

Identity Politics and Religious Recognition in Indonesian Democracy: A Post-Secular Perspective

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Abstract

In various academic literature studies in Indonesia, identity politics is often equated with the politicization of identity. As a result, identity politics is less noticed as the politics of recognition or multiculturalism politics for oppressed identity groups. This article aims to show the distinction between identity politics and politicization of identity in the history of democracy in Indonesia, while also showing how identity politics, as the politics of recognition and religious moral values, can support democratization. This study is a philosophical research and therefore uses a philosophical research methodology, with five main methodological elements: Interpretation, internal coherence, holistic, historical continuity, and heuristics. First, this study finds that Identity politics and politicization of identity are two terms in contemporary social philosophy with different meanings. Identity politics is not bad per se, while politicization of identity is harmful per se; second, the answer to the problem of democracy is not to confine religion to the private sphere as in secularism in the West or the depoliticization of Islam in the New Order era in Indonesia, but rather to carry out a double learning process between state and religion, politics and faith, reason and revelation, which is called post-secularism; Third, religious hegemony remains a threat to democracy in Indonesia, but because democracy is not only a system but also an ethos, the moral contribution of religion is greatly needed in forming a healthy democracy. In conclusion, identity politics can support democracy when religion engages in dialogue with public reason and becomes the moral foundation of the democratic ethos. Therefore, this study suggests that religion and state must always engage in a dual learning process and recognize each other's contributions.

Keywords

Secularization, secular ratio, religious ratio, stream politics, democracy, secularism, post-secularism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Identity politics remains an interesting topic to be studied by many researchers and academics in Indonesia. Data collected by Sihidi et al. show that studies on identity politics in Indonesia have increased from 2016 to 2021. In 2016, there were only 75 publication topics on identity politics. That number increased drastically in 2019, namely 109 topics, and in 2020, namely 104 topics (Sahidi et al, 2022). Although that number decreased in 2021 (78 topics), the tendency to research and publish on



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identity politics is powerful.

The following are some studies conducted on identity politics at a practical level in Indonesia and thoughts on identity politics at a theoretical level (philosophy) in the United States. First of all, academic research on identity politics in Indonesia is increasing in number, which is in line with the fact that the use of identity politics as a political vehicle in electoral contests has increased from 2014 to 2019. Kristimata's study shows that the polarizing effects of identity politics from the 2014 election are still felt today (Kristimata, 2018). Second, the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election was known as one of the electoral contests with a powerful and obvious religious-based identity politics game strategy (Hamidah, 2018). After the 212 mass movement, many electoral contests in the DKI Jakarta area were suspected of mobilizing primordial sentiments, mainly Islamic religious sentiments (Lesmana et al, 2021). Third, politics using religious identity peaked in 2019 in the presidential electoral contest between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto (Hanan, 2020). Various observations show that contestation is important in identity politics, especially Islamic ones (Khamdan, 2018).

Meanwhile, academic-philosophical studies (thoughts) on identity politics can be mentioned below. First, Amy Gutmann, a contemporary American political thinker, in her work "Identity in Democracy", explains that contemporary liberal democracy is inseparable from identity politics. She divides identity politics into three categories: good, bad, and ugly. Identity politics is good because it has a positive impact on democracy, namely, it can create public awareness of multicultural citizenship and prevent the tyranny of the majority over the minority. Identity politics is bad if a group only fights for the sectoral ego of its religious or ethnic group while promoting hatred towards other religious and ethnic groups. Identity politics is ugly if a religious or ethnic group not only spreads hatred towards other groups but also legitimizes and commits violence to assert the supremacy of its group (Gutmann, 2004).

Second, a study of identity politics in liberal democratic countries conducted by Bein (2022). According to Bein, the three categories of identity politics put forward by Gutmann illustrate that identity politics has a complex meaning in the discourse of social and political philosophy. Identity politics is identity-based politics, which actively builds the awareness of group members to identify themselves with the ideals and characteristics of their group. What is at issue in identity politics is not personal identity but collective identity, be it religion, ethnicity, race, region, or gender. The reason they identify themselves is because of the tyranny of the majority over the minority. Minority groups rise to fight for justice and freedom for their group by highlighting collective identity while promoting a worldview different from the dominant group. So, identity politics is the politics of struggle from groups that experience injustice and inequality and want to determine their destiny (self-determination).

Third, in line with Bein's view above, Turan (2022) had also previously linked identity politics to the issue of justice. According to Turan, the fundamental problem of identity politics is justice (Turan, 2019). The demand for justice is fought for by minority groups of language, religion, ethnicity, feminists, people with disabilities, and homosexuals to gain recognition of their collective identity in liberal democratic countries such as America and Canada. Fourth, Iris Marion Young understands identity politics as recognizing differences in ways of life, commonly called "differentiation politics". She demands that the principle of neutrality in liberal democracy does not ignore differences and erase uniqueness (Silva et al, 2019).

Fourth, based on the struggle of the French-speaking minority group in Quebec, Canada, Charles Taylor believes that identity politics is the politics of recognition of collective identity, in Taylor's

technical terms, called "politics of recognition". According to Taylor, the demand for recognition of uniqueness does not violate the principle of equality in democracy but rather guarantees equality in the recognition of the identity of each community group (Taylor, 1992). Fifth, finally, Will Kymlicka, starting from Young and Taylor's thoughts, talks about this issue from the perspective of rights theory. According to him, the politics of minority rights are not individual rights but collective rights (Kymlicka, 1996).

Different from the academic studies at the practical level and the level of contemporary political thought above, several studies on identity politics in Indonesia tend to depict identity politics negatively, as shown in the following studies: First, a study conducted by Mayrudin and Akbar on the political attitudes of PKS and PKB, the two largest Islamic parties in Indonesia, shows that identity politics is politics that uses religious symbols to win the sympathy of voters (Ma'asan et al, 2019). Second, Sihidi also has almost the same view that identity politics in Indonesia threatens democratization because it creates polarization and social conflict based on identity between majority and minority groups (Sihidi et al, 2022). Third, according to Lesmana and Sutrisnok, identity politics in Indonesia divides society into opposing camps: radical vs moderate, Nusantara Islam vs Arab Islam. They argue that the role of the elite in mobilizing religious sentiment is huge (Lesmana, 2021). It can be concluded that mentioning identity politics in Indonesia always has a negative connotation, namely politics that threaten democracy and social cohesion, because it plays on primordial religious, racial, or ethnic sentiments.

This study is different from those studies, and this difference shows something "new" in the study of identity politics: The first novelty is that identity politics is clearly distinguished from the politicization of identity. What several of the studies above mean is not identity politics but the politicization of identity. These terminologies come from contemporary social philosophy, which have different meanings. Identity politics is born as a political reason to fight for identity, justice, and freedom as citizens from state repression or majority hegemony (Ismail, 2018). Meanwhile, the politicization of identity, or in Clifford Geertz's terms, "sectarian politics" (stream politics) is born not for political reasons to seize equality as citizens but because liberal democracy opens space to seize power and is supported by the self-understanding (religious reason) of the group based on the normative values of the group. An example of stream politics is forming a political party connected to the voter base, namely the religious community, with practical political calculations to win the election (Mayrudin et al, 2019). In the first Indonesian election in 1955, for example, not only Islam but also Christians (Parkindo) and Catholics (Catholic Party) carried out aliran politics. So, the purpose and significance of this study is to organize the conceptual chaos that equates identity politics and politicization of identity, or identity politics and aliran politics.

The second novelty is that the manifestation of identity politics and the politicization of identity in Indonesia touches on fundamental issues that have been debated since the founding of the Indonesian State at the 1945 BPUPKI Session, namely the issue of the relationship between the State and Religion which has led to the issue of democratization in the present day. However, this is not a historical study but a philosophical study. From the perspective of social philosophy, identity politics does not hinder the democratization process when religious aspirations are not marginalized from public discourse (Jegalus, 2009). To show how religious values can become social ethics and moral aspirations that save Indonesia, which is pluralistic in religion as a Democratic and Modern Legal State, this study will present the views of two contemporary thinkers, Habermas (West) and Nurcholish Madjid (Asia).

Thus, this study, in addition to clarifying the conceptual differences between identity politics and identity politicization (stream politics), the significance of this study is to show epistemically and philosophically the role of religious public as public reason and social ethics for democracy in Indonesia. Therefore, this study will focus more on the issue of religion and democracy, because the essence of the relationship between the two in political language (empirical) is the issue of the relationship between religion and the state.

2. METHOD

Since this study study's social philosophy (contemporary), the Philosophical Research Method is used. Here, I use the Philosophical Research Methodology proposed by Bakker & Zubair (1989). According to this methodology, the scientific discipline of philosophy recognizes studies from political science, sociology, anthropology, and history on the reality of identity politics and politicization in Indonesia as "the first-level sciences". In contrast, social philosophy is only "the second level science" (Bakker et al, 1990). In this case, the object of study, namely identity politics and politicization of identity, is the same as the social sciences, such as political sociology, political science, and political history. However, the same object must be accommodated in the formal object of philosophy. At this point, philosophy is very clearly different from the social sciences because philosophy focuses on the object's essence and only deals with ideas. However, that does not mean that philosophy only plays with ideas, but rather because that is the demand and call of the scientific task of philosophy, namely, to produce a thought based on a discussion of ideas. Moreover, that differs significantly from the social sciences, which use ideas to read data. For them, ideas or concepts are only a means to capture the contents of the data that has been collected. Therefore, they talk about data and how to read data.

This study is not a study of social science but rather a study of social philosophy, specifically contemporary social philosophy. Realizing there are similarities and differences in formal objects between the social sciences and social philosophy, this study takes a firm position as a study of social philosophy. Therefore, the way to obtain "data", if it may be called that, because the term "data" is not a philosophical terminology, is through two ways: first, directly encountering facts in the field and then analyzing them philosophically; second, indirectly, namely taking "data", in the terminology of philosophical studies dealing with "reality", from the results of studies of social sciences, such as Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology and History, then analyzing them philosophically.

This study is more concerned with the second way, namely by accepting the latest study results from the social sciences, which are categorized as "political thought" about identity politics and politicization of identity in Indonesia, and then supplemented with direct observation by the researcher as an Indonesian academic. Data or realities obtained both from the results of social science research (politics, sociology, anthropology, and history) on identity politics and politicization of identity and data or realities from direct observation by the researcher, are analyzed according to the framework of analysis of philosophical research methods, which include five main methodological elements, such as: Interpretation, internal coherence, holistic, historical continuity, and heuristics (Bakker et.al, 1990). The five main methodological elements of this philosophical study can be explained as follows:

- (1) Interpretation: The data (reality) reported by empirical science studies on identity politics and the politicization of identity are read from a philosophical conception, namely the most fundamental conception of the existence and essence of identity politics and the politicization of identity and its impact on the relationship between religion and state in Indonesia. So, the interpretation here is not understood as the social sciences mean, but in a philosophical sense.

- (2) Internal coherence: All the main ideas about identity politics and politicization of identity are examined according to their relationship to each other and how the two concepts affect democracy in Indonesia, whether religion can support or hinder democracy in Indonesia. In this case, a real and logical dependency relationship will be sought between the politicization of identity and the development and quality of democracy, whether in total or only in part. Then, an attempt will also be made to find which elements are the most central or dominant in the ideas of identity politics and politicization of identity, and how they relate to democracy.
- (3) Holistic: All elements of the philosophical conception of identity politics and the politicization of identity, both in Western thought (philosophy) and practice in Indonesia, are used to assess the overall vision and understanding of the relationship between religion and the Indonesian state.
- (4) Historical continuity: Researchers will also pay attention to the historical development line from thinking about identity politics and the politicization of identity to Suharno's political policy of depoliticizing Islam and the establishment of Golkar as the political machine of the New Order, then continuing with new developments, namely post-Suharto democracy, regarding the possibility of religion entering democratic politics.
- (5) Heuristics: Based on the methodical reflection above, this research will shed "new light" on the relationship between religion and democracy and, at the same time, the relationship between religion and the Indonesian state, namely that religion can enter the public political space but no longer based on the authority of "religious reason" but rather the "authority of public reason."

With this research method, this study maintains its uniqueness. It can even be called the uniqueness of philosophical studies, as well as the academic honesty of the researcher, as required in all scientific studies, namely that this study is a social (political) philosophical study, not a social (political) study. Therefore, this study maintains "intellectual humility" as a study from the perspective of social philosophy, not from the perspective of social sciences (Political Science). This study acknowledges the apparent differences between the studies of "Normative Political Theory" (Political Philosophy) and "Empirical Political Theory" (Political Science). Although scientific vocabulary seems the same, it is still not the same. Not the same does not mean one is right and the other is wrong. Therefore, for the sake of the sharpness of the analysis of this study, namely a social philosophical analysis that moves at the level of thought, this study maintains not to mix it with empirical political analysis as generally understood by the social sciences in Indonesia. Mixing "social philosophy" and "social science" is the same as dissolving both sciences. The essence and methods of analysis of these two sciences are not only different but very different: "Social Philosophy" operates at the level of pure thought. In contrast, "social science" is involved in factual reality; therefore, it "must" be based on data, and the data in question is empirical. Meanwhile, (social) philosophy is not based on "data" but on "reality", where reality itself is empirical, but what is to be captured is not at the level of "phenomena" but at the level of "noumena", thus capturing the essence of that reality.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Identity politics and politicization of identity

The first election in 1955 was a manifestation of democracy. At that time, identity-based politics (religion) emerged in the form of the birth of dozens of religious-based political parties, plus parties

with secular ideologies such as communism and nationalism. Clifford Geertz called this phenomenon "Flow Politics," which relied on three sources of voters: Santri Islam, Abangan Islam, and Priyayi Islam (Jatmiko, 2022). The santri stream was divided into traditionalist Islam, which became the basis for the Nahdatul Ulama Party (NU), and modernist Islam, which became the basis for the Indonesian Muslim Consultative Assembly Party (Masjumi). Meanwhile, parties that could be called secular, such as the Indonesian National Party (PNI), the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI), took the Abangan Islam voter base.

However, in the era of the Suharto regime, the political stream was abolished because it created political instability. Eliminating political streams was later known as the "depoliticization of Islam" (Prayudi, 2017). However, because it seemed that there was still a scent of political streams (religion), the New Order regime carried out what was called a fusion of political parties in 1973, namely the merger of political parties by eliminating the identity of the stream (religion). Religious identity was eliminated. For Suharto, all political parties based on religion were incompatible with his political pragmatism (Hakim, 2016). The character of political struggle based on religion or ideology was replaced with a new ideology, namely development. All political parties with an Islamic identity were merged into one party without a religious identity, namely the United Development Party (PPP). In contrast, parties that did not have an Islamic identity, such as PNI, Parkindo, the Catholic Party, Murba, and IPKI, merged into the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) (Bruinessen, 2022). So, the 1977 election contestants were followed by two parties, PPP and PDI, plus Golkar, formed by the New Order regime. The three election contestants, namely the two political parties and Golkar, did not have a religious identity. PPP identified with "development", PDI identified with "democracy", and Golkar identified with "work" (Hakim, 2016).

A little note regarding Golkar, namely that Golkar, formed by the New Order, was not a political party but rather a "functional group" whose essence was not political like political parties but only carried out real actions for the bonum commune, namely, carrying out development. Therefore, Golkar's unique identity was not only not based on religion, so it was the same as PPP and PDI, but mainly because of its essence and existence as a "functional group" that only focused on "work" matters, namely building so that Suharto was known and recognized as the "Father of Development". This uniqueness, namely, not a political party but becoming an election contestant; and second, as a functional group that was not based on religion, only focused on development, especially the economy, which made Golkar always able to win every election.

Therefore, the political economy perspective can be used as a paradigm to see the economic and political factors behind the control and restriction of the freedom of Islamic groups during the New Order. According to Vedi R. Hadiz, since the disappearance of communism from the political landscape of the country, and along with the weakening of more radical mass organizations in the Soekarno era, political Islam is the only force capable of organizing, mobilizing, and uniting the grassroots forces called the ummah to fight the New Order. The New Order was the catalyst for capitalism in Indonesia. Under the tyrannical wing of the New Order, oligarchic politics as a politics of maintaining the wealth of a small group of elites, flourished and remained a poison to democracy to this day. During the New Order, massive intercourse occurred between the rulers and businesspeople, capital and state bureaucracy, forming a group of elites and their families as a giant conglomerate class (Hadiz, 2017).

Islamic unions that were formed since the Dutch East Indies regime, through Soekarno, until the formation of radical Islamic groups during the New Order, consistently spoke out loudly against sinful capitalism. This was not solely because of Islamic teachings but also because of moral objections

to the exploitative elements and the dangers of social marginalization from capitalism. Since then, the ummah has been considered a grassroots group that has become a victim of the entrenched oligarchy and capitalism in the New Order regime (Hadiz, 2017). In the eyes of the New Order regime, radical Islamic groups are opposition groups that are considered dangerous to the stability of power. Moreover, the emergence of Islamic power with a grassroots base (ummah) is contrary to the character and political logic of the New Order regime, which carries out development through demobilization and disorganization of society (Sunardi, 2019).

According to Hadiz, the depoliticization of Islam is evident in the tight control and intervention of state officials in the formation of a potentially powerful Muslim electoral vehicle in the late 1960s. This control and intervention arose from the anxiety that Islamic-identified parties could become formidable rivals for the Golkar party, the political vehicle of the elite in Soeharto's circle. Meanwhile, the military was unable to fight the left-wing alliance because it failed to absorb the sympathy of all Islamic elements in Indonesia, except for a few former armed rebels of Darul Islam. As Hadiz, from this phenomenon of depoliticization of Islam, we are shown the complex and rich historical and sociological roots of Islamic identity politics in Indonesia. Islamic identity politics during the New Order blended with left-wing political currents and became the only ummah-based opposition force against the arrogance and crimes of the New Order regime (Hadiz, 2017). Thus, "sectarian politics" during the New Order era played a critical role against the Suharto government, especially Suharto's political agenda known in Indonesian social science studies as "depoliticization of Islam".

3.2. Politicization of Identity and distortion of democracy

Different from identity politics, politicisation of identity or stream politics is a distortion of democracy. The politicisation of primordial religious and ethnic identities to gain power as a strategy of struggle is bad. Under the influence of identity politics, constituents choose leaders or representatives in parliament no longer based on the values demanded by democracy, such as the candidate's track record, program, personal and public integrity, but solely because of the candidate's ethnic and religious identity. The candidates are very aware of the weaknesses of Indonesian voters, namely, not rational voters but traditional voters, who choose not based on rational considerations but solely on "our people" (Wingarta et al, 2023). Democracy as a demand for public rationality ultimately fulfils public sentimentality. Therefore, election contestants can easily exploit religious or ethnic sentiments to win the fight in democracy (Frenki, 2021).

However, the politicisation of identity does not only appear in electoral contests but also in efforts to install certain religious moral doctrines into the body of general laws (UU) or regional regulations (Perda) such as Sharia Perda. A study conducted by Maimun and Haq (2018) in Pamekasan showed that Sharia-based Perda was also supported by identity politics intertwined with legal politics in addition to philosophical-sociological and legal motivations. However, the results were counterproductive to other regional regulations (Maimun et al., 2018).

Suppose we observe the practice of democracy in the reform era. In that case, it can be said that the politicization of religious identity is more commonly used at the national level than ethnic or regional identity, even though the presidential and vice-presidential candidates are all Javanese. Meanwhile, the practice of politicising identity at the regional level tends to exploit ethnic or regional sentiments, although religious sentiments are sometimes politicised (Hara, 2018). The politicization of ethnic and religious identities is a distortion of democracy because it can open opportunities for inter-group conflict, especially threatening the position of minority groups in a place. Religious riots, ethnic

conflicts in the regions, and various forms of mass violence in elections are political functions of individual and group sentimentality, where religious and ethnic values are used as instruments to mobilize the masses, which leads to the birth of mass violence.

However, we do not have to eliminate democracy. Eliminating the democratic system is not the answer to the problem. The answer is that the Indonesian nation is not only a democratic political system but also a democratic ethos. Although the constitution has been amended and it clearly states democracy as a method of legitimizing power both at the national and regional levels, if the people do not yet have a democratic ethos, democracy, which should be rational, will become fertile ground for the growth of anti-democratic voter sentiment in the public space (Dijn, 2019). According to T.W. Adorno, a German Frankfurt School figure, the implementation of democracy can only run well when society experiences *Erziehung zur Mündigkeit* (Education for Maturity) (Sharon, 2017). Members of society participating in the election must become socially and politically mature (Jessop, 2017). Individual citizens must be accustomed to listening more to their conscience than to the voice of their group (religious or ethnic), and to train themselves to argue rationally rather than allowing themselves to be dragged along by ethnic and religious sentiments.

3.3 Religion and Democracy

The issue of politicising religious identity for practical political interests shows the complex relationship between religion and politics in a democratic country. Should religion be privatised? Is religion a supporter of democracy or a scandal of democracy? Based on J. Habermas's answer about religion and democracy, especially his idea of "postsekulare Gessellschaft" (postsecular society), this study is of the view that although on the one hand religion is a scandal of democracy, basically religion is a pre-political and ethical basis that strengthens democracy. Hatta once said that by placing divinity in the first principle of Pancasila, moral foundations become the basis of political and social foundations for modern Indonesia (Ulfah et al, 2021).

The term "post-secular", as Habermas in his lecture on Myth and Ritual, refers to "the essential role played by religion in shaping the way of thinking of secular society". It concludes that religion persists throughout history (Habermas, 2021). In Notes on Post-secular Society, Habermas uses the word "post-secular" to indicate that the European public must take into account the continued existence of religious communities in a secularized society (Habermas, 2008). Therefore, according to Habermas, the term "post-secular society" refers to two things, namely first, the fact of the survival of religion in an increasingly secular society; second, changes in public consciousness, which pushes secular society into a dual learning process between religious people, or between believers and those who consciously do not choose religion (Madung, 2021). Habermas describes the changes in post-secular society as a result of the "modernization of public consciousness" (Hisyam, 2021). This modernization of public consciousness triggers a dual learning process between religious citizens and each other, between religious people and those who are not religious, between faith and knowledge, revelation and reason, and between theology and philosophy (Mahadevan, 2018).

It must be admitted that in Indonesia, religion continues to survive in the public space and has a public role in almost all areas of life, which is something to be proud of. However, various scandals arise when the strengthening role of religion in this public space is not accompanied by what Habermas calls "post-secular awareness to carry out a dual learning process between faith and public reason, revelation and philosophy" (Tan, 2021). As a result, behind the intense intervention of religion in political processes and control over power, archaic power and predatory instincts, as seen in acts of

terror, intolerance, and violence, are still a form of threat and religious scandal to democracy in Indonesia (Mudhoffir, 2023). Bela is of the view that terrorism and religious violence show the paradox of democracy. Democracy allows radicalism to grow as a form of self-expression, a human right. On the other hand, terrorism, religious intolerance and radicalism threaten human rights and individual freedoms, especially the rights of minority groups, which means threatening democracy itself (Bela et al, 2021).

However, this study proves that this argument is wrong; it is not the openness of democracy that is the root of the problem, but the inability of religion to dialogue with secular principles and a democratic legal state is the epistemic root of all negative facts (terrorism, radicalism, and intolerance). In other words, the failure of (adherents of) religion to dialogue with secular reason makes them uncritical of fundamentalist and fanatical doctrines such as the doctrine of terrorism, sacred violence or the idea of a caliphate state (Tan, 2021; Lind, 2018). Using Hannah Arendt's perspective, the loss of critical power traps religious people into "the banality of evil". The term "banality of evil" that Arendt means is the inability to distance themselves from ideologies that are anti-humanity and anti-democracy, so that adherents of radical ideologies, whether religious or secular, tend to behave like robots: operationalised, instrumentalised and obedient (Selamat et al, 2022). From Arendt's perspective, the perpetrators of terror acts may appear as good people in their environment and are known to be pious by their neighbours, but they are robots whose consciousness has been distorted (Prayudi, 2017). The findings of Zakiyah et al. confirm Arendt's view that the families of terrorists in Sidoarjo and Surabaya, East Jakarta, Indonesia, are known as "ordinary people" by their neighbours. Their appearance is generally the same as that of other people in their neighbourhood, even participating in social activities (Zakiyah et al, 2023).

If we use Nurcholish Madjid's perspective, all religious problems in a democratic society, from fundamentalism, intolerance, politicization of religious symbols and narrow religious sentiments, to violence, the ambition to establish an Islamic State of Indonesia (caliphate) and acts of terrorism, are rooted in the "crisis of intellectual freedom and the idea of progress" (Faqihuddin, 2023). According to Madjid, due to the lack of fresh ideas, some Muslims do not have "psychological striking force" (Madjid, 2019), which makes them unable to break through anti-progress ways of thinking. As an initiator of secularisation (not secularism) in Indonesia, Madjid fights for a dual learning process between faith and reason, religion and science, revelation and philosophy in Indonesia. Like Habermas, Madjid rooted the chaos created by religion in Indonesia's democratic public space in the inability of religion to dialogue with secular reason and the principles of a democratic legal state (Dian et al, 2022).

The rise of religious radicalism in the public sphere raises the question of whether religion is compatible with democracy. The distinction made by Nurcholish Madjid between secularisation and secularism can answer this question. According to Nurcholish, secularism is a social pathology and therefore must be rejected. Secularism tends to eliminate religious reasons because it considers them irrational, so religion has no public and political relevance (Setiadi et al, 2020). Unlike secularism, secularisation is necessary because secularisation separates religious and state affairs so that the state is free from the pathology of religious absolutism. Conversely, religion is not politicized for practical political interests. Secularisation does not view religion as irrational (Jegalus, 2020). On the contrary, secularisation recognizes religion's public and ethical role in efforts to form a democratic ethos. Therefore, in discussions in the West, what is known as the "dialectic of secularization" is known, namely that secularization results in: first, the separation of religion and state so that each carries out its

function authentically, so, secularism is a "maturation" of religion and state, and second, the dialectic between secular (political) reason and religious reason (Kleden et al, 2010).

If secularisation is a stage that post-secular societies like those in the West have passed, then in Indonesia, there is no post-secularism, even though religion has long played a role in the public sphere. Indonesia has not experienced the secularisation of religion like in the West. The silence of Islam during the authoritarian New Order government was not a symptom of secularisation but a product of political totalitarianism. Therefore, once Suharto's authoritarian-militaristic power collapsed, Islamic organisations rose again in the public sphere (Mietzner, 2018). However, at least a parallel can be drawn between the conditions created by secularism and the New Order regime, namely that both kicked religions out of the public sphere.

Today, religion, according to Habermas, is impossible to domesticate. Habermas's view is proven by various empirical phenomena in Indonesia, namely religious movements that we now call "identity politicisation," filling the Indonesian political landscape (Habermas, 2005). Of course, we cannot judge these phenomena as mere disturbances to democracy. Habermas argues that we can no longer say that if you want to get involved in politics, then faith is abandoned to be able to do politics democratically (Agcan, 2020). The correct answer is that a citizen of faith can participate in democratic politics, but on the condition that they can "translate" the language of their faith into a public language that anyone, including people of other religions, can understand. Habermas calls this act of translating semantic transposition. The keyword here, according to Habermas, is rationality. Religious aspirations and opinions can enter the political public space by using public reason (secular reason), not the religious reason of the religion itself (Ollig, 2003).

Habermas means that believers must abandon their religiocentric perspective once they enter the public sphere without losing their religious identity. Therefore, Habermas speaks of "epistemische Einstellung" (epistemic attitude) (Hardiman, 2009), namely that when I leave the uniqueness of my house of faith and enter the public sphere, I must no longer speak only based on the contents of my faith but must also be able to listen to others (Krzysztof, 2019). Habermas strongly believes that in the era of globalisation, which opens new opportunities for communication between secular and religious thought, religion can open itself to change by achieving a more pluralist-cosmopolitan insight (Kedziora, 2019). However, is it possible for us to translate the unique epistemic content of religious beliefs into rational discourse that is full of mutual understanding? According to Habermas, this may be because in a pluralistic society, citizens must work hard to address post-secularism's challenges. Fanatical attitudes in the form of hard secularism or religious radicalism are not very useful for building mutual understanding in today's pluralistic society (Mahadevan, 2018).

4. CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, identity politics can be good and evil. Identity politics is good when it becomes a tool for the political struggle of minority groups to escape injustice or oppression by the state or majority group. However, identity politics can be bad when it metamorphoses into identity politicisation or stream politics, and this is always possible. Different from identity politics, identity politicisation is bad per se, because this action eliminates rationality from democracy and thickens narrow sentimentality to win electoral contests. Exploiting religious sentiment can create horizontal conflict between religious adherents, while exploitation of regionalism can create vertical conflict between regions and the centre.

In this case, democracy does provide space for each party to participate and achieve their interests based on identity. However, politicisation of identity by exploiting religious or ethnic sentiments can weaken the values of democracy itself. This condition must be overcome. However, the way to overcome the distortion of democracy is not to return to autocracy like the New Order regime or to the aristocratic system of the past. However, instead of democracy, all parties are given space to debate and speak out to find a new consensus supporting democratic values and life together as multicultural citizens.

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