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Religious Identity and National Conflict in the 20th Century Indonesia

Andreas Jonathan
ICRS-UGM, Yogyakarta
email: anjo.icrs@gmail.com

Abstract

This study attempts to discuss on how religious identities contribute to or was in conflict with the emerging national identities, with focusing issue on the struggle of Islam in its relation to Indonesian identity as a multi-religious nation and Pancasila state. Based on the critical analysis from the various literatures, the result of the study showed that Islam did both contribute and was in conflict with the Indonesian national identity. The Islamist fights for the Islamic state, the nationalist defends Pancasila state. As long as Islam is the majority in Indonesia and as long as there is diversity in Islam, especially in the interpretation of Islam and the state, Indonesian national identity will always be in conflict between Pancasila state and Islamic state. Even though, the role of religion in society and nation change is very significant. The Islamist is always there, although it is not always permanent in certain organizations. In the past, NU and Muhammadiyah were considered as Islamist, but today they are nationalist. At the same time, new Islamist organizations and parties emerge to continue their Islamist spirit.

Keywords:
Islam, Religious identity, Pancasila

Introduction

National identity of Indonesia has been a big issue since it was founded in 1945, in particular the issue of *Negara Pancasila* (Pancasila State) versus Islamic State. Although Pancasila was accepted as the basis and state ideology, it does not mean that the challenge has stopped. Out of

the five principles (*sila*), the first *sila* "*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*" (Belief in One God) that always becomes the hot issue, mainly because Indonesia is a multi-religious nation though Islam is the majority. Indonesia is neither a state that is based on one religion nor a secular state. Nevertheless, the existence of religions in Indonesia is very significant and closely related to the social and political dynamics of the Republic.

So, how did religious identities contribute to or was in conflict with the emerging national identities? The discussion will be focused on the struggle of Islam in its relation to Indonesian identity as a multi-religious nation and Pancasila state. Since Islam is the major religion in Indonesia (80%) and in the history of Indonesia showed that the change of Islam has impacted the nation significantly. The fact that there are various Islamic groups in Indonesia leads to a dynamic discussion both internally among the Islamic groups as well as between Islamic and non-Islamic groups in the 20th century Indonesia.

The Shift of Religions in Nusantara

Indonesia (Nusantara) is a multi-cultural country because it is a nation that unites hundreds of ethnic groups. It is also a multi-religious nation because each ethnic group has their own indigenous belief which is called animism by some modern people. Not only the "heterogeneous animism"[1](Reid 1993) of these ethnic groups, but also the mixture with some foreign "scriptural religions"[2] that entered the region more than a millennium ago (Corbett-Hemeyer, 2016; Halikioupoulou & Vasilopoulou, 2016; Narayanan, 2016; Pratt & Pratt, 2016). Nusantara was once under

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1 This term is used by Anthony Reid in the Syllabus of Religious Change and Social Change in Southeast Asia's Long Term.

2 "Scriptural religions" is also used by Reid in the same Syllabus. It refers to what commonly called 'world religions" like Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

a Buddhist kingdom Sriwijaya in the 7th to 14th century[3], and then under a Hindu kingdom Majapahit in the 14th to 16th century[4]. After the rule of Majapahit, Nusantara was Islamized in a relatively short period, but it had never been an Islamic kingdom that ruled over Nusantara because Christianity (both Catholicism and Protestantism) arrived in some parts of Nusantara in about the same period while Islamization was in process (Reid 1993).

Regarding the Islamization of Java, Sri Margana says, "The Kingdom of Majapahit finally collapsed in the 1530s. On the north coast of Java, Demak, the first Islamic Kingdom in the island, was established in 1513. Ten years later of the former Majapahit territory was already Islamized at least nominally… with the fall of Majapahit, Blambangan was left as the only Hindu Kingdom in Java"(Margana 2007).

The Islamization of Java and Nusantara was part of the Islamization of Southeast Asia that started in the 14th century but it reached its great success in the 16th to 17th century (Reid 2000). In the case of Java, at least there were two dominant factors that supported the success of Islamization: military conquest and Sufi missionaries. While the former spread Islam by force, the latter spread Islam by culture and mysticism (Birchok 2015; R.W. Hefner 2009; Khalid 2014; Reid 2000; Salim 2008). Both Anthony Reid and M. C. Ricklefs agreed that the impact of Sufism was significant for Islam in Java. It was showed by some evidence of cultural and mystic synthesis like mosques and holy tombs were built that mixed the Hindu Majapahit ornaments and Javanese *pendopo* with the ritual needs of Islam; the creation of masked drama by Sunan Kali Jaga; the transformation of art performance by *wayang* (Javanese shadow puppet show); and the Javanese manuscript (*serat* and *suluk*) indicated a deep interest of Islamic scholarly tradition of mystical union with God (Reid

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3 See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Srivijaya

4 See http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majapahit

2000) (Ricklefs 2006).

This mystic synthesis Islam was not the only kind of Islam in Java and Nusantara, particularly in the 19th century when the number of *hajis* that led a reform movement was increasing (R.W. Hefner, 2013; Kuipers & Askuri, 2017; Rickfles, 2007). This reform movement was anti mystic synthesis and called Muslims for pure Islam and *shariah*. This movement was supported by the Arab communities on Java's *pesisir* (north coastline). Since then, the Muslim society was polarized into two groups: the shariah-oriented and the mystic synthesis groups. This polarization more or less has been continued until today, although it has much more variants. In relation to the discussion in this paper, the polarization is manifested in the Islamist and the nationalist groups. The Islamist is shariah-oriented and pro-Islamic state, while the nationalist is Pancasila-oriented and against Islamic state.

Islamist – Nationalist Conflict

The struggle of the Islamist – Nationalist conflicts that have been present as old as the republic, in which some issues in the 20th century, before, and after the Indonesian independence as examples of this conflict.

Before the Indonesian Independence

In the early 20th century the Dutch colonials applied ethical policy that opened the education for Indonesians. According to Ricklefs, education has played a significant role for the first generation of Indonesian nationalist (Rickfles 2007). It was marked by the forming of Budi Utomo in 1908 founded by the medical students of STOVIA like Wahidin Sudirohusodo, Radjiman Wediodiningrat, and Sutomo. They were Javanese who practiced mystic synthesis and wanted to maintain Javanism (Rickfles, 2007b). Another nationalist organization was Taman Siswa founded by Ki Hajar Dewantara in 1922.

On the other hand, some modernist or reformist Islam figures like Ahmad Dahlan, Mohamad Roem, and Ruslan Abdulgani also formed an organization called Muhammadiyah in 1910. They wanted to purify Javanese Islam from mystic synthesis (Ricklefs 2007). The Islamist movement before Indonesian independence was considered as part of nationalism movement because they also fought against the Dutch colonials. Another Islamist organization was Sarekat Islam founded by H.O.S. Cokroaminoto in 1912. Sarekat Islam was the first Islamic Party in Nusantara. Thus, since the beginning, there had been internal conflict among Muslims, which according to Ricklefs between the *abangan* (mystic synthesis Muslims) and *putihan* (Puritan Muslims) (Rickfles 2007).

The number of organizations and political parties like Indische Partie and Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) increased since early 1900 to the Independence Day. Other than these two polarizing societies of Nationalist and Islamist, there were many other organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) that altogether was known as "*politik aliran*" (Feith 1974).

Sukarno's Era

In the preparation for the Indonesian independence, Muslims from various backgrounds were involved in some committees like BPUPKI, *Panitia Perancang UUD,* and PPKI.[5] BPUPKI was formed by the Japanese in March 1945 with 62 members. Out of 62 members, 15 persons were representatives from the Islamist, [6] the rest were secular-nationalist,

5 BPUPKI= Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia, PPKI= Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia

6 Those 15 BPUPKI members who are considered as Islamists: Abikusno Cokrosuyoso (PSII), KH. Ahmad Sanusi (PUI), KH Abdul Halim (PUI), Raden Syamsudin (PUI), KH Mas Mansur (Masyumi), Raden Ruslan Wongsokusumo (Masyumi), KH Masykur (NU), KH. Wachid Hasyim (NU), Ki Bagus Hadikusumo (Muhammadiyah), Abdul Kahar Muzakir (Muhammadiyah), Ny. Sunaryo Mangunpuspito (Aisyah), KH. Agus Salim (Penyadar), Sukiman (PII), AR. Baswedan (PAI), Abdul Rahim Pratalykrama (Residen Kediri)

including 3 Christians (Aritonang 2005).[7] The discussion regarding the form of the state whether Islamic (*Negara Islam*) or united (*Negara Kesatuan*) was the hottest issue debated in BPUPKI. This debate did not come to any agreement and the topic of discussion was changed to Sukarno's speech on 1 June 1945 about the state foundation (*Pancasila*). The issue of religion was also mentioned deliberately in his speech. Sukarno appealed to the assembly that Indonesia should be based on Divinity (*Ketuhanan*) that all people could worship their Lord freely and respect other religions. Because the debates between Islamist and secular-nationalist still have not come to an agreement, on 18 June 1945, 9 out of 62 BPUPKI members were chosen to be in a special committee called "*Panitia Sembilan*" to draft the Preamble of the Constitution (*Pembukaan UUD*).[8] *Panitia Sembilan* came to a compromised formulation called the Jakarta Charter, which the first principle said "*Ketuhanan dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*" (Divinity with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law).

In the second assembly on 10-16 July 1945, the Jakarta Charter formulation was reported by *Panitia Sembilan*. Johanes Latuharhary, an Ambonese Christian, raised his objection regarding the seven words.[9] The disagreement was not only from Latuharhary, but also from some Javanese Muslims, like Wongsonegoro and Husein Jayadiningrat (Husein 2005). However, finally the assembly accepted the Jakarta Charter and the discussion moved to the government structure. The Islamist proposed a

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7   The three Christians are Maramis (Minahasan), Latuharhary (Ambonese) and Parada Harahap (Bataks) (see http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daftar_Anggota_BPUPKI-PPKI)

8   The members of *Panitia Sembilan* were 5 from secular-nationalist camp: Sukarno, Hatta, Ahmad Subarjo, Muh. Yamin, Maramis and 4 from Islamist camp: Abikusno (SI), Abdul Kahar (Muhamadiyah), Wahid Hasyim (NU), Agus Salim (PI). Maramis is a Christian but considered as part of secular-nationalist.

9   The problematic seven words are: "*dengan menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*". Latuharhary considered that words as discrimination to other religions.

kingdom with a *Khalifah*, but finally the majority agreed to have a republic with a president. Other tensions were on the proposal from the Islamist that the president must be a Muslim and the state religion is Islam. Sukarno in his speech on 16 July 1945 tried to mediate the debates and urged the assembly to accept that the president must be a Muslim and to put the first principle of Jakarta Charter in chapter 29 verse 1. Sukarno in front of the assembly deliberately asked Latuharhary and Maramis as non-Muslim members to accept this proposal as their sacrifice to the country. Finally, the assembly was closed by that decision.

After Japan was bombed by the USA, the Japanese formed PPKI on 7 August 1945 with 21 members (later became 27). Out of 27 people, 16 were former BPUPKI members, which only 2 were from the Islamist group: Ki Bagus Hadikusumo (Muhamaddiyah and K.H. Wachid Hasyim (NU). On 15 August Japan surrendered to the Alliance, and on 17 August 1945 Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed the independence of Indonesia. On the evening of 17 August Sukarno and Hatta called four Muslim leaders (Aritonang 2005)[10] for an urgent meeting, asking to delete the seven words of the Jakarta Charter to accommodate objection from Christians. Finally, in relatively short time they agreed to change the first principle to *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* in order to keep the nation's unity.[11] On 18 August, PPKI assembly accepted that proposal together with deleting the clause "must be a Muslim" from the requirement of the president. The Islamist leaders

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[10] Soekarno and Hatta talked to Ki Bagoes Hadikoesoemo, KH. Wahid Hasyim, Mr. Kasman Singodimejo, Mr. Teuku Mohammad Hasan after heard a message from Nishijima (the assitant of Admiral Maeda) about the objection of Christians to the seven words of the Jakarta Charter. If they did not delete the seven words, the Christians in East Indonesia would not join NKRI. Accroding to historian Dr. I.O. Nanulaitta, the Japanese soldier met Mr. J. Latuharhary and Dr. GSSJ Ratulangie.

[11] Hatta said, *"Supaya kita jangan pecah sebagai bangsa, kami mufakat untuk menghilangkan bagian kalimat yang menusuk hati kaum Kristen itu dan menggantikannya dengan Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa."* Quoted from Mohammad Hatta, *Sekitar Proklamasi 17 Agustus 1945* (Jakarta, Tintamas, 1969) p. 56. See Aritonang, p. 255. According to Robert Hefner, it is the NU who proposed the words "*Yang Maha Esa*" (*Civil Islam*, p. 42)

accepted this compromise with three reasons (Aritonang 2005):

> *Firstly,* the Islamic group was aware of the importance of the nation's unity, especially in the context of Indonesia that was just founded. *Secondly, "Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa"* is not against the meaning of *tauhid* in Islam. *Thirdly,* the Islamic group hopes for a general election which would be held six months after the Proclamation. They were confident that they would win because the majority of Indonesia is Muslim.[12]

Some Islamist leaders, who felt being betrayed because PPKI changed what they discussed and agreed in BPUPKI, continued their struggle for the Jakarta Charter (Robert W. Hefner 2000). The attempt to establish an Islamic State continued to occur in many ways from formal political means to radical rebellions. One significant rebellion was DI/TII/NII[13] rebellion by S.M. Kartosuwiryo and Kahar Muzakkar. Kartosuwiryo proclaimed the founding of NII on 7 August 1949 and claimed himself as the Imam of NII. In the draft of NII Constitution, non-Muslims were totally excluded and forbidden to hold any government role (Aritonang 2005).

The formal political means was expected from general election 1955. Two years before the election, on 11-15 April 1953 the *Ulamas* held a *Muktamar* to prepare *Dustur Islamiyah* (Islamic Constitution) with a conviction that the Islamist parties would win the election. A fatwa was announced that it was *haram* for Muslim to vote for non-Islamic party. However, the result of the election was a shock for the Islamic parties that they could not win the majority votes as they expected confidently. The winner was the Nationalist Party (PNI).[14]

12 This conviction was based on what Sukarno said, "*Nanti… dalam suasana yang lebih tenteram, kita tentu…. dapat membuat UUD yang lebih lengkap, lebih sempurna.*"

13 DI= Darul Islam, TII= Tentara Islam Indonesia, NII= Negara Islam Indonesia

14 From 250 seats in the parliament, the Islamic parties got in total 114 seats; from Masyumi: 57, NU: 45, PSII: 8, and PERTI: 4 seats – this is equal to 45,6% from the total seats (See: http://kepustakaan-presiden.pnri.go.id/pemilu/)

From 1953 to 1959 there were never ending debates in the process of making the Indonesian new Constitution in *Konstituante* whether Islam or Pancasila would be the foundation of the state. Once again, the conflict between nationalist and Islamist took place. These long debates encouraged Sukarno to issue a President Decree on 5 July 1959 to dismiss *Konstituante* and to return to the 1945 Constitution. Sukarno began the Guided Democracy that later brought him to be a long-life president. In the fifth paragraph of the Decree, Sukarno said "We believe that the Jakarta Charter 22 June 1945 was the spirit of (*'menjiwai'*) the 1945 Constitution and was integrated (*'suatu rangkaian kesatuan'*) to that constitution"(Saksono 2009).

Suharto's Era and after

At the end of Sukarno's era, the communist was crushed by Suharto and the army. The Islamist groups (Mujiburrahman 2006),[15] which were in tension with the communist in NASAKOM period, involved in the anti-communist and the mass killing of the communist party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia – PKI*) members. When Suharto became the new president, the Islamist group expected that they would be given more opportunity than they got from Sukarno, but disappointingly Suharto marginalized them from power arena. Suharto even forced all organizations, including religious ones, to take Pancasila as the sole basis (*asas tunggal).*

The first tension in religio-political matter in Suharto's era was the building of a Methodist church in Meulaboh, Aceh in 1967. The local people and some Islamist leaders protested so that the building was stopped by the local government. This Meulaboh case did not only become a local issue but a national issue since it was brought to the Parliament (DPRGR). On 17 June 1967 the Christian representatives in the

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15 At least two groups were involved: NU youth (Pemuda Ansor), and Masyumi student organisations (HMI and PII)

Parliament issued an interpellation known as "Simorangkir's Question".[16] Simorangkir raised this issue based on religious freedom, that there should be no restriction to build a place of worship wherever in Pancasila state. After a long hot debate, Lukman Harun represented the Islam faction on 10 July 1967 proposed that religious propagation should be confined to the people outside the recognized religions or who do not have religion (Mujiburrahman 2006).

Suharto on 16 August 1967 tried to give a solution. He said that based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, religious freedom is guaranteed because it is the most fundamental human right. It comes from the dignity of the human being as God's creature and is not given by a state or a group. In addition, he also emphasized that "the spreading of a religion should be avoided in ways that may hurt the feeling of people who happened to have a different religion" (Mujiburrahman 2006).

The attempt to revive the Jakarta charter in the 1945 Constitution also continued in early period of Suharto's era when NU and Parmusi[17] raised a demand to the MPRS General Assembly in 1968. The first regulation of Suharto's regime that confined religious freedom was the Joint Decree of the Minister of Religious Affair and the Minister of Domestic Affair (SKB No. 1/1969) on 13 September 1969. This SKB was to control the building of worship places especially in Muslim areas. It was followed by the Marriage Law as the first law that was made according to Islamic law (UU No. 1/1974). The intention to make the Marriage Law had started by assigning a committee in 1950. In 1952, this committee had finished a draft of the Public Marriage Law (*RUU Perkawinan Peraturan Umum*) and in 1954 a draft of the Islamic Marriage Law (*RUU Perkawinan Umat Islam*) finished. In 1968, RUU *Peraturan Pernikahan Umat Islam* was

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16 Simorangkir was one of the top leaders of Parkindo (*Partai Kristen Indonesia* – Indonesia Christian Party).

17 Parmusi was a new form of Masyumi that was banned by Sukarno and Suharto.

proposed to DPRGR and in 1973 the government proposed to DPR *RUU Perkawinan*. This 1973 draft shocked the Islamist group since there were many points not in tune with Islamic law. Finally, the Marriage Law 1974 was changed to be in tune with the *shariah*.

Some laws made during and after Suharto's era inspired by *shariah*, for instance: UU Wakaf No. 41/1977, UU Peradilan Agama No. 7/ 1989 and No. 3/ 2006, UU Sistem Perbankan Nasional No. 7/1992 and No. 23/1999, UU Pengelolaan Zakat No. 38/1999, and some laws that were mainly to protect Muslims: UU Sistem Pendidikan Nasional No. 20/2003, UU Perlindungan Anak No. 23/2002, as well as some other laws were in waiting. Not only at national level, the *shariah* is also implemented at regional level through *Peraturan Daerah* (Regional Regulations) in not less than 22 *kabupaten* and city (Saksono 2009).[18]

After the fall of Suharto, the attempt to revive the Jakarta Charter came back. In the MPR General Assembly in 1999, the Islamist parties argued to amend the 1945 Constitution, including the Preamble with a hope to accept the Jakarta Charter. Interestingly, this time NU had a different position and did not support this idea. This position was expressed by the Nation Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa - PKB*) that was founded as political vehicle for NU members by Abdurrahman Wahid. Wahid had played a significant role in transforming NU to be more pluralist. Finally, it was decided that the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution (including Pancasila) could not be changed at any cost. This decision was supported by both NU and Muhammadiyah as the two largest Muslim groups that both fought for Islamic State and the Jakarta Charter in 1945.

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18 For instance: Bulukumba, Cianjur, Tasikmalaya, Indarmayu, Garut, Sinjai, Gowa, Maros, Enrekang, Takalar, Lombok Timur, Pamekasan, Padang, Solok. Some of the Perda are: Perda Wajib Berbusana Muslim Kabupaten Solok No 6/2002, Perda Pencegahan Maksiat Provinsi Gorontalo No 10/2003, Perda Wajib Al-Quran bagi Siswa dan Pengantin Kota Solok No 10/2001, Perda Busana dan Pandai Baca Tulis AL-Quran Kabupaten Enrekang No 6/2005.

However, the Islamist never stops their attempt for Islamic State or to revive Jakarta Charter. Some new organizations and political parties emerged like *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI), *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS), and *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI). HTI publicly declared that democracy and Pancasila have failed and Indonesia should be turned into an Islamic state (*kilafah*) and *shariah* law.[19] This anti-democracy ideology has also influenced students and youth, for instance on 18 October 2009, there was an Indonesian Islamic Student Congress (*Kongres Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia – KMII*) that openly took an oath to replace the historic Youth Oath (*Sumpah Pemuda*) of 28 October 1928. There were five points in this oath which basically rejected any secular system like democracy and would not stop to fight for Islamic State and *shariah* law, as stated in the oath:

> "Dengan sepenuh jiwa, kami akan terus berjuang tanpa lelah untuk tegaknya syari'ah Islam dalam naungan Negara Khilafah Islamiyah sebagai solusi tuntas problematika masyarakat Indonesia dan negeri-negeri muslim lainnya." [20]

> "With all of our souls, we will continue to fight tirelessly for the establishment of Islamic Sharia in the auspices of the *Khilafah Islamiyah* State as a complete solution to the problems of the people of Indonesia and other Muslim countries."

The diversity in Islam today makes the categorization of Muslims by Geertz (*santri, priyayi,* and *abangan*) does not really relevant anymore. In other words, Geertz's categorization, though in some extent is still helpful, it oversimplifies the fact of the huge diversity in Indonesian Islam today. The conflict between the Islamist and the nationalist nowadays is not only between the *putihan* and the *abangan* as it was in the past, but it is also among the *putihan*. We can see from the *santri* group some prominent

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19 http://hizbut-tahrir.or.id/tentang-kami/

20 http://id-id.connect.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=157123937651882

Islamic leaders who are against the Islamic State such as Nurcholis Majid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Bahtiar Effendy.

According to Bahtiar Effendy the main reason of these differences is that "Islam is a poly-interpretable religion", and therefore, he adds, "Islam could not and should not be perceived as monolithic"(Effendy 2003). To explain his statement, Effendy continues that on the one hand "… there are those who argue that Islam should be the basis of the state; that *sharia* ought to be adopted as the state constitution; … that the idea of modern nation state is contradictory to the concept of *umma* (Islamic community) which recognizes no political boundary"(Effendy 2003). While on the other hand, "… there are those who believe the notion that Islam does not lay down clear cut and dried pattern of state theory…. the establishment of an Islamic state in its formal ideological terms is not very significant.... there is no legitimate basis to put Islam in a contradictory position to the modern political system"(Effendy 2003). This development in Islamic thinking makes the struggle of Islamic state is more difficult.

Conclusion

Considering the question on how did religious identities contribute to or were in conflict with the emerging national identities, the discussion above come with the conclusion that Islam did both contribute and was in conflict with the Indonesian national identity. The Islamist fights for Islamic state, the nationalist defends Pancasila state. As long as Islam is the majority in Indonesia and as long as there is diversity in Islam, especially in the interpretation of Islam and the state, Indonesian national identity will always be in conflict between Pancasila state and Islamic state.

The discussion showed that the role of religion and religious change in the society and nation change is very significant. The Islamist is always there, although it is not always permanent in certain organizations. In the past, NU and Muhammadiyah were considered as Islamist, but today they

are nationalist. At the same time, new Islamist organizations and parties emerge to continue their Islamist spirit. Will Pancasila as national identity survive in the midst of this conflict? We hope so.

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