

## **The Existence of Islamic Politics Against Heterodox of Islamic Movements in Indonesia: Post-Independence Rifa'iyah Sect**

**Amalina Zukhrufatul Bahriyah<sup>1</sup>, Moh. Mujibur Rohman<sup>2</sup>, M. Ridho Ilahi<sup>3</sup>, Ahmad Mahrus<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Izzul Aulia<sup>5</sup>, Muhammad Syarif Hidayatullah Akbar<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>1,5</sup> UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, <sup>2</sup>Institut Agama Islam Miftahul Ulum Pamekasan, <sup>3</sup>Universitas Indonesia Depok, <sup>4</sup>UIN KH. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan <sup>6</sup>Universitas Jayabaya  
Correspondence: [amzb2000@gmail.com](mailto:amzb2000@gmail.com),

**Abstract.** This research explains the relationship between politics and Islamic movements which influence each other with their respective roles in society. Political discussions include power, ideology, legitimacy, government, state, nation and others. The political consequences have had a huge impact on the orthodoxy and heterodoxy of the Islamic movement in Indonesia. This study focuses on the Rifa'iyah case in the 20th century AD. The Rifa'iyah group is heterodox because it is considered to deviate from Islamic teachings in general. This causes heterodox groups to experience discrimination and prohibitions from the Central Java Prosecutor's Decree. The uniqueness of Rifa'iyah's living pattern is in groups and in rural areas. This minority group received political asylum and blended into society until their struggle succeeded in revoking the prohibition decree. Especially the emergence of reform which has become the political aspirations of the Islamic community. This research is a qualitative type using a social-historical approach. The data collection method is library research, while the data analysis method is descriptive analysis. The research results show that politics has a role as accommodative, hegemonic and power. Rifa'iyah's strategy is to adjust its political role to regain its legality by collaborating with political parties, studying academically by holding seminars, and taking advantage of the reform period. The existence of politics can dissolve or maintain heterodox.

**Keywords:** Politics; Orthodox-Heterodox; Islamic Movement; Rifa'iyah.

## Introduction

The 20th century AD occurred a revolution for political ideology.<sup>1</sup> In this century, it is known as traditional political theory which has 3 characteristics, including: political philosophy, changing political philosophy into ideology and emphasis on intuition or law.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle stated that politics is an effort made by society to gain power and maintain it.<sup>3</sup> Political theory experienced development starting in 1971. Starting from traditional theory to contemporary theory. There are three newest theories, namely neo-Kantian liberal, libertarianism, and communitarian.<sup>4</sup> The main concepts of politics according to Miriam Budiarjo are the state, power, decision making, policy, division.<sup>5</sup>

The phenomenon of debate between Islamic thought from the time of the Prophet until now still occurs. This debate sparked a prolonged conflict that involved power. The local socio-cultural order is the main factor in this conflict. Islam has presented various thoughts that cause conflict. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy emerged because of this conflict. Usually orthodoxy is understood as a school that the majority follows or a teaching that the authorities follow. Meanwhile, heterodoxy can be understood as a deviation from formal teachings.<sup>6</sup> Elements in politics really influence each other, such as politicians, bureaucracy, power, decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Kelly et al., *The politics book* (New York: DK Publishing, 2013). 15

<sup>2</sup> Leela Ram Gurjar, "Trends of contemporary political theory," *Indian Political Science Association* 68, no. 4 (2007), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41856380>. 827

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Tokan Pureklolon, *Globalisasi politik (politik modern menuju negara kesejahteraan)* (Yogyakarta: PT Kanisius, 2021). 34

<sup>4</sup> Gurjar, "Trends of contemporary political theory." 830-831

<sup>5</sup> Yudi Rusfiana dan Ismail Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*, ed. oleh Sunjay (Bandung: Alfabeta Bandung, 2017). 3

<sup>6</sup> Iswahyudi, "Pengaruh filsafat terhadap Heterodoksi Teologi Islam," *Al-Tahrir* 17, no. 1 (2017). 3

factor in this conflict. Islam has presented various thoughts that cause conflict. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy emerged because of this conflict. Usually orthodoxy is understood as a school that the majority follows or a teaching that the authorities follow. Meanwhile, heterodoxy can be understood as a deviation from official teachings. Elements in politics really influence each other, such as politicians, bureaucracy, power, decisions.

Orthodoxy is an ideology accepted by most clerics and sometimes by government circles. Ideas like these determine whether something is heretical or not. Movement history is sometimes accompanied by a sense of rivalry and threat. They declared themselves to be “the true” while labeling others as heretics. This state of mysticism is common and can be found in almost all religious systems. Based on other contexts, *ahlu al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah* is considered mainstream or orthodoxy. So those who deviate from this orthodoxy are heretics. Because traditionalist Islam consistently emphasizes that its adherents are members of the *ahlu al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah*, while modernist Islam was considered deviant and heretical when traditionalist and modernist Islam clashed at the beginning of the 20th century.<sup>7</sup> The conflict that occurred between orthodoxy and heterodoxy began to flare up with political elements. Nahdliyin residents used their authority to pressure Rifa'iyah. At that time, the MUI bureaucracy was controlled by NU, which sent a letter to the Central Java Prosecutor's Office and issued a prohibition decision. Power, state, policy, allocation and decision making are part of politics. If a group gains more followers or the government recognizes it as an official sect of the authorities, then that group may cease to be heretical and cease to be heterodox. However, Rifa'iyah cannot change this because they are a minority. So Rifa'iyah's strategy was to follow political currents. The role and function of politics greatly influences society and the state. Politics is accommodative, power and hegemony can ban the Rifa'iyah group or revoke the decree from the Central Java Prosecutor's Office.

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<sup>7</sup> Abu Rokhmad, *Islam dan Aliran Menyimpang* (Semarang: CV. Varos Mitra Utama, 2019). vii-viii

This type of research is qualitative. The approach to this research is historical-sociological. Where to find out the history of Rifa'iyah using history. Meanwhile, political influence uses sociology because it interacts with society. The data collection technique uses library research or can be called library research. The data used are history books, political books and other documents that are continuous with research. After collecting data, the method for analyzing the research uses descriptive analysis. The author explains his findings regarding political influence in the Islamic movement in the 20th century AD.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Political Concepts in Indonesia

Politics comes from the ancient Greek word "polis" meaning "city or country". This word then has derivatives such as: "polites" means "citizens or residents of a city or country", "politikos" means "state expert", "politeke techne" means "political skills", "politieke episteme" means "political science". Other countries also have their own languages, including: Roman (ars politica), English (political science, the science of politics, the science of the state), German (staatswissenschaft), French (les sciences politiques), Dutch (staatswetenschappen), Italian (Scienze politica), Arabic (siyasah) stratagem.<sup>8</sup> The General Indonesian Dictionary defines politics as all affairs and actions regarding the government, including tactics, deception, cunning that can determine state policy.<sup>9</sup> The center of the political concept according to Patrick Riley is the general will (Generality), which means the rule of law, civil education, and so on.<sup>10</sup> According to Georg Hegel, politics includes society, state, culture or political movements.<sup>11</sup> Merriem-Webster believes that politics is an activity, action, or policy of a

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<sup>8</sup> P. Anthonius Sitepu, *Studi Ilmu Politik* (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2012). 106

<sup>9</sup> Abdul Manan, *Perbandingan politik hukum islam dan barat* (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2018). 1

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Losco dan Leonard Williams, *Political theory kajian klasik dan kontemporer*, 2 ed. (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2005). 275

<sup>11</sup> Kelly et al., *The politics book*. 15

government to obtain and maintain power.<sup>12</sup> According to Ruth W. Grant, politics can be identified, among other things: First, a person will understand that an action requires a reason, so that person will choose how to act and decide. This reason is a factor in the occurrence of political phenomena. Political actors cannot be explained by themselves except by considering an event that influenced them. Second, political behavior is a manifestation of human freedom in expressing one's goals and intentions. Political practice is an art, not a technique, so each person will be different in expressing that art. This freedom really requires limitations such as the law of cause and effect. Thirdly, politics is democratic, namely accepting differences of opinion. Each party has a different point of view which results in political disputes.<sup>13</sup>

The political system is a framework that originates from political institutions which have distinctive characteristics in each period of leadership, especially in Indonesia, including:

a. *Orde Lama* Era (1945-1966)

The political system in the post-independence period established a basic constitution and formal legal bodies that carried out the political process within the political structure.<sup>14</sup> This period is characterized as liberal democracy with political parties dominating in determining state policy through its constitution. Old Order politics can be said to be authoritarian because Soekarno controlled more political power than the Army and PKI (Indonesian Communist Party). The president handles problems in constitutional institutions, limits parties, blocks press freedom, and makes laws and regulations.<sup>15</sup> In this era, the political system

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<sup>12</sup> Rusfiana dan Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*. 2

<sup>13</sup> Ruth W. Grant, "Political Theory, Political Science, and Politics," *Sage* 30, no. 4 (2022), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3072622>. h. 587

<sup>14</sup> Rusfiana dan Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*. 62

<sup>15</sup> Abdul Halim, *Politik hukum islam di Indonesia* (Ciputat: Ciputat Press, 2005). 109-110

experienced several changes, starting from presidential, parliamentary and guided democracy.

b. *Orde Baru* Era (1966-1998)

The New Order was characterized by mass depoliticization, socio-political institutionalization, state corporatism, and ideological hegemony over society.<sup>16</sup> This regime was in power the longest among the others, reaching 32 years. In the economic sector, progress can be seen, but the political system cannot achieve stability. The pattern of the political system did not side with the people so that a monetary crisis occurred which caused this government to collapse.<sup>17</sup>

c. Reformation Era

Reformation is a change carried out in a system through peaceful and gradual actions that imply improvement.<sup>18</sup> Reform becomes democratic with the aspirations of the people through organizations.<sup>19</sup> After the New Order, the Reformation emerged which was famous for accepting political strategies.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Political Thought in the Islamic World

Islamic political thought cannot be separated from the sects that live in the Islamic world. The existence of sects in Islam began a long time ago during the Tahkim incident. This incident occurred during the siffin war between Ali and Muawwiyah's group. The war occurred because of politics which ultimately emerged as two groups, namely the Shiites as a group who remained loyal to Ali's leadership and the Khawarij as a group who left Ali's ranks because they did not agree with Ali's decision regarding his approval of

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<sup>16</sup> Leli Salman Al-Farisi, "Politik hukum islam di Indonesia: membedah kerancangan bukan negara agama dan bukan negara sekuler," *Aspirasi* 11, no. 2 (2021). 28

<sup>17</sup> Rusfiana dan Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*. 75

<sup>18</sup> Andrew Heywood, *Politik*, 4 ed. (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2014). 145

<sup>19</sup> Al-Farisi, "Politik hukum islam di Indonesia: membedah kerancangan bukan negara agama dan bukan negara sekuler." 29

<sup>20</sup> Michael Buehler, "The rise of shari'a by-laws in Indonesian districts: An indication for changing patterns of power accumulation and political corruption," *Taylor & Francis* 16, no. 2 (2008), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23750914>. 275

tahkim. Until now, there are many sects and firqahs in the Islamic world that have different ideas. The following Islamic political thoughts include:

- a. Sunnis are more status quo, where the legitimacy of the government is in power. The position of the people is that it is strictly forbidden to rebel against leaders even though the leadership is cruel. Sunni expert thought believes that power is sacred and must be obeyed. The origin of power according to this school comes from God, so it is holy and cannot be denied.<sup>21</sup> In general, the concept of leadership in Sunni is based on several things, the first is fadhilah zuriyah which states that the Caliph must come from the Quraysh tribe, the second is appointment or known as bai'at, this is a demand agreed upon by the majority of Muslims regarding the determination of the head state implemented by ahlul halli wal 'aqdi. Meanwhile, according to al-Baiqallani, if the system of allegiance is not valid then the caliph is not valid in accepting his leadership position. Thus, the initiation of the caliph in Sunni is required by the ahlul halli wal aqdi through an election process. This is different from al-Mawardi's view which explains that there are two types of determining the caliph, namely through ahlul halli wal aqdi and the second is by appointment by the previous caliph.<sup>22</sup> With regard to the requirements for determining leaders in Sunni groups, there are several differences of opinion, several figures such as Ibnu Khaldun and al-Baghdadi are of the view that to fulfill the criteria for leaders, they need to fulfill 4 things, whereas according to al-Ghazali, they must fulfill 7 requirements, which is also different from the view of al-Ghazali. -Mawardi who believes that there are 7 requirements. Regarding these differences, they can be classified into main and general requirements. In terms of

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<sup>21</sup> Manan, *Perbandingan politik hukum islam dan barat*. 19

<sup>22</sup> Abd. Manaf, "Teori kepemimpinan dalam perspektif fiqh siyasah syia'ah dan sunni," *Pemikiran Syariah dan Hukum* 7, no. 1 (2013). 93

the main requirements, the three figures agree on the same. Meanwhile, the umym requirements become ijma' and other requirements are agreed to by the majority of groups. There are several similarities in the requirements between these figures as follows: (1) have the ability to carry out ijthad, (2) have superior abilities in the political science, administration and war sectors, (3) have good physical and spiritual abilities, (4) ) Have a fair nature and noble morals, (5) Fulfill the qualifications for overall leadership, (6) Lineage or lineage.<sup>23</sup>

- b. Shia, initially Shia was a firqah and then became a denomination that emerged in the same period as the Khawarij. This group is defined as sympathizers of Ali bin Abi Talib's group as the first imam and ending with Imam Muhammad Al Mahdi. There are differences of opinion regarding the number of imams in Shia, there are firqahs in Shia who argue that the imams recognized in Shia are 7 Imams and the majority of Shia firqahs believe in 12 Imams.<sup>24</sup> Shiites have political thoughts which, according to Abul A'la Al-Maududi, are as follows: First, the election of the imamate does not go through the general public. Second, the priest must be holy, awake and avoid actions that contain major or minor sins. Third, only Sayyidina Ali continued the Imamate after Rosululloh ﷺ died with the text. Fourth, the priest selection system requires the previous priest to be appointed before he dies. Fifth, the imamate belongs only to Ali's descendants.<sup>25</sup> Based on this firqah the Sunni authority structure is invalid, they do not accept that leadership in Islam can be handed over through human decision. Shiites view that authority in leadership remains with the family and descendants of the Prophet

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<sup>23</sup> Miftakhur Ridlo dan Moch. Yunus, "Dialektika sunni dan syi'ah dalam pemikiran politik islam," *Asy-Syari'ah* 8, no. 2 (2022). 56-59

<sup>24</sup> Mark Sedgwick, "Sects in islamic world," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 3, no. 2 (2000). 209

<sup>25</sup> Manan, *Perbandingan politik hukum islam dan barat*. 24-25

Muhammad from Ali, to Hasan, to Husain and so on who form the line of Imams. This sect developed and became a sect adhered to by the majority of people in Iran. Shiites believe that the Imam is a *ma'sum* appointed by God and the 12th Imam never dies, according to them the 12th Imam is hidden and remains present in providing enlightenment regarding Shiite teachings and will return at the end of time to establish a true government. This kind of ideological model is contrary to Sunni ideology.<sup>26</sup>

- c. Khawarij political thought according to Abul A'la Al-Maududi: First, recognizing the existence of the caliphate of Abu Bakr and Umar, while Usman and Ali had to be killed because they deviated at the end of their leadership. Second, sin is the same as disbelief, so the perpetrator is disbelieved if they do not want to repent, so they clearly disbelieve all the companions of the Prophet. Third, the validity of the caliphate is only through free election among Muslims, this is more or less the same as determining the imam by the majority of Islamic sects, namely by taking allegiance. Fourth, a caliph must be a pious man who is Islamic so he does not have to be from the Quraysh tribe, although initially in determining the imam he was required to be an Arab, then this requirement changed after many non-Arab people joined the Khawarij sect. Fifth, you must obey the government as long as justice and goodness are within the scope of it. If you deviate, you must fight it. Sixth, only accept the Koran as a source of Islamic law, while hadith and *ijma* have a different perspective from Muslims in general.<sup>27</sup> The Khawarij sect is of the view that there is an obligation to determine an imam, but there are exceptions, namely when all Muslims are able to act fairly, help each other and work together for goodness, in other words, if these elements

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<sup>26</sup> Redmond Fitmaurice O.P., "Islam and Politics," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 79, no. 314 (1990). 180-181

<sup>27</sup> Manan, *Perbandingan politik hukum islam dan barat*. 27-28

have been fulfilled then there is no longer a need to establish a government. This view was expressed by the Khawarij group of Najdiyah in the 7th century. One of the controversial ideas about this sect is the assumption that groups outside the Khawarij are infidels and it is lawful to kill them. On this basis, this group divided the country's territory into 2 parts, namely dar al-salam and dar al-kuffar. Dar al-salam is part of their group, while dar al-kuffar is a group that is outside their group that is allowed to be killed and is not included in this group of dhimmi infidels who are forbidden to kill. With regard to killing people in the Dar al-Kuffar sect, this is considered jihad and seizing their property is ghanimah. This understanding is still developing today where there are groups that are considered neo Khawarij such as Jama'ah Islamiyah, Hizbut Tahrir, DII/TII and other groups.<sup>28</sup>

- d. According to Abul A'la Al-Maududi, Muktazilah political thoughts include: First, sharia law is mandatory in appointing and confirming a caliph. Second, the election of the caliph is with the agreement of the Muslims and there is no dispute between the Muslims. Third, a caliph can come from any circle. Fourth, a person who commits a heinous sin (adultery) is not allowed to pray behind the imam. Fifth, the position of a person who commits a major sin is between an unbeliever and a believer.<sup>29</sup> Muktazilah experienced development and became the caretaker of government when the Abbasid dynasty was attacked. This group used philosophy as a tool to repel attacks from its opponents, which later this group became known as a rational group which had an impact on the continued development of this group and was supported by several leaders of the Abbasid government from generation to generation so that this group was free to spread its teachings. The development of

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<sup>28</sup> Aly Masyhar, "Khawarij dan Neo-Khawarij: studi perbandingan falsafah politik," *Tribakti* 25, no. 1 (2014). 80-83

<sup>29</sup> Manan, *Perbandingan politik hukum islam dan barat*. 31-32

Muktazilah teachings became more widespread during the reign of Al-Ma'mun, who was an intelligent intellectual and loved knowledge. In this period, the Muktazilah school was very developed and had top priority and even became the state's official school of thought. This fanaticism then made Ma'mun force the public to follow this school, which culminated in the implementation of the mihnah at the suggestion of a Muktazilah figure, namely Ahmad Abi Daud, which was approved by Ma'mun.<sup>30</sup>

### 3. Islamic Movement: Rifa'iyah Flow

Tarrow believes that there are four main foundations for what can be called a movement, namely collective challenges, common goals, solidarity and maintaining politics.<sup>31</sup> In the 20th century, all elements of society united against the invaders and fought for independence. After the independence of the Rifa'iyah group, there was a polemic in society. Rifa'iyah is a movement of tarjumah students who are anti-bureaucracy and the colonial government. This movement relies on the teachings of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i as a pioneer figure.<sup>32</sup> Sartono Kartodirjo typologizes this movement as puritanical orthodox revivalism. According to him, the Islamic purification movement aims to restore or purify Islamic practices in society. Meanwhile, Nahar Nahrawi considers this movement as a movement to spread fiqh in the midst of social life which emphasizes a Sufistic orientation and pays less attention to sharia in the aspect of fiqh.<sup>33</sup>

Groups that deviate or separate themselves from orthodoxy can be called heterodoxy. Rifa'iyah's teachings were considered heretical at that time because they deviated from orthodoxy (the original sect). Even though Ahmad Rifa'i was previously considered

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<sup>30</sup> Ahmad Zaeny, "Ideology dan politik kekuasaan kaum mu'tazilah," *Tapis* 7, no. 3 (2011). 100-101

<sup>31</sup> Sefriyono & Mukhibat, "Radikalisme islam: pergulatan ideologi ke sksi," *Al-Tahrir* 17, no. 1 (2017). 209

<sup>32</sup> Ahmad Syadzirin Amin, *Pergulatan Rifa'iyah di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Badan Wakaf Rifa'iyah (YADA'I), 2003). 39

<sup>33</sup> Shodiq Abdullah, "Islam Tarajumah: Komunitas Doktrin Dan Tradisi," *Rasail*, 2006. 1-2

the purification of Islam, several of Ahmad Rifa'i's teachings are different, such as one pillar of faith, authentic faith, faith in angels, faith in books, valid requirements for the number of people praying on Friday, and Tashih got married. Based on his thoughts and teachings, this gave rise to conflicts with other ulama because they were somewhat different from society in general.

#### 4. Political Influence on Heterodox

The style of rulers in the 20th century, politics was wrapped in religion.<sup>34</sup> The political aspect cannot be separated from government bureaucracy because it has become part of the political instrument.<sup>35</sup> The Islamic movement really needs political support from power. This political influence resulted in influencing the state's mindset, such as the Tahkim incident between Ali and Mu'awiyah.<sup>36</sup> Change always occurs in the political system which has a positive impact on the benevolent process, political actors, and other elements in politics.<sup>37</sup> Equal power and brutal force provide the only path to a safe and stable existence.<sup>38</sup>

Feminist and Marxist views that politics is only a tool for control and oppression. These actions were carried out solely with the aim of maintaining ownership of power and using it for one's own benefit. Both of them also have the view that politics can lead to change for oppressed communities.<sup>39</sup> Political influences on orthodoxy and heterodoxy include:

##### a. Accommodative

Accommodative means adjusting. Minority social interactions should be in line with those of the majority group. This concept aims to accommodate the interests

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<sup>34</sup> Nasihun Amin, *Paradigma teologi politik Sunni* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2015). 45

<sup>35</sup> Pureklolon, *Globalisasi politik (politik modern menuju negara kesejahteraan)*. 141

<sup>36</sup> Amin, *Paradigma teologi politik Sunni*. 45

<sup>37</sup> Pureklolon, *Globalisasi politik (politik modern menuju negara kesejahteraan)*. 36

<sup>38</sup> Losco dan Williams, *Political theory kajian klasik dan kontemporer*. 104

<sup>39</sup> Rusfiana dan Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*. 30

between parties.<sup>40</sup> After independence, Rifa'iyah teachings were still classified as a minority and could not be widely spread due to the following:

- 1) The rulers and government bureaucracy still harbor the seeds of hatred from generation to generation. The authorities claimed that Ahmad Rifa'i was radical towards the Dutch colonialists and created a resistance movement. This resistance was expressed in his work *Nadzam Wiqayah* which stated that the regent, lurah, penghulu, tumenggung were followers of the infidel king. Ahmad Rifa'i's radical attitude towards the Dutch colonialism led to the creation of a resistance movement that expressed anger at the Dutch East Indies government. This threatened the stability and security of the government, so he was tried and arrested and then exiled to Ambon.
- 2) Conflict arose from the ulama regarding Ahmad Rifa'i's thoughts, one of which was about the one pillar of Islam. It is not surprising that this conflict still occurs among several generations of students.
- 3) The residence pattern of Rifa'iyah residents is only in rural areas in groups. Their worship is very careful so they stay away from city culture which is considered heretical.

The Rifa'iyah minority is not isolated from the surrounding environment, and is even able to adapt to other Islamic groups whose numbers are greater. Such as taking part in the management of the DKM Mosque with NU, Muhammadiyah and so on. There was a conflict with NU, so Rifa'iyah withdrew. Rifa'iyah also adapted other Islamic movements that collaborated with political parties. Rifa'iyah is not power-hungry to become a political party official, but is only limited to contributing

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<sup>40</sup> Moh Rosyid, "Rifa'iyah Islamic community's accommodative Politics in Kudus," *Politik Profetik* 10, no. 2 (2022). 117

votes and socializing the political party's symbols. Rifa'iyah's open mind explained academically the errors in KH's teachings. Ahmad Rifa'i in Serat Cebolek to the general public. Several historians and religious experts held a National Seminar in Yogyakarta with the theme "Revealing the XIX Century Islamic Reformation of the KH Ahmad Rifa'i Movement: Continuity and Change". Seminar participants reached 500 participants from the Jama'ah Rifa'iyah, religionists, historians, cultural observers and other scientists on December 12-13 1990. Apart from that, community leaders from various regions such as Yogyakarta, Aceh and other areas also came to this seminar. The aim of the seminar was held as follows:<sup>41</sup>

- 1) Revealing the background of the Islamic independence movement on the North Coast of Java Island.
- 2) Revealing the background to the creation of myths that emerged as a result of Islamic movements in the past.
- 3) Demythologizing the fibers and chronicles that tell about Islam and various movements in the past, especially Serat Cebolek which tells the story of KH. Mutamakin and KH. Ahmad Rifa'i.
- 4) Revealing the existence of the KH movement. Ahmad Rifa'i is good at Tawhid, Fiqh, Sufism, and various other aspects. Including continuity and change in historical dynamics.
- 5) Expanding perspectives and gaining new reflections in studying historical aspects of nineteenth-century Islamic movements such as Muhammadiyah, NU, Persis and others.

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<sup>41</sup> Salinan arsip seminar 1990 yang didokumentasikan di Media Rifa'iyah, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTTpS0LoGUY>.

6) Encouraging efforts to position Indonesian history, especially Islamic history, more proportionally.

**b. Hegemony**

Hegemony is the influence of leadership or dominance. A large and strong group will become the ruler of a weak group. After independence, conflict between Rifa'iyah and NU began to emerge due to creating their own congregation to carry out Friday prayers in Paesan village. The reason for this incident was because carrying out Friday prayers with the local community did not meet the requirements in fiqh (alim just). Government regulations at that time only allowed one congregation to be established in one area for Friday prayers. Residents from the NU group also dominate in the village so it is not surprising that most of the mosque takmirs are from NU circles. Resentment from NU circles is increasing towards Rifa'iyah who founded the school<sup>42</sup> and its management. Rifa'iyah had joined as a wing element of the NU organization, but finally left and separated from NU because he offended Rifa'iyah's teachings.<sup>43</sup>

In the 19th century, bureaucrats monopolized religion as a tool of hegemony by targeting the earth's sons. With their leadership style and dominating power, they gain profits by collecting fees and manipulating fatwas that support colonial interests.<sup>44</sup> This was the same thing that Rifa'iyah experienced in the 20th century AD. NU members dominated the bureaucrats in both the MUI and the Regional Religious Department. The lawsuit

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<sup>42</sup> Yayasan Pendidikan Islam Rifa'iyah sebagai sekolah pertama yang didirikan warga Rifa'iyah tahun 1965

<sup>43</sup> Risma Sofiatil Ulya, "Pergulatan Rifa'iyah dalam Mencari Legalitas Diri di Tengah Polemik Tuduhan Ajaran Sesat di Kabupaten Pekalongan 1965-1999" (Universitas Negeri Semarang, 2013). 10

<sup>44</sup> Amin, *Pergulatan Rifa'iyah di Indonesia*. 39

addressed to Rifa'iyah was initially rejected, but finally managed to penetrate the Central Java High Prosecutor's Office so that Decree No. Kep-012/K.3/4/1981 on April 2 1981 concerning the prohibition of the development of just Islam (Rifa'iyah).<sup>45</sup> Rifa'iyah's report, which was previously rejected, was accepted in court because of the following letter of complaint:<sup>46</sup>

- 1) Decree of the Head of the Demak District Prosecutor's Office no. Kep. 04/K.3.Dm.3/12/1980 dated 26 December 1980 concerning the prohibition of the Development of the Alim Adil Islamic Religion and its Guidebook Ri'ayatul Muhimmah written by KH. Rifai in the jurisdiction of the Demak District Prosecutor's Office.
- 2) Letter from the Head of the Regional Office of the Department of Religion, Central Java Province No. WK/2-1/057/1981 dated January 8 1981 concerning the Alim Adil Islamic Religion.
- 3) The fatwa of the Head of the Demak Regency Religion Department Office in his covering letter No.MK.05/1-a/1317/60 dated 22 October 1980.
- 4) Demak Regency Ulama Council Letter No.24/MU/II/IX/1980 dated 20-9-1980 to the Regent of KDH Level II Demak.

### c. Power

Power comes from English which means power, ability, strength or authority. Power in politics can be understood as the ability to influence the behavior of others in a way that is not of their choosing. Its influence can be rewarding or punishing.<sup>47</sup> In general, government authority can be obtained through attribution, delegation

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<sup>45</sup> Ulya, "Pergulatan Rifa'iyah dalam Mencari Legalitas Diri di Tengah Polemik Tuduhan Ajaran Sesat di Kabupaten Pekalongan 1965-1999." 69

<sup>46</sup> Kejaksaan Tinggi Jawa Tengah, "Surat Keputusan Kepala Kejaksaan Tinggi Jawa Tengah No: Kep. 012/K.3/4/1961" (Semarang, 1981).

<sup>47</sup> Heywood, *Politik*. 9

and mandate, as well as assistance tasks (medebewind). The method of obtaining this authority also illustrates the essential differences between the various levels of government in a country. Apart from that, the implementation of delegation proves that there is a higher level of government (delegator) and a lower level of government (delegans). If government authority is looked at specifically, it will relate to the rights, obligations and responsibilities between the various existing levels of government. The division of attribution, distribution, delegation and mandate can illustrate how the various levels of government have different rights, obligations and responsibilities between one level of government and another.<sup>48</sup> According to Heywood, the word power, which means power, has functions in politics, including:<sup>49</sup>

- 1) An ability to achieve desired results by any means.
- 2) Policy determinants.
- 3) Prevent policy formation.
- 4) Able to influence and control someone's thoughts.

The situation in Indonesia during the New Order period, Golkar was very active and dominated in parliament because it received total support from the President. During the New Order era, the Golkar Party was the main source of requesting assistance.<sup>50</sup> Leadership among the masses was initially democratic. However, it is slowly becoming more authoritarian, dominated by the executive, controlling press freedom, the legislature is very weak because the executive has full power, such as Golkar and ABRI.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Isharyanto, *Partai politik. ideologi*, (Yogyakarta: Absolute Media, 2017). 22

<sup>49</sup> Rusfiana dan Nurdin, *Dinamika politik kontemporer internasional dan local dengan hambatan dan tantangan dalam mencapainya*. 24-26

<sup>50</sup> Buehler, "The rise of shari'a by-laws in Indonesian districts: An indication for changing patterns of power accumulation and political corruption." 282

<sup>51</sup> Halim, *Politik hukum islam di Indonesia*. 119

Political parties are strictly prohibited from developing, such as PDI and PPP, except for Golkar, which is allowed to develop into villages. All decisions are in the hands of the ruling elite so the people are apathetic towards politics. The role of bureaucracy and its power in the state is very large.<sup>52</sup> Rifa'iyah collaborated with the Golkar political party to get protection. With the support of power from Golkar, Rifa'iyah still persists in a state of intimidation by the Nahdliyin residents.<sup>53</sup>

The conflict that occurred between NU and Rifa'iyah mass organizations can be described as a hidden conflict that manifests in actions (sabotage, non-cooperation, selfish reluctance to accept other people's opinions, style of speech, and indifference) as well as words (ridicule, slander, insinuation ). Even if this conflict does not escalate into actual violence, it will significantly disrupt daily life. If uncontrolled, tensions between the two groups will get worse. The existence of people arguing over trivial issues is what gives rise to the conflict. Rifa'iyah residents preferred to remain silent and refused to comply to prevent the dispute from escalating and becoming a major conflict. Rifa'iyah's belief is that if you serve the wrong person, even if you are on the side of the right, you will also be in the wrong; therefore, you can only control your emotions to the extent that it is better to "go to Allah".<sup>54</sup> The existence of this conflict does not mean that Rifa'iyah closes herself off from her surrounding environment. They even adapt and mingle with others. Politics is a way to restore what is labeled as heterodox.

The rise of reform has created an opportunity to gain recognition rights for groups experiencing discrimination.

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<sup>52</sup> Pureklolon, *Globalisasi politik (politik modern menuju negara kesejahteraan)*. 154

<sup>53</sup> Ulya, "Pergulatan Rifa'iyah dalam Mencari Legalitas Diri di Tengah Polemik Tuduhan Ajaran Sesat di Kabupaten Pekalongan 1965-1999." 82-83

<sup>54</sup> Dadung Budi Yuwono, "Karakter Hubungan dan Harmonisasi Kehidupan Antara Kelompok Keagamaan Rifa'iyah dan NU," *international Journal ihya' 'ulum al-din* 18, no. 1 (2016), doi:10.21580/ihya.17.1.1733. 130

Rifa'iyah's strategy in efforts to legalize itself includes: collaborating with political parties, establishing relationships with political figures by utilizing power, reviewing Rifa'iyah's teachings by holding seminars so that people do not make bad claims, and taking advantage of the emergence of reform. The Rifa'iyah Central Leadership then took the courage to write a letter with number 054/PPRifa'iyah/X/1999 concerning the Request for Review of the Decision of the Central Java High Prosecutor's Office Number: Kep.012/K.3/4/1981 dated 2 April 1981 at 1 October 1999 with a carefully considered political approach. The decree contains prohibitions on the Islamic teachings of Alim Adil (another name for Rifa'iyah) and the reference book is Riayatul Muhimmah. This was done as an effort for Rifa'iyah followers to re-spread the Rifa'iyah ideology which was previously shackled by this decree. With a mature strategy, finally the Central Java High Prosecutor's Office issued Decree Number: Kep-40/P.3/DSB.1/11/1989 dated November 1 1999, revoking Decree Number: Kep-012/K.3/4/1981 which prohibits Alim Adil (Rifa'iyah) and his guidebook Riayatul Muhimmah by KH Ahmad Rifa'i from Islamic teachings. The rise of KH Ahmad Syadzirin Amin as a figure in Jama'ah Rifaiyah to become Chairman of the Pekalongan Regency MUI in 1999–2000, strengthened the legalization of this group. This succeeded in breaking the dominance of NU ulama from the MUI leadership of Pekalongan Regency.

## **Conclusion**

Politics can be interpreted as a policy or an action. Islamic firqohs have diverse political and religious viewpoints, just like Indonesian politics, which had a very long process before the democratic system. During the Old Order, Indonesia experienced several political system changes starting from presidential, parliamentary and guided democracy. In the New Order there was depoliticization of the masses, socio-political institutionalization, state corporatism, and ideological hegemony over society. Finally, the reforms used until now have accepted political

strategies. At the beginning, this reform created a new air for groups that previously experienced discrimination. Rifa'iyah took advantage of this momentum to get her legal status back. Rifa'iah is a movement of Islamic boarding school students who are anti-bureaucracy and the colonial government which was pioneered by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i. After independence, the Rifa'iyah group had prolonged conflicts in society. This conflict is said to be a hidden conflict because it does not use physical force or weapons. Political influence can cause the heterodox to be dissolved or it can also gain legality. Rifa'iyah was able to regain legality.

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