "political Islam" to Indonesian politics. Therefore, one should be very careful not to attribute the reinvigoration of Islam in Indonesia to a single factor like politics. There are some other major factors working in Indonesian society as a whole which in one way or another dictate the course of Islam towards reinvigoration and renewal.

One of the major factors that contributes significantly to Islamic cultural reinvigoration is place the government accorded to religion. Run contrary to the assertion of many Western observers that Indonesia is a "secular" state, the Indonesian government has always emphasized that religion plays an important role in national life and development. It is formally stated in various guidelines and regulations of the national development that the ultimate aim of Indonesian development is the creation of a just, prosperous, and religious society; a society which enjoys not only material progress, but also spiritual well-being. Thus, in the Indonesian life and national development, religion is assigned a prominent role. Being the vast majority of the Indonesian population, it is the Muslims who would undoubtedly reap most benefit from such a perspective.

In the field of education, religious instruction is compulsory from elementary schools to university. Again, because majority of Indonesian students are Muslim, religious instruction are mainly on Islam. Furthermore, Muslims have their own privileges in the educational field by having a dis-

tinctive Islamic educational institutions from the elementary level to the higher one. This privilege is recognized officially in the recently enacted National Education Law of 1989. This law is considered by Muslims not only as a recognition of the importance of Islamic education, but also as a corner stone for the reinvigoration of Islam in Indonesia by way of education.

As far as Islamic education is concerned, in addition to public schools (*sekolah negeri*) — which are administered by the Department of Education and Culture, there is a significant number of Islamic schools (*madrasah*) managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Throughout Indonesia there are now over 21,000 Islamic religious elementary schools, more popularly called “*madrasah ibtida’iyah*”; around 4,500 Islamic religious junior high schools, or *madrasah tsanawiyah*; and over 1,300 Islamic religious senior high schools, or *madrasah ‘aliyah*. Total enrolment of all these *madrasahs* is more than 8 million pupils and students. At the level of higher education, side by side with the 42 state public universities, there are now 14 state Islamic universities throughout Indonesia. Each of the IAIN, under the aegis of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, usually consists of has five faculties: Ushuluddin (“Theology”), Syari’ah (Islamic Law), Tarbiyah (Islamic Education), Adab (Islamic History and Arabic Literature), and Dakwah (Islamic Propagation).”

Islamic education managed by private sectors is also improving significantly. The *pesantrens* (Islamic boarding traditional educational institutions), which in the past were mainly located in rural areas of Java, are gaining popularity; they are now spreading throughout the country. Many of the new *pesantrens* are established in urban areas, like Jakarta. The content of the *pesantren* education has also been improved with the inclusion of modern sciences, and technological knowhow. Many of the *pesantrens* provide private public schools, and *madrasah* at various level. Not least important, more and more *pesantren* complexes have modern, big, and beautiful buildings. Thus, *pesantrens* are no longer associated with rural culture and backwardness. They are becoming a symbol of pride among Muslims.

Meanwhile, Indonesia has also improved the position of Islamic legal institutions. The Shari’ah Court (*peradilan agama*), which has a long history in Indonesia, is now on the equal status with the other three courts: public court, administrative court, and military court. This is enacted in the Islamic Court Law of No. 7, 1989. Furthermore, in the framework of the reconstruction of the national legal system, the Supreme Court and Department of Religious Affairs recently completed a joint project on the codification of the Is-

lamic jurisprudence, with the objective of publishing law books and manual for the Shari'ah judges.

The improved economic conditions of the Muslims has allowed them to build many Islamic-related buildings; mosques, madrasah, and pesantrens. Thousands of new mosques have been and are being built every where; most with the initiative and financial resources of the Muslim society itself. The rest are built financial aid coming from the government. President Soeharto himself is the chairman of the Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila which has built hundreds of new mosques in various places in Indonesia. Most of these new mosques are built using modern technology and architecture. Despite their significant increase, these mosques apparently can not accommodate the enthusiast Muslims, especially during the Friday congregational prayers. For that reason many government offices and hotels considered it necessary to hold the Friday prayers at their own places.

According to some rough estimation, young people comprising up to 85 per cent of attendance in many mosques in some places. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are now blooming associations of "Remaja Masjid" (Mosque Youth) throughout the country. A wide range of social and religious activities are carried out by these associations, from sports and martial arts to music, academic, and religious discussions. Most of the members of these youth associations are recruited from among senior high school and university students, but many younger and older people also join them. These associations of Mosque Youths held their first national convention in March 1980 in which their reformulated programs emphasized the importance of the fifteenth century of the Hijrah as the Revival Century of Islam.

Further indications of Islamic resurgence in Indonesia are also evident on university campuses. Particularly during the fasting month of Ramadan, many campuses are full with major religious activities, as if there were converted to Islamic centers. Such programs as the "Ramadan on Campus" —as students call it— has become increasingly popular among university students. The program of the Ramadan on Campus includes such socio-cultural and religious activities, unconventional for many Muslims, as poetry readings, dramas, and even musical shows, besides of course, the traditional *tarawih* (Ramadan nightly prayers), *tadarrus* (Qur'anic studies), and religious lectures and discussions.

Most Indonesian university campuses now have their own monques. The most prominent among them is the Salman Mosque on the campus of the

Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB, or Bandung Institute of Technology), one of the most prestigious centers of higher learning in Indonesia. The Salman Mosque has in many ways been a prototype of the university mosques elsewhere in Indonesia. It plays a leading role in transforming mosques from merely places for worship into multipurpose centers for the Muslim religious, social and cultural activities. As Hefner observes, Salman-inspired religious activities became a prominent feature of campus life at every major university during the 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁰

Again with regard to Islamic reinvigoration in Indonesia, it is necessary to mention the continued increase of the number of Indonesian haj pilgrims to Mecca. In the last several years more and more Indonesian Muslims made their pilgrimage. Since 1993 the total number of Indonesian pilgrims are the largest among all Muslim countries excepting Saudi Arabia. In the last haj season (1996), almost 200.000 Indonesian pilgrims made their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It is important to note that President Soeharto himself and his family made their pilgrimage in 1991. Since then more and more government high officials followed the suit; and each year the leader of Indonesian haj contingent (*amir al-haj*) was a minister of the cabinet; the Indonesian *amir al-haj* for the 1996 haj season was the Army Commander, General Faisal Tanjung.

Last but not least, another significant development also took place. In December 1990, a new important Islamic organization was formed: it is the Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia (ICMI, or All-Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association) which is chaired by Minister of Research and Technology, Professor B.J. Habibie. The formation of the ICMI was undoubtedly blessed by President Soeharto himself. Without Soeharto's blessing it is unimaginable that the formation of the ICMI was so smooth. Furthermore, with his blessing, the ICMI is able to include among its leadership long serving cabinet ministers, independent intellectuals, and even critical non-governmental Muslim leaders. The ICMI has been set up as a sounding board for Muslim input into public policy, rather than as a mass-based political vehicle. To help formulate and voice Muslim views, the ICMI launched its own newspaper, *Republika*, and its own think-tank, the Center for Information and Development Studies (CIDES). The ICMI is also instrumental in the founding of the Bank Mu'amalat (Islamic Bank) which recently also includes the *Takaful* Islamic Insurance, and the Bank Perkreditan Rakyat (BPR, People's Credit Banks) which now have spread throughout the country.

The ICMI plays an important role in the establishment of various new institutions, but supposedly also in the appointments of several ICMI top leaders into high offices such as ministries in the latest Indonesian cabinet or governorship at the provincial level. Considering this, it would be a mistake, therefore, to view ICMI in religious terms only. It is right that at one level, the ICMI can be seen as a natural product of the process of Islamic revivalism, but a number of political objectives are also being served by the organization. In the final analysis, the rise of ICMI has been seen by some observers as the "return" of political Islam into Indonesian politics.¹¹

Despite some ongoing discussion on whether or not the ICMI represents the return of political Islam in Indonesia, its rise has also been seen by many observers as a consequence of the growing consolidation and power of Indonesian Muslim middle class. Both Hefner and Nakamura have convincingly shown us that it is the New Order government which is mainly responsible for bringing this Muslim middle class into existence. Nakamura is more explicit in delineating this new class as Santri middle class.¹² The term "santri" refers of course to strict Muslim as opposed to *abangan*, nominal Muslim.

One of main factors of the rise of santri middle class is the expansion of higher education which in turn creates what some observers call "Muslim intellectual boom". And a small portion of this new rising Muslim intellectuals got their higher education abroad. Many of this santri middle class then occupy important position in social, political, and economic lives. As Vatikiotis concludes, rapid urbanization and access to education have swollen the number of practising Muslims who now belong to the country upwardly mobile, indigenous middle class. They brought Islamic religious belief into bureaucratic and business circles close to the ruling elite.¹³ Moreover, this santri middle class in turn contributes not only to the finance of various Islamic activities, but also to the growth of a new image of Islam as mentioned above. They, for instance, hold Islamic activities in prestigious hotels; establish discussion groups, like the Yayasan Paramadina; go to pilgrimage on the so-called ONH-plus which includes accommodation in five-star hotels in Mecca and Medina; send their children to socially prestigious Islamic schools, such as the Azhar schools in Jakarta.

Significant changes have also taken place in the field of *dakwah*, Islamic preaching. In the past, the government was very sensitive to *dakwah* for many Muslim preachers had made use the *dakwah* activities as good oppor-

tunities to bitterly criticize government. Thus, in the government point of view, the *dakwah* activities had been too political. Therefore, the government imposed some restrictions of the freedom of speech which was expressed through *dakwah* activities. For instance, *dakwah* in the form *pengajian umum* (public religious meetings) required permit from police; otherwise this could lead to arrest of those mainly responsible for the *pengajian umum* under question.

Now, permits are no longer necessary for *dakwah* activities. There is now freer circulation of preachers in the whole country. This freedom of *dakwah* has been a key factor of Muslims' satisfaction, for its also reflects that the *dakwah* has gained a new legitimacy and respectability. This legitimacy and respectability, furthermore, are conferred by the presence of government officials at the *pengajian umum*, or by the use of government's buildings for *pengajian umum* purposes.¹⁴

Because of these new legitimacy and respectability, the *pengajian umum* audience has widened considerably. Its audience now is not limited to common peoples, but also includes civil servants who used to be reluctant to attend such religious meetings. Before long, the *pengajian umum* has proliferated throughout the country. And new rising stars among preachers now are K.H. Zainuddin MZ, an IAIN graduate; K.H. Qasim Nurseha, a religious teacher of President Soeharto's family; and Tuty Alawiyah, chief of the As-Syafi'iyah Pesantren in Jakarta. Zainuddin MZ draws crowds of thousands to large stadiums and, therefore, is dubbed by many as the "Kiyai Sejuta Ummat" (preacher of one million *ummah*).

The *dakwah* activities is now also expanding in television. Each of the six television channels has program of Islamic morning forum. During the last Ramadan, these six television channels were full of Islamic programs ranging from simple lectures and discussions to poetry reading and musical shows with Islamic themes. It appears that such programs command a wide audience.

As far as the *dakwah* movement is concerned, a prominent role is apparently remains to be played by large and established organizations such as the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdhatul Ulama. Both of these organizations, in addition to social-education programs, make *dakwah* as an important priority. Owing to their nationwide existence, those two organizations are able to carry out *dakwah* activities both in the urban and rural areas.

Conclusion

As has been indicated above, a major factor of Islamic reinvigoration is economic development. As Schwarz rightly points out the New Order government began on the edge of an economic abyss. Export revenues were stagnant or sliding; investment had trickled almost to a stop; factories are operating at a fraction of capacity and with outdated equipment; inflation had topped 1000 percent a year; infrastructure was crumbling; and the government was running a massive budget deficit. In less than three decades, by most measures, Indonesia's economy has performed well since Soeharto took power. From 1965 to 1988, macro economic growth plus a successful family planning program combined to raise Indonesia's per capita gross national product by 4,3 per cent a year. This is a better performance than most of Indonesia's neighbors in Southeast Asia and almost oil exporting economy. That is why Schwarz and some other observers begin to call Indonesia as "the emerging tiger".¹⁵ Better economic performance has resulted in the poverty alleviation which stands as one of the most important achievements of the New Order. In 1970 almost 60 per cent of Indonesian were living below the poverty line. By 1990, the figure had dropped to 15 per cent. According to World Bank report 1990, Indonesia had the highest annual reduction in the incidence of poverty among all countries studied.¹⁶

There is no doubt that this annual reduction of poverty takes place mostly among Muslims who constitute the largest single majority in Indonesia. Considering our discussion above, it is clear that Muslims' economic improvement has positively contributed to the increase of Muslims' attachment to Islam. Therefore, a crucial question now is how to maintain the economic growth of Indonesia. Once Indonesia loses the momentum of economic development. One might expect that it would leave some negative effects on the revival of Islamic life.

Another important issue that should be dealt with by Indonesian Muslim leaders and activist towards the real Islamic revival in Indonesia is how to eliminate or at least to reduce, the gap between Muslim religious enthusiasm and their actual social practices. I have shown above that there is a good number of the signs of Islamic resurgence, but at the same time un-Islamic practices are still widespread; the most obvious ones are; rampant corruption, injustices, power abuse, weak social ethics and discipline.

Therefore, if Indonesian Muslims are serious about the revival of Islam in Indonesia they should really establish a better correlation between their

religious enthusiasm and their actual social practices. Otherwise, the real Islamic revival is only an illusion. ●

End Notes:

- 1) *Impact International*, 1995, Vol.25, No.12, December 1995.
- 2) Azyumardi Azra, "The Indonesian Marriage Law of 1974 : An Institutionalization of the *Syari'a* for Social Changes", *Istiqra*, No.6, Vol.6, pp. 24-38.
- 3) Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics under Subarto*. New & Updated, London & New York, Routledge, 1994, pp. 128-29.
- 4) Azyumardi Azra, "Globalization of Indonesian Muslim Discourse : Contemporary Religio-Intellectual Connections between Indonesia and the Middle East", paper presented at the International Conference on Islam and the Twenty-first Century, Leiden University, The Netherlands, 1996.
- 5) Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting : Indonesia in the 1990s*. Boulder, Westview Press, 1994, pp. 162-193.
- 6) No. 173, June 1992, pp. 34-42.
- 7) Cited in Mitsuo Nakamura, "The Emergence of an Islamizing Middle Class and the Dialectics of Political Islam in the New Order Indonesia : Prelude to the Formation of the ICMI", paper presented at the Conference on "Islam and Social Construction of Identities : Comparative Perspectives on Southeast Asian Muslims". Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Hawaii, 1993, pp. 27-28.
- 8) *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 9) Munawir Sjadzali, "Keynote Adress to the International Seminar on New Trends in Islamic Studies", in his *Kiprah Pembangunan Agama menuju Tingkat Landas*, Jakarta, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1986, pp. 189-194.
- 10) Robert W. Hefner, "Islam, State, and Civil Society : ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class", paper presented for the Conference on "Islam and the Social Construction of Identities : Comparative Perspectives on Southeast Asian Muslims". Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Hawaii, 1993, p. 13.
- 11) Cf. M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia : Sebuah Kajian Politik tentang Cendekiawan Muslim Orde Baru*, Jakarta, Paramadina, 1995; Robert W. Hefner, *loc. cit.*, and Mitsuo Nakamura, *loc. cit.*
- 12) Mitsuo Nakamura, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.
- 13) Michael R.J. Vatikionis, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
- 14) *Ibid.*; Andre Feillard, "Traditionalist Islam and the State in Indonesia : Flexibility, Legitimacy, and Renewal", paper presented at the Conference on "Islam and the Social Reconstruction of Identities : Comparative Perspectives on Southeast Asian Muslims", Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the University of Hawaii, 1993, pp. 34-35.
- 15) Adam Schwarz, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-59, cf. John Bresnan, *Managing Indonesia : The Modern Political Economy*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.
- 16) World Bank, *World Bank Development Report*, 1990, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 45.

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