Political Strategy of Islamophobia in Indonesia: From the Old Order to the Reform Era

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to uncover the models and forms of Islamophobia practised by the political regime in power in Indonesia. This study also analyses why the government in power in Indonesia makes policies and takes actions that lead to Islamophobia. This article uses qualitative explanatory methods. The data sources come from in-depth interviews with various informants and data is also collected through a literature study by exploring relevant data from various sources that can be accessed online, including books, journals, websites, and news portals. This study found that the political motives and strategies of the ruling regime in making policies and taking actions were based on Islamophobia, namely by diminishing the political power of Islam in Indonesia and eliminating its influence, which could disrupt the continuity of the ruling regime, which is controlled by nationalist groups. That way, the government can maintain power and carry out its agendas.
Keywords: *Islamophobia; Indonesia; Regime Political; New Order*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of Islamophobia generally occurs in Western and Eastern European countries, especially in Germany, France, Sweden, and Norway. Islamophobia in Western and Eastern Europe takes the form of destructive acts and persecution against Muslim minorities. Muslims in Eastern Europe are a minority group that is vulnerable to prejudice and bad actions of Islamic haters (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). In Western Europe, prejudice and ill-treatment against Muslims are juxtaposed with discussions about gender, emancipation, and other feminist ideologies (Midden & Ponzanesi, 2013). In the United States, Islamophobia occurs in the workplaces, particularly in terms of recruiting Muslim employee candidates.

Many prospective Muslim employees applying for jobs in the Northeastern United States such as Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, are only accepted no more than one-third. The answers given to them via email and telephone were less than the other groups (Wright et al., 2013). Muslim students in educational institutions or schools also got acts of intolerance and hostility by students from other religions, which are shown in the classroom. This kind of action has strengthened since 2016 (Martin & Smith, 2020). In addition, Muslim women who wear the hijab also received unpolite treatment than other women who do not wear the hijab or other non-Muslim women (Abdelhadi, 2019).

Islamophobia in the form of acts of discrimination against Muslim women who wear the hijab also occurs in France. They are prohibited from gaining public access and are considered a threat to public safety. Their presence is closely monitored. Muslim women are the most discriminated against, sometimes even being attacked in public when they appear religious. Discrimination and other Islamophobic treatment are sometimes also demonstrated in public facilities and tourist attractions such as on the beach (Hancock & Mobillion, 2019). In Britain, Islamophobes disband the activities of Muslim-affiliated groups (DasGupta & Dasgupta, 2018). Tensions often occur between Muslims and the police (Awan et al., 2013). In Norway, the threat of violence occurs to Muslim minority groups, which is caused by the prejudice that Muslim minority groups support violent efforts carried out by Muslims in other countries (Tahir et al., 2019).

Ali Aslan has conducted research related to Islamophobia and found that Islamophobia in Turkey has a role in building the modern Turkish state, such as replacing the Ottoman Sultanate with a secular Turkish Republic which lasted until 2000. In Turkey, Islamophobia succeeded in turning their country into a secular nationalist. The transformation started from emptying the authority of religion and morality (Islam) from anything including politics so

that politics became separated and independent from religion and the government of the sultanate has been changed to a parliamentary government (Aslan, 2018). Tahir Abbas, researched Islamophobia after 9/11, which related to the effects of attacks on Islamophobic tendencies that damaged relations between Muslims in Britain and the British government and society in general (Abbas, 2004). Another research related to Islamophobia was carried out by Mattias Ekman who examined the attitudes of right-wing parties in Europe that made Islamophobia material for political campaigns (Ekman, 2015).

Moordiningsih's research on Islamophobia in Indonesia reveals that from a psychological perspective, Islamophobia arises from social prejudice. This prejudice arises from negative behaviors or attitudes carried out by members of the non-Muslim community towards Islam and Muslims. These prejudices lead to discriminatory attitudes. Discrimination does not appear suddenly but is an accumulation of prejudices that occur because of limited information or negative information received for a long time (Moordiningsih, 2004). Several other studies related to Islamophobia in Indonesia were also carried out by Abdul Aziz, with a focus on efforts to counter Islamophobia (Aziz, 2016), Islamophobic discourse in the mass media (Amalia & Haris, 2019), and the causes and ways of overcoming Islamophobia (Istriyani & Yuliatun, 2016).

These studies state that Islamophobia arises from social prejudice against Muslims, which tends to show different attitudes from the perceptions of most groups in society. Therefore, as a socio-religious symptom, Islamophobia becomes something that leads to negativity, in the form of perceptions, prejudices, and actions directed at Muslims. There is also research that links Islamophobia to the rise of modern Turkey, and the use of Islamophobia by political parties during general elections. Various efforts have been made to overcome Islamophobia in certain circles, so that Islamophobia does not continue to occur, especially after the 9/11 incident in the United States.

To complete the number of studies above, we conducted this research to describe the policies and actions of the Islamophobic regime that ruled Indonesia after independence until now, to be precise in the Old Order, New Order, and Reform Order eras. This research analyzes how Islamophobic actions and policies are used as a political strategy by the regime that is currently in power in Indonesia. This study provides another perspective in the study of political science, that Islamophobia is not just a socio-religious symptom that occurs in Europe, America and others, but clearly provides a picture that Islamophobia is more of a political strategy carried out by the ruling regime to gain political power and support, so that the ruling regime continues to gain political power. Islamophobia carried out by the ruling regime in Indonesia in various policies and political actions.

RESEARCH METHOD

Using an explanative qualitative method. According to Petter Næss, qualitative research can use an explanatory research approach that explains how and why something can happen, including in actions and behavior (Næss, 2016). This research was conducted to describe Islamophobic attitudes, actions, and policies, as well as the accusations that the ruling regime in Indonesia had against Islam and Muslims after independence in 1945. The government in question started from the Old Order led by Soekarno, the New Order led by Suharto, and the Reform Order led by Joko Widodo. Every political leadership in every era will be clearly explained. Then the related data is analyzed and explained, along with the attitudes, policies, and actions of the ruling regime in Indonesia about its political strategy.

Data collection in this study was carried out through a literature study by exploring relevant data from various sources that can be accessed online, including books, journals, websites, and news portals. The data that has been collected about Islamopobhia from the first sources were examined, refined, and organized into this article. The first source is used as a reference so that the level of accuracy and validation can be accounted for. Most of the journals

and books that are the source of this research data are indexed internationally by Scopus and nationally accredited by Sinta.

Table 1. Media Used as a Source of Research Data

No.	Name of Media	Title of News	Years Published
1	Bbc.com	*"UIN Rector: Banning the veil to prevent radicalism and fundamentalism"*	2017
2	CNNIndonesia.com	*"Police Detect Signs of Anarchy in Action 212"*	2017
3	Kompas.com	*"HTI Officially Disbanded by the Government"*	2017
4	Tirto.id	*"List of names of 200 preachers released by the Ministry of Religion"*	2018
5	Okezone.com	*"GP Ansor Rejects Ustadz Abdul Somad's Lecture in Jepara"*	2018
6	Kumparan.com	*"Dissolution of Ustaz Firanda's Recitation in Aceh, This is the Committee's Explanation"*	2019
7	Republika.co.id	*"Positive Ministry of Religion Removes the Caliphate and War from the Curriculum"*	2019
8	Tempo.co	*"Chronology of the Disbandment of Ansor's Version of Felix Siauw's Lecture in Bangil"*	2019

Source: Various Online Media, 2020

Data collection was carried out by in-depth interviews with various competent informants in discussing the theme of Islamophobia in Indonesia. As qualitative research, according to Petter Naes, data collection can be done by means of interviews (Naes, 2020). Because this research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, in-depth interviews were not directed face-to-face, but by telephone which was recorded and documented.

This research interview was conducted with expert informants. According to Beate Littig and Franz Pöchhacker, the use of expert informants in their fields in qualitative research interviews can prevent researchers from biased interpretation of interview material or results (Littig & Pöchhacker, 2014). Empirical research involving experts in interview activities in data collection is common, has developed and been widely used since 1990 (Meuser

& Nagel, 2009). The informants interviewed were experts or specialists in the field of religion relevant to the topic of Islamophobia. The informants interviewed consisted of professors at various campuses in several universities in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Islamophobia Regime in Indonesia

It is necessary to investigate why the relationship between religion and state sometimes triggers a dynamic that arouses suspicion. Likewise, Muslims in Indonesia whose role in establishing this country can be seen from the participation of political figures in formulating the state. This can be seen from the active role of representatives of Muslims in the Indonesian Independence Preparatory Investigation Agency on March 1, 1945, and the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence on August 7, 1945 (Latief, 2022). The process of Indonesia's journey as a state, Islam, and the *ummah* in every ruling regime is in a position of being cornered, under suspicion, and even being accused.

The history of Muslim leadership in Indonesia has gone through three phases: First, the romantic stage in which Islamic leaders intend to establish an Islamic state based on what Muslims want, regardless of the objective conditions of Muslims (Kadir, 1999). Second, Masyumi (read: Indonesian Syuro Muslim Council) wanted an Islamic state, theocracy, and democracy (Barton, 2011). Third, Islamic thought concentrated on political thought and began to grow and develop in other fields, such as Islamic economics and Islamic banking (Liddle, 1996). During the Old Order era, Muslim leaders used a political strategy with an ideological system. Initially, this thought did not frighten nationalists. However, through a historical process and various interpretations, this thought has become a threat which then gave birth to a phobic attitude towards the idea of an Islamic state.

The state's phobia towards Islam during the Old Order period was not solely due to religious factors, but rather to political factors. The beginning of

the dispute between Soekarno and M. Natsir began with the determination of the concept of nationality. According to Natsir, the state idea developed by Indonesia must be an Islamic one. This is based on the historical fact that Islam originally defined Indonesian citizenship which consists of various islands. Islamic nationality also does not stop at independence, it even continues as long as the legal structure of the Indonesian state has not been implemented. According to Natsir, Islam is an eternal social system that is always suitable for all times and places as well as a complete social system (Noor, 2016). There are at least two main causes that trigger the emergence of phobia against Islam in Indonesia. First, the problem of position and power in government. During the democratic era, Masyumi, represented by M. Natsir, was very dominant in government, while Nationalism, represented by Soekarno, had very limited authority. Therefore, Soekarno tried to eliminate the Masyumi Party on the pretext that Masyumi would establish an Islamic state. Second, there are fundamental differences in democracy. Soekarno wanted guided democracy, while Natsir rejected and opposed guided democracy (Demir & Barton, 2023).

After Soekarno issued the Decree on July 5, 1959, Parliamentary Democracy was replaced with Guided Democracy. Masyumi faced Nationalism with political resistance. However, Soekarno developed an issue that was able to corner Natsir (Masyumi) and Muslims to believe him more. The form of phobia spread by the Old Order regime under Soekarno's leadership towards Muslims was that Masyumi was the party that was the obstacle to the revolution in Indonesia. Then, Islamic figures who are members of it are categorized as enemies who must be eliminated. The Old Order regime adopted a policy of including Islamic parties other than Masyumi into the Muslim League in collaboration with Soekarno, while Masyumi in 1960 was dissolved by its figures who opposed the regime's policies and was arrested, imprisoned, and exiled (Siregar, 2011).

Soekarno emphasized his position in Nationalism, Religion, and Communism (Nasakom), with propaganda that religion if it was not

juxtaposed with Nationalism and Communism would be meaningless. In this context, the state must be present to ensure that all groups accept this concept. Muslims who rejected the concept of Nasakom were made enemies of the state. The concept of Nasakom raises resistance from every citizen, especially among the students. All pesantren in Java refused and put up a fight. To deal with this, the Old Order regime adopted a policy of "*splitting bamboo*". The a*bangan* group, supporters of Nasakom, were used as a tool against the santri. The result was the horizontal conflict between abangan and santri. The fight, which was originally limited to ideas and thoughts, turns into a physical conflict when there is no common ground (Mustapa & Hamid, 2024). The Old Order was afraid of the vocal power of the ulama at that time.

> "The arrests of the ulama that occurred during the Old Order era are a manifestation of the government's fear of Islam. This fear is purely from the government, the people are not afraid of Islam." (Interview with Prof. Dr. SC, M.A, June 21, 2020).
> There is a phenomenon of the Old Order regime's fear of the ulama's

power at that time.

> "Islamophobia exists in Indonesia, such as the arrests of ulama during the Old Order era. Islamophobia is the fear of Islam by people in power, that is, those who feel harassed by Islam. If an Islamic party wins, of course, the party member who becomes president will pay attention to the Muslim budget. This is what people who understand Islamophobia are afraid of." (Interview with Prof. Dr. H. HN, M.A., North Sumatra, June 22, 2020).
> Islamophobia was experienced by the Old Order government by

arresting and persecuting clerics.

> The arrest of clerics like Hamka is also an act of the Islamophobic government. At that time Hamka often criticized the government, which when linked to the government's will is the opposite." (Interview with Prof. Dr. Drs. H. US, M.A., West Java, June 22, 2020).
> Under the leadership of General Soeharto, the New Order had a phobia

attitude towards Islam. Soeharto regarded Islam and Muslims as a threat and disturbance to national stability. Soeharto's policies also significantly marginalized Islam and Muslims from their sphere of power (Zuhri, 2021). Soeharto banned the use of Islam as a basis for Islamic organizations and

Islamic political parties in Indonesia and replaced it as the sole principle of Pancasila. All organizations in Indonesia must make Pancasila the only direction (Aspinall & Fealy, 2010). Soeharto banned the Masyumi Party (Indonesian Syuro Muslim Council), including the dissolution of Islamic parties Nahdlatul Ulama, Perti, Parmusi, and PSII. Soeharto only allowed one party, PPP (the United Development Party) with the Pancasila as the basis (Mujani & Liddle, 2010). Not only there, Soeharto then arrested and imprisoned a large number of Islamic figures, including Sri Bintang Pamungkas, Abdul Kadir Jailani, and AM. Fatwa (Fealy, 2004).

Not only in political activities, the attitude of Islamophobia Soeharto, including in clothing. Soeharto banned students from wearing the veil at school. Triggers many students to move from public schools to religious schools (Meilinawati, 2016). On public campuses that began to bloom religious activities, did not escape the target of Soeharto Islamophobia. To reduce the dynamics and rampant Islamic activities among students, especially those studying at public campuses, Suharto implemented the NKK-BKK (Normalization Program for Campus Life/ Student Coordination Body). Soeharto became closer to the military by implementing the dual military functions and the police (Crouch, 1988). Including the increasingly repressive of Islamic groups by carrying out killings of Islamic groups in various regions in Indonesia, including the shooting of the recitation worshipers in Tanjung Priok, 1984 (Akmaliah, 2014), the Talangsari tragedy, 1989 (Akmaliah, 2016), until the tragedy of Haor Koneng, 1993 (Suh, 2016). In areas that want the application of Islamic Sharia such as Aceh, known as "Serambi Mekah" or the "Veranda of Mecca", not answered by dialogue and listening to the aspirations of the people, but by carrying out military operations, so that in the future old Aceh became a Military Operations Area (Sulistiyanto, 2001).

Under General Suharto's leadership, the New Order also had a phobic attitude towards Islam. Suharto's policies also significantly marginalized Islam and Muslims from his territory. Soeharto prohibited the use of Islam as the

basis for Islamic organizations and Islamic political parties in Indonesia and made Pancasila the only basic principle for any organization. Apart from political activities, Suharto's Islamophobia was also shown in matters of dress. He prohibits students from wearing the veil at school, which triggers many students to move from public schools to religious schools. On public campuses, where religious activities began to flourish, Soeharto's Islamophobia was also targeted.

> "Soeharto, apart from hating Islam, also hates political parties, so that in the eyes of the world, especially the United States, he looks democratic: it is possible to have political parties, even though they are only the flower of democracy." (Interview with Prof. Dr. SC, M.A, June 21, 2020).

After the New Order era, the reform era was born. In this era, acts of violence and terror occurred in several regions in Indonesia. Perpetrators of violence and terror are often set to use Islamic attributes, causing fear and suspicion of Muslims (Erzad & Suciati, 2018). During the Reform Order under the Joko Widodo administration, the government took several political policies that were considered Islamophobic. Any movement that is considered to have the potential to awaken the power of Muslims is always monitored, prevented, and dissolved by the government. Negative issues were blown against Muslims, such as being ridden by certain interests, or the politicization of identity in the name of religion (Ahyar & Alfitri, 2019), and accusations that they were anarchists, and so on, which were not proven at all.

In 2017, the Joko Widodo administration also disbanded Islamic organizations that were accused of having anti-Pancasila ideology (Kompas.com, 2017), although these allegations were not proven. In the same year, this regime also issued a non-Law Government Regulation Number 2 of 2017, which replaced Law Number 17 of 2013 concerning mass organization, which aims to supervise and disband mass organizations that have the potential to be anti-Pancasila. In addition, in 2018, the regime through the Ministry of Religion determined 200 names of Indonesian preachers, whom they accused of being anti-Pancasila (Tirto.id, 2018).

In this era, religious authority appears to have the regime's supporters. This authority was then followed by the dissolution and expulsion of several ulama from the Islamic study forum which they fostered. The disbandment & expulsion occurred in various regions in Indonesia, such as that experienced by Abdul Somad in Jepara (Okezone.com, 2018), Hanan Attaki in Tegal (Kumparan.com, 2019), Bachtiar Nasir in Malang (Kumparan.com, 2020), Khalid Basalamah in Sidoarjo (Republika.co.id, 2017), Felix Siauw in Pasuruan (Tempo.co, 2017), Firanda Andirja in Aceh (Kumparan.com, 2019), and others. As for the masses who carried out the anarchist dispersal, they were not legally processed. This kind of neglect is part of the current regime's Islamophobic strategy. In 2019, the Joko Widodo regime prohibited the State Civil Apparatus from wearing the veil (*niqab*) for women and trousers over the ankles or "*cingkrang*" pants for men while working in the office (BBC.com, 2019). The regime identifies men who wear robes or robes and trousers over their ankles as individuals who are involved in acts of terrorism. This instruction is also enforced in Indonesian universities, including Islamic universities (Republika.co.id, 2018). The Chancellor at one of the Islamic tertiary institutions even decided to drop out of one of his active students, who had a *niqab* (BBC.com, 2018). This still happens, even though the ban on the use of the *niqab* cannot be immediately accepted in every region in Indonesia because several autonomous regions apply Islamic clothing such as in Aceh.

Actually, wearing the veil by women is a sign that they have "migrated" from bad behaviour to better behavior, and men who wear *cingkrang* pants are a sign that they have cleaned up and started to apply the Prophet's sunnah in their daily life. However, this argument was not accepted by the regime even by Islamic universities. They still hold the view that students who have faith have been exposed to radicalism, even though radical indicators cannot be measured from the way someone dresses. Apart from the dress codes, the regime's Ministry of Religion has also removed the caliphate and jihad material from the educational curriculum. This is regulated in the Decree of the Director

General of Islamic Education Number 3751, 5162, and 5161 of 2018 concerning Technical Guidelines for Learning Outcomes at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Madrasah Tsanawiah, and Madrasah Aliyah (Republika.co.id, 2019). Islamophobic actions in Indonesia during the Reformation Order were more like representing political groups for short-term goals.

> "I see that the dissolution of the Islamic study forum which was carried out on Ustadz Abdul Somad was more of a political nature because it was considered to support Prabowo, and this was only for a moment. If the election was over, it wouldn't be like this. The recommendation to ban the 200 ustadz was also not objective, but rather political. If you want to be fair do it right like a teacher. Tested by all preachers, clerics who meet the requirements or not, then they will be given professional certification." (Interview with Prof. Dr. Drs. H. US, M.A., West Java, June 22, 2020).

The actions of the Reform Order regime were very strong with political nuances in policymaking.

> "The ban on the veil and pants for ASN, and the elimination of caliphate and jihad material in the Islamic education curriculum, I see that is still a discourse. However, the political configuration will indeed affect legal products. It is not easy to make it a legal or legal product like what happened in the New Order era, more as a regime political instrument." (Interview with Prof. Dr. H. MT, M.Ag., Saturday 20, 2020).

Islamophobia Regime Political Strategy in Indonesia

This research finds that Islamophobia is part of the political strategy of the ruling regime in Indonesia to continue to perpetuate its power. This has been going on since the Old Order regime under President Soekarno, the New Order under Suharto's supervision, and the Reformation Order under the direction of Joko Widodo. As a political strategy, the forms of Islamophobia practiced by each regime have different patterns and forms from one another. During the Old Order regime, Islamophobia originated from the repeal of the seven main sentences in Pancasila. Soekarno, who was known to be close to the communist group, tried to eliminate the domination of Islam as a political force in Indonesia during the early days of independence. This can be seen from the efforts made to combine religious nationalism and communism

through the movement known as Nasakom, and continued until he delivered one of his famous speeches, which was later written into a book entitled "Islam Sontoloyo." Soekarno also made Islamophobic policies through his political movement by dissolving the Masyumi Party, which at that time became the second largest political party after the Indonesian National Party (PNI) led by Soekarno.

The New Order regime carried out Islamophobic policies and actions by prohibiting the wearing of the hijab for Muslim students who attend public schools. Soeharto also did not allow the Masyumi Party to return to Indonesia and prohibited the use of Islamic principles or principles for the United Development Party, as the only party to shelter Indonesian Muslims. Soeharto also arrested Islamic leaders who were vocal about the government. He also carried out repressive actions in the Tanjung Priok case. The Reform Order under the regime led by Joko Widodo also carried out an Islamophobic policy. They manifest some of these Islamophobic attitudes in the prohibition of state civil servants from wearing the niqab for women and *cingkrang* pants for men; removing learning about jihad and the caliphate from school materials; limiting and selecting clerics according to the criteria they specify; and dissolve Islamic mass organizations that are not in line with them.

Many studies conducted by previous researchers explain that Islamophobia rests on two things. First, on the consequences of the prolonged war (can be seen in the writings of Huntington and Fukuyama). Together with their adherents and supporters, the major ideologies in the world continue to fight for domination to win further battles and lead the world (Jackson & Xidias, 2017). In a war situation, of course, one side and the other see each other as enemies. Likewise, what happened between Islam and the West, which faced diametrically, led to a clash between Islam (Muslim) and the West (Huntington, 1993). In this context, combat consists of two parts: pre-11/9 and post-11/9. Before the events of 9/11, the tendency not to accept things related to Islam had occurred in various parts of the world in various forms and

characteristics. According to Sriram, the anti-Muslim sentiment that has developed in America is rooted in the biopower concept put forward by Foucault, 1978 and the concept of homo saucer by Agamben, 1998 (Sriram, 2016).

Can see in Turkey as did Kemal Attaturk, who made many changes to Turkey's various Islamic practices and traditions with something considered modern. The Islamic tradition was connoted as something that is no longer compatible with everyday life. Ali Aslan argued that Islamophobia in Turkey had a role in developing the Modern Turkish state, namely succeeding in replacing the Ottoman Empire with the secular Turkish Republic. In Turkey, Islamophobia is carried out by attempting to vacate religious authority and traditions in Turkish society's political and social life. So, for a relatively long time, Turkish people are accustomed to habits and life not related to religion, including political life. The political practice that has been happening in Turkey is the sultan's leadership which is inherited from Islamic politics, shifted to the parliamentary traditions originating from the West. One form of Islamophobia can be discovered in Turkey. Mustafa Kemal has made many changes to various Turkish Islamic practices and traditions with something that is considered modern, including replacing the legacy of the Islamic caliphate government system with a western heritage parliamentary democracy. Islamic tradition connotes something that is no longer suitable for everyday life. Islamophobia in Turkey played a role in building a modern Turkish state, replacing the Ottoman Sultanate with the secular Turkish Republic. Islamophobia is carried out by emptying religious authority and traditions in the political and social life of Turkish society, so that in a relatively long period Turkish society is accustomed to non-religious life, including political life (Aslan, 2018).

Next is the war that occurred after 9/11. The effects of Islamophobia from the events of 9/11 damaged the relationship between Muslims in Britain and the government and British society in general (Abbas, 2004).

Islamophobia in European countries has resulted in accusations that Muslims in Europe are the same as the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). After 9/11, Muslim women in America, especially those wearing the hijab, received discrimination in the form of lower wages than other women who did not veil or non-Muslim women (Abdelhadi, 2019). and Muslim employee candidates are treated differently from non-Muslim employee candidates (Wright et al., 2013). After 9/11, acts of discrimination against Muslim women wearing hijab took place in France. They are prohibited from getting public access. Their presence is monitored because it is considered a threat to public safety. These Muslim women are sometimes even attacked in public when they look religious. Discrimination and Islamophobic treatment often occur in public facilities and holiday vacation spots such as on the beaches (Hancock & Mobillion, 2019). The dissolution of Muslim-affiliated groups occurred after 9/11 in the UK (DasGupta & Dasgupta, 2018). In Norway, the threat of violence befell the Muslim community because it is considered to support violent efforts carried out by "the accused of 9/11", especially Muslims, (Tahir et al., 2019).

Islamophobia is an attempt to consolidate political support. Islamophobic attitudes and actions are intended to gain the sympathy and political support of voters. Halliday said, in Denmark, the People's Party made Islamophobia its main program. Likewise with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India. In the 1997 election campaign, this party campaigned by raising three main issues related to Islamophobia. The campaign is carried out openly and through mass media and social media. The Islamophobia campaign was carried out by the BJP subtly by positioning Islam under other religions adhered to by the majority of Indian society (Halliday, 1999). Right-wing parties in Europe also use Islamophobia as a political strategy. Republican politicians in the United States also use Islamophobia as a political campaign. Islamophobia is a political machine that continues to be produced to create fear by campaigning for violence that Muslim groups are accused of having

(Ekman, 2015).

Islamophobia in Indonesia is carried out by the regime that is currently in power, such as the Old Order, the New Order, and the Reform Order. These regimes use the Islamophobia syndrome to weaken the political power of Muslims in Indonesia as the majority population. If the Muslim group wins the battle in the political field, then this will be a threat to the ruling regime which has declared itself a nationalist group. Since the Old Order, the New Order to the Reform Order, the president has always represented nationalist groups. The polarization of political power in Indonesia has long been divided into two schools: Islam and nationalism.

Several researchers have also examined the divisions of Islamist and nationalist groups in Indonesia. Islamophobia is very prominent in the political dimension, as well as dislike and hatred of Islam because it is considered to weaken the political legitimacy of the rulers.

> "So Islam is not considered a religious force, but a political force that can weaken the will of the ruler. So the goal is for political interests, Islam becomes a political threat that threatens the legitimacy of power that is owned or in the hands of the rulers authority." (Interview with Dr. ZR, MA, West Sumatra, May 20, 2020).

Political polarization in Indonesia the political power of Islam in Indonesia was considered a threat because Islamic groups always struggled to defend Islamic ideology in the political world. Political polarization between Islamist and nationalist groups has continued and tapered off at certain momentum. However, the persistence of Islamic and nationalist polarization will hinder communication between the two political groups in Indonesia.

> "I see Islamophobic actions carried out by the government as a form of protection for the nation's ideology. From the Old Order, the New Order, and the Reformation, the pattern adopted by the government is almost the same. I see Joko Widodo as a national entity stronger than a religious entity, a diversity entity stronger than a religious entity. So he will seriously take action that is considered threatening this problem." (Interview with Prof. Dr. M, SS, M.Si., M.Sc., Ph.D., West Java, June 23, 2020).

At the beginning of the independence era, when the Old Order under

the leadership of President Soekarno came to power, apart from Islamism and nationalism there was communism. Communism fronted by the Indonesian Kominis Party (PKI) at that time became a very calculated political force. Because he saw the three points as being balanced, President Soekarno tried to unify the three of them in the jargon of "Nasakom" in 1955. The PKI vote in the general election in that year occupied the fourth position after PNI, Masyumi, and NU. PKI votes reached 16 percent. In Yogyakarta, the PKI even won more votes than Masyumi and NU. After the PKI could no longer participate in the elections, the political forces that opposed Soekarno were Masyuni and NU. Because of Islamopobhia, Sukarno then disbanded Masjumi, and arrested and imprisoned its leaders. After Masyumi was dissolved, there were relatively no political forces that the Soekarno regime considered as opponents until it shifted to Suharto.

General Suharto, who led the New Order regime, also came from nationalist circles. He is also very phobic towards Islamic groups. The political power of Islam is paralyzed so that it is free to carry out all policies in its government without having any political enemies at all. The remaining Islamic parties were merged into the PPP on the condition that they have to replace their Islamic principles with the Pancasila principles. Figures suspected of having the potential to interfere with the government were arrested, jailed, or executed by military action. The political power of the New Order regime under General Suharto was so extreme that no political power could match it. Soeharto ran the government by relying on three forces: ABRI, the bureaucracy, and Golkar. Soeharto reduced the power of political Islam in Indonesia for 32 years until the reformation event in 1998. Soeharto was later replaced by his deputy, Habibie. The transitional period of Habibie's government then brought Abdurrahman Wahid to become President, who before the end of his term was replaced by his deputy, Megawati.

The presidential election which was held in 2004 then led Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) to become President for two terms (2004 - 2014).

In the 2014 presidential election, Joko Widodo, a cadre from the PDIP who was originally the mayor of Solo and the Governor of DKI Jakarta was elected President until now. The Reform Order, especially under President Joko Widodo, was very Islamophobic and very much in control of the intensity of Islamic groups both as parties and as mass organizations. Muslim figures both outside the party and mass organizations were "silenced" by all. The 212 incident which was initiated by Habib Riziq Shihab to punished Ahok relatively did not interfere with Joko Widodo's government so that he was relatively smooth in carrying out his political agenda without any significant opposition.

Islamophobia that occurs in Indonesia can be seen as political competition.

"Who wants to sit back when the opponent gets stronger? Islamophobia entered the Old Order through the PKI, the New Order considered Islam and the Islamic Party (PPP) as rivals that had to be weakened or removed (by Golkar). The reformed order is more sophisticated because it is not straightforward, uses anti-terrorism jargon, but uses the term dumb or obsolete as "entrance", which is Islamophobia." (Interview with Prof. Dr. S, SA, MA, West Sumatra, May 15, 2020).

"Suppressing the political power of Islam does not provide space for them to gain extraordinary political advantages. However, by rubbing the political power of Islam to its full potential, there is not the slightest bit of room for Islamic political power, so that they can move together. called Political Ideology." (Interview with Dr. ZR, MA, West Sumatra, May 20, 2020).

Islamophobia in Indonesia is an expression of the ongoing polarization of identity politics between Islamists and nationalists. Throughout the Indonesian political regime, from the Old Order, the New Order, to the Reform Order, except for Abdurrahman Wahid, all those in power were nationalist rulers. Then all the policies and actions of the Islamophobes of the ruling regime so far are the strategies of the nationalist political forces to continue to strengthen their power. That way, the political power of nationalist groups was getting stronger, while Islamic political groups were increasingly marginalized and unable to fight politically.

As a political strategy, Islamophobia in Indonesia is by forming a

political attitude in the majority of voters or citizens in Indonesia, that certain Islamic groups, especially political Islamic groups, are common enemies, especially by nationalist groups. This is intended to form togetherness among nationalist groups spread across various political parties, civil society groups and religious organizations. At the same time, these groups also show their partisanship and support for the ruling regime that carries out Islamophobic politics, on the grounds that certain Islamic groups are a threat to these groups.

CONCLUSION

Islamophobia occurred in Indonesia by the political regime that was in power, starting from the Old Order, the New Order, and the Reform Order. The government uses an Islamophobic strategy in Indonesia to dwarf the strength of Islamic groups and eliminate their influence on society. The Islamophobic policies and practices implemented by the ruling regime in Indonesia are not a response to the actions and behavior of certain Islamic groups that disrupt or threaten the existence of the ruling regime, but rather as policies and actions to gain sympathy from groups or voters who dislike certain Islamic groups. Certain Islamic groups that practice certain religious actions and behaviors are in the minority, while groups that dislike these groups are on the majority side. So that siding with the majority group is politically beneficial to the ruling regime. The Islamophobic policies and actions carried out by the ruling regime in Indonesia can be a strength for the majority of nationalist groups and most Muslims in Indonesia in the form of political support. However, this cannot be the only factor, because factors outside of politics, such as the economy, can also be important factors for the government to gain support. If the ruling regime is successful in managing economic growth and improving welfare and services for citizens, then the Islamophobia carried out by the ruling regime can strengthen political support. However, if the opposite is true, it can actually be a boomerang that is detrimental to the ruling regime politically.

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