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A PSEUDO-SECULAR SPACE, RELIGIOUS MINORITY AND REASONS FOR EXCLUSION: THE AHMADIYYA MINORITY GROUP IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

Abstract

This paper examines the intersection of religion and politics and its consequences on religious minorities in Indonesia. This paper is based on a case study of the current position of the Ahmadiyya minority group in the Indonesian Islamic majority. The tension arises from a specific circumstance: This large Muslim country uses democracy as a political system, but the involvement of religious politics is evident. This situation directly endangers the presence of the Ahmadiyya group.

Keywords: Indonesia, Democracy, Islam, Ahmadiyya, Pseudo-Secular, Minorities, Exclusion

Introduction

This article—by considering the intersection of social-political spaces and the exclusion of religious minorities in Indonesia based on the current situation of the Ahmadiyya—aims to spread and emerge the discipline of *'the politology of religion'*.[2] It is important first to introduce the profile of the Ahmadiyya minority group. The group itself was founded in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) in the village of Qadian, Punjab, India. Several key factors encouraged Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to initiate a new Islamic movement and therefore to build the Ahmadiyya. These include British colonialism in the South Asia region, degradation of Muslim culture in many areas, and the Christianization process undertaken by the western missionaries. The formation of the Ahmadiyya group occurred as a result of self-criticism by concerned Muslims and resistance against

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the interference of other religions in India at that time.[3]

In the Indonesian case[4], the problem arises especially because mainstream Islam does not recognize and accept the Ahmadiyya as a part of official Islam.[5] In addition, the position of the Ahmadiyya is mostly influenced by "the unique status of Indonesia".[6] On the one hand, this country is already widely known to have the largest Islamic population at over 85% of the overall population. Indonesia does not implement "an Islamic ideology" as a state policy. The country uses democracy as the national political system. On the other hand, however, in some provinces and districts, the application of "sharia law" based on Islamic teaching is part of the political changes that have occurred since the collapse of Suharto regime in 1998.[7] This situation directly affects the position of the Ahmadiyya and other religious minority groups.

This article analyses and answers the question: to what extent "a pseudo-secular" atmosphere in social and political spaces can affect the status of the Ahmadiyya and other religious minorities in contemporary Indonesia? The answer to this question is elaborated through the following sections, which explain the Indonesian landscape as "pseudo-secular". A brief discussion of the problem of exclusion and minorities is offered, and the situation of the Ahmadiyya as an "excluded minority group" is described.

This article is mostly based on a review of previous studies about the case. Some reports of the situation of the Ahmadiyya facilitate this consideration of the critical intersection of religion and politics in Indonesia. This article explains the ongoing situation and the challenges faced by the Ahmadiyya in the shadow of pseudo-secular politics. This article ends by identifying policy implications and recommending strategy in the concluding remarks.

Indonesia: The Portrait of a Pseudo-Secular Space

This article argues that Indonesia is a pseudo-secular space. This links with the involvement of religion in political contestation. In political theory, secularism is defined as the separation of religion and the state. In concrete and practical meaning, secularism is a description of "the absence of God" in social and

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3   Bernhard Platzdasch, Religious Freedom in Indonesia: The Case of the Ahmadiyya, *ISEAS Working Paper: Politics and Security Series No. 2,* ISEAS, Singapore, 2011, *http://www.iseas.edu.sg/documents/publication/ps22011R.pdf/* (Accessed 11.05.2016).

4   Located in the Southeast Asia region with a population of about 240 million people, Indonesia is known as the country with the largest Islamic population around the world with 220 million people. Indonesia has approximately 17 thousand islands with diverse social, ethnic, cultural dimensions in the Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies (CRCS) Graduate School Gadjah Mada University, Jogyakarta, Indonesia, Annual Report on Religious Life in Indonesia 2009, *http://crcs.ugm.ac.id/id/laporan-tahunan* (Accessed 15.06.2016).

5   Doenja Abel, The position of religious minorities in a diverse archipelago: The Indonesian government's framing of the Ahmadiyya-minority and its effects, *Doctoral dissertation*, Utrecht University, the Netherlands, 2013.

6   Nadjib A. Burhani, Hating the Ahmadiyya: the place of "heretics" in contemporary Indonesian Muslim society, *Contemporary Islam*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2014, pp.133-152.

7   He was in power as Indonesia's President from 1966 to 1998.

political discourses.[8] The idea of God has no position in social and political arenas. Thus, religion has no role in constructing "identity politics". Religion is seen a private-sector matter. Secularism has to do with the decline of religious interest in the whole political process and space. Religion is rejected in the contest for power.[9]

Meanwhile, in the context of the Southeast-Asian landscape, in comparison with western politics and democracy, religion has a very close connection with social and political complexities. It cannot be denied that religion plays a lead role in social and political dynamics.[10] This does not mean that secularism is never implemented in state-building processes. It can also be said that even the state is based on secularism. In the application of liberal democracy, religious sentiment still influences and affects dynamics and problems in the society and polity.

Some scholars remind us that the relationship between religion (Islam) and democracy (secularism) is one of the most important and challenging themes of Indonesian political discourse today.[11] By identifying Islam as one of central actors in the whole processes of democratic change in the country, this paper considers the fact that democracy has already justified the role of Islam in politics. In the Indonesian case, as democracy influences Islam, this religious community also offers a distinct character to the trajectory of the democratization process in the country. In fact, so many political opportunities have been interpreted and claimed differently by each group within Islam.[12] The assumption is that Indonesian Islam has undergone a significant shift from the view that Islam can manage democracy to the critical view that Islam is encountering conflict and tension.[13]

It is well said in relation to the discourse of the secular landscape that Indonesia has a unique experience. This has to do with the context of religion and politics. It is also possible to say that, though more than 85% of its overall population is Muslim (more or less 210 million people of 240 million in total), Indonesia has never proclaimed its status as "state-based religion".[14] The country is historically based on the *Pancasila* (i.e., the five fundamental principles) as its ideological state foundation. These include belief in one and only God, justice and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, deliberation for consensus, and social

8   Jonthan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, History and ideology: The Instance of Henry V, in: John Drakakis, *Alternative Shakespeares,* Routledge, London, 2002.

9   Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan Van Antwerpen, *Rethinking secularism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2011.

10   Angel Rabasa, *Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radical and Terrorists*. No. 358. Routledge, New York, USA, 2014.

11   Robert William Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia,* Princeton University Press, USA, 2011.

12   Marcus Mietzner, Indonesia's democratic stagnation: anti-reformist elites and resilient civil society, *Democratization*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 2012, pp. 209-229.

13   John L. Esposito, *Rethinking Islam and Secularism*, Association of Religion Data Archives, The Pennsylvania State University, USA, 2011.

14   Joe Cochrane, Why Indonesia is not A Muslim Democracy, *http://www.newsweek.com/why-indonesia-not-muslim-democra-cy-81951* (Accessed 31.01.2018).

justice for all of Indonesia's people. This ideological standpoint makes Indonesia a multi-cultural space. The country is neither a secular nor a religious state.[15]

At this point, as previously stated, it is also important to note that, though Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, it is applying a 'democratic state model'.[16] The country is not based on Islamic law. However, it cannot be denied that, in many specific cases, Indonesia is challenged by the fact of religious dominance within the society through the movement of some Islamic groups and political forces. Islam in contemporary Indonesia, specifically in the democratic transition, is playing a strategic role and is often violent at social and political levels. It is clear that social and political spaces have been strongly affected by the interference of this religious sentiment. Indonesia never moves just in a secular pathway; it also deals with the crucial situation caused by religious affiliation in social and political sides.[17]

From this, however, it cannot be imagined that secularism (the secular) can be introduced as a comprehensive platform of social and political mechanisms. It should even be said that the role of religion in social and political dynamics is one of the main facets of the Indonesia public experience. Religion is still trying to show a significant position in the entire nation-state building process. Religion seems to have an intention to determine a democratization pathway. Thus, it is proved that the Indonesian political transformation is strongly influenced and dominated by religious sentiments.

To support this position, one example of the existence of the pseudo-secular phenomenon can be seen in the presence of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, The Indonesian Islam Clerics Council) in religious affairs and even in state policy making.[18] MUI consists of Islamic leaders and intellectuals and pursues the goal of Islam being officially recognized by the Indonesian government. MUI was established as a national Islamic representative in 1975. During the presidency of Suharto, this institution became "a political bridge" between Muslim leaders and the state. One of MUI's main activities is producing *fatwa* (Islamic decrees) which strengthen friendships among Muslims and represent Indonesian Muslims in inter-religious activities with other religious organizations. MUI has aggressively played the important role of guarding government policy with respect to religious issues.[19]

In presenting its great influence over Indonesian religious life, MUI currently

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15   Saiful Mujani and R. William Liddle, "Muslim Indonesia's secular democracy", . 2009., pp. 575-590. Also See: T.J. Lan, Heterogeneity, politics of ethnicity, and multiculturalism: What is a viable framework for Indonesia?, *Wacana, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2011, pp. 279-292.

16   Marcus Mietzner, Political evolution: Indonesia's strong base for democratic development, *http://www.eastasiaforum. org/2014/02/10/political-evolution-indonesias-strong-base-for-democratic-development/* (Accessed 29.01.2018).

17   Bernard Johan Boland, *The struggle of Islam in modern Indonesia*, Vol. 59, Springer, New York, USA, 2013.

18   The information about this organization can be found in *http://mui.or.id/* (Accessed 16.07.2017)

19   The information about the role of MUI can be found in *http://www.halalmui.org/newMUI/index.php/main/detil_page/8/1625/30/1/262/* (Accessed 15.07.2017).

presents itself as "a contra actor" against secularism and its proponents by declaring a special *fatwa* to ban "the development of secularism, liberalism, and pluralism" in modern Indonesia.[20] In July of 2005, MUI issued a fatwa against pluralism, secularism, liberalism, interfaith prayer, interfaith marriage, and all alternative interpretations of the verses of the holy Al-Quran.[21] MUI, based on "the 2005 Decree", confidently considers all these ideologies as bad ways of thinking.[22] MUI claims that these ideologies only freely employ rational ways of thinking and do not include religious-based thinking.[23] In addition, MUI also resists pluralism. It considers pluralism an ideology that recognizes every religion as the same such that no one can claim the truth of their religion.[24]

The former Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004—2014), has openly supported the 2005 MUI conference. He promised that his regime and the government would establish close cooperation with the MUI. In July of 2005, relying on the strong political support of the democratic government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, MUI reiterated the 1980 decree against the Ahmadiyya.[25] The decree signed by MUI identifies the Ahmadiyya as "a sect" and "not a part of an official Islam". MUI has forced the Indonesian government to prohibit the Ahmadiyya, to freeze this organization's activities and to close all the Ahmadiyya's mosques and related properties.[26]

It might be concluded that Indonesia is applying "a pseudo-secular" politics given how religion negotiates its position in Indonesia's political transformation. This is clearly consistent with the trend of the political process, which relates to the application of specific religious interests in public policy and state law. The local politics, for example, tends to be dominated by the religious majority group. They, therefore, have authority to manage social diversities that intend to refer to the majority interest; and then this situation makes (religious) minority groups face the series of exclusion.[27]

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20   Syafiq Hasyim, The Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) and Religious Freedom, *Irasec* (Institut de Recherche sur l'Asie du Sud-Est Contemporaine Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia), *Discussion Papers* 12, Bangkok, Thailand, 2011.

21   Jeremy Menchick, Illiberal but not intolerant: Understanding the Indonesian Council of Ulamas, *http://www.insideindonesia.org/illiberal-but-not-intolerant* (Accessed 25.07.2017).

22   Mun'im Sirry, Fatwas and their controversy: The case of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* Vol. 44, No. 1, 2013, p. 100.

23   Ibid.

24   Zainal Abidin Bagir, Advocacy for Religious Freedom in Democratizing Indonesia, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 2014, pp. 27-39.

25   Human Rights Watch (HRW), Indonesia: Reverse Ban on Ahmadiya Sect: Government Should Protect Religious Minority, Not Threaten Prison for Beliefs, *https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/06/10/indonesia-reverse-ban-ahmadiyah-sect* (Accessed 27.04.2016).

26   MUI Fatwa No. 11/Munas VII/MUI/15/2005 was signed on July 29, 2005.

27   Ishaq Rahman, Jeopardizing Transition: Freedom of Worship, the Power of Local Government, and Democratization in Indonesia, 2013, *http://www.janp.sfc.keio.ac.jp/JAHSS/2012/papers/3-A-2.pdf.*

Minorities and the Reasons of Exclusion

This section briefly discusses religious minorities and exclusion. This discussion is placed in the context of social and political discourse, which is often associated with the mechanism of electoral democracy. In some cases, the mechanism is also dominated by the majority group. In theory, democratic process favours some substantive aspects, such as power distribution, encouraging cooperative solution, value sharing and fostering constructive participation in the multicultural context.[28] It is generally agreed that all of these are key concerns of democracy. However, on another level, when the democratic process is already running, all these aspects are systematically narrowed and conquered by the tyranny of the majority.

The substantive aspect of democracy—which provides an opportunity for the participation and involvement of minorities—faces serious challenges in the form of majority domination. The majority group presents power consolidation by taking full control of the political process. Unfortunately, this situation influences the democratic process by the emergence of an anti-democratic attitude at social and political levels. This condition triggers tension and conflict between the majority and minority groups in which the latter can merely become victims.[29]

The majority domination, in this democratic pattern, clearly affects minorities who experience "full alienation" from public policy-making and the overall political process. Moreover, the measurement of the quality of democracy will be totally determined through the level of minorities' access into public policy network.[30] The majority realizes and actualizes *"a narrow space"* for minorities, which makes them socially and politically marginalized. Minorities are just becoming a part of the political legitimation needed by the majority. As a consequence, political consensus as a main output of democratic process is not effective in ensuring the protection of minorities.[31] At this point, the tyranny of the majority is constantly strengthening the *exclusion of minorities*. This situation raises such a contrast meaning to basic principles of democracy in terms of guaranteeing the enjoyment of basic rights for every individual and group.[32]

Furthermore, in the case of minorities' exclusion, majoritarianism is merely a framework and a set of an idea that completely produces a "dominative relationship pattern". Concerning this tendency in the Indonesian discourse, the actors

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28 V. C. Plaut, F.G. Garnett, L.E Buffardi and J. Sanchez-Burks, "What about me?" Perceptions of exclusion and Whites' reactions to multiculturalism, *Journal of personality and social psychology*, Vol. 101, No. 2, 2011, p. 337

29 Patrick J. Kelly, International Law and the Shrinking Space for Politics in Developing Countries, *Law and Rights: Global Perspectives on Constitutionalism and Governance,* Vandeplas Publishing, Lake Mary, USA, 2008, pp. 8-31.

30 Mark Salter, Democracy for all? Minority rights and Democratization, *http://www.opendemocracy.net/mark-salter/democracy-for-all-minority-rights-and-democratisation* (Accessed 16.06.2016).

31 Marc F Plattner, Populism, pluralism, and liberal democracy, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 2010, pp. 81-92.

32 Hong-xia HU and Jun Zhang, On the "Majority Tyranny" Problem of Democracy, *Journal of Beijing University of Technology (Social Sciences Edition),* Vol. 6, 2009.

of violence are referred to as "society actors" in the totalitarian era. Many radical groups have exhibited violent actions in society—particularly in suppressing and attacking members of religious minorities. Moreover, in this situation, the narrowing of democratic values and principles would adversely affect the presence of minorities. Minorities' exclusion occurs when they do not have free and fair access to the benefits of development as guaranteed by the state.[33]

Exclusion can be closely related to a number of constant conditions in economic, social, political and cultural aspects. In concrete meaning, exclusion primarily explains the lack of political participation by minorities as members of society and citizens of the state. This situation shows a disconnect between minorities and the state. The majority will restrict the role of minorities in the political process. This definitely destroys the main principle of democracy in recognizing equality of opportunity to participate in political process. This is mainly related to "the inconsistency" of the state in protecting its minority citizens. Thus, the tyranny of the majority is manifested in a series of actions from the state that cannot accommodate the interest of minorities.

As a result of the weakness of the state on the one hand and majority domination on the other, minorities have gotten almost nothing from the political process. This can be seen as the main reason for the absolute exclusion of members of minorities from key positions. The majority dominates the political process and the whole benefits from democratic changes. Minorities' exclusion is an ever-present danger in any political practice of the state.[34]

In the Indonesian context, exclusion has been experienced by minority groups over the last few years. It happened widely in the post-authoritarian session. Exclusion indicates the failure of political management by the state at all levels to protect minority citizens. The lack of political will to protect minorities has led to massive discrimination against religious minorities.[35] Exclusion is also related to the inability of the society to guarantee minorities rights in achieving and claiming their expectations as part of political community. Minorities are continuously becoming targets of discrimination and objects of exclusion.[36]

The Ahmadiyya: *"Being Excluded People'*

The Ahmadiyya first came to Indonesia in 1924 (1925 according to some sources) and began to spread out as a new Islamic movement within some es-

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33 Ian Douglas Wilson, Continuity and change: The changing contours of organized violence in post–New Order Indonesia, *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 2006, pp. 265-297.

34 Remzi M. Sanver, Characterizations of majoritarianism: a unified approach, *Social Choice and Welfare*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2009, pp. 159-171.

35 Yüksel Sezgin and Mirjam Künkler, Regulation of "Religion" and the "Religious": The Politics of Judicialization and Bureaucratization in India and Indonesia, *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* Vol. 56, No. 2, 2014, pp. 448-478.

36 Thomas A. Morton, Matthew J. Hornsey, and Tom Postmes, Shifting ground: The variable use of essentialism in contexts of inclusion and exclusion, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2009, pp. 35-59.

tablished Islamic organizations such as the Muhamadiyah. This new group also initiated good relationships and connections with Indonesian Islam. In 1925, the main thought of the Ahmadiyya associated with the second coming of the Messiah or Jesus Christ had attracted the attention of the Muhammadiyah congress in Semarang, Central Java.[37]

Moreover, as evidence of this good friendship, one year later, in 1925, in the Muhammadiyah congress in Semarang, Ahmadiyya scholars from West Sumatra were invited to attend a conference. In the meantime, they also visited Yogyakarta and Solo in Central Java and then met and established relationships with the leaders of the Muhammadiyah. Despite the harmonious relationship between the Ahmadiyya and Islamic mainstream groups in Indonesia, some top leaders of the Islamic mainstream such as Haji Rasul started to view Ahmadiyya as a group outside of Islamic main teaching.[38]

The Ahmadiyya still received legal recognition, though they faced a hard resistance from Islamic mainstream groups. They were legally recognized by the colonial government in 1930s and by the Indonesian government two decades later in the 1950s. This achievement reflects a very important basis for the Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. For them, this can be considered a fundamental reference to gain political protection from the state in the contemporary situation.[39]

More than eight decades since their first arrival in Indonesia, the Ahmadiyya began to experience a series of difficulties. They have to struggle for freedom in public life. The current situation of the group is marked by the dynamics of its relationships with other Indonesian Islamic groups, theological controversy with mainstream Islam, the problem of political protection, the shifting of political contestation, the availability of NGOs support, the need for recognition as Indonesian citizens and the increasing violence against them. It is important to note that, in the past, there had been debate and discussion concerning their status as an Islamic group. In addition, though there were discussions, those were never presented in a violent way in comparison to the democratic transition phase. The Ahmadiyya group has experienced different challenges during a time of democratic transition with their challenges faced no longer only taking in the form of dogmatic debates related to the core of their Islamic ideas, but they have also been expressed through massive violence, with the Ahmadiyya group having continuously faced brutal attack more than a decade post-1998.[40]

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37 The information of historical background of the Ahmadiyya group can be seen in Shaikh Khurshid AhmadTranslated by Zakaria Virk (no date) A Brief History ofAhmadiyya Muslim Community (For Ahmadi Children), *https://www.alislam.org/library/history/ahmadiyya/index.html/* (Accessed 27.04.2016).

38 Herman L. Beck, *The rupture of the Muhammadiyah with the Ahmadiyya*, BKI, Leiden, the Netherlands, 2005.

39 Munahar H. Sidik, *Dasar-Dasar Hukum dan Legalitas Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (The Foundation of Law and Legality of The Ahmadiyya in Indonesia). IKAHI, Jakarta, Indonesia, 2007.

40 Wahid Institute, Annual Report on Religious Freedom and Religious Life in Indonesia The Wahid Institute 2009, *http://wahidinstitute.org/v1/Programs/Detail/?id=442/hl=en/Annual_Report_On_Religious_Freedom_And_Religious_Life_In_Indonesia_The_Wahid_Institute_2009* (Accessed 15.04.2016).

In addition, there is a perception associated with the contemporary situation of the Ahmadiyya group. The group has been considered a source of conflict and the victims a source of violence. Fortunately, the idea that the Ahmadiyya group is a source of conflict has always been challenged and criticized by some elements of the Indonesian public. Moreover, the perception that the Ahmadiyya are victims has become common in the public sphere. The international community has expressed its interest in this perception. In general, human rights NGOs and even the National Human Rights Commission have said that the members of the Ahmadiyya have become "targets" of massive violation.[41]

However, as previously explained, the MUI declared a decree against the Ahmadiyya in 1980. According to this decree, the Ahmadiyya was determined to be a non-Muslim group. This first decree was strengthened at the 2005 MUI National Conference.[42] Following the decree, on June 9, 2008, three national government bodies, including the minister of Indonesian religious affairs, the Indonesian home minister, and the Indonesian attorney general signed what is called "the joint decree". The decree specifically ordered the Ahmadiyya to stop all their religious activities, such as spreading interpretations of the main points in Islam and introducing mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet after Muhammad.[43]

Since the joint decree signed and declared by the Indonesian government, discrimination and persecution have been continuously on the rise against the Ahmadiyya.[44] This joint decree has become a formidable instrument for governors, regents and mayors in making "anti-Ahmadiyya regulations".[45] In 2011, the Jemaah Ahmadiyya of Indonesia, the Indonesian national representative of the Ahmadiyya, reported that five provinces, including Banten, East Java, West Java, West Sumatra, and South Sulawesi, and 22 mayors and regents in Indonesia have signed regulations that prohibit the Ahmadiyya. These regulations are based on "the 2008 joint decree".[46]

Within the Indonesian democratic transition, we have witnessed unceasing discrimination against religious minority groups. This has reached a critical point in contemporary Indonesia .[47] In 2006, the members of the Ahmadiyya in Mataram, Indonesia, were sent by the local government into what is called a "transitory place" after violent attacks by militant groups pushed them away

41   Torhild Breidlid, The Legitimazation of Violence Against the Ahmadiyya Community in Indonesia, *Jurnal Kawistara*, Vo. 3, No. 2, 2013.

42   Bastiaan Scherpen, Enjoining right, forbidding wrong: The MUI and Indonesian Islam, *http://www.sr-indonesia.com/in_the_journal/view/enjoining-right-forbidding-wrong-the-mui-and-indonesian-islam?pg=all* (Accessed 18.04.2016)

43   Crouch, Melissa, *Law and Religion in Indonesia: Conflict and the Courts in West Java*, Routledge, New York, USA, 2013.

44   International Crisis Group (ICG), Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree, July 7, 2008, Brussel, Belgium, *http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-Eastasia / indonesia/b78_indonesia____implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf/* (Accessed 15.06. 2015).

45   Torhild Breidlid., Loc. Cit.

46   Human Rights Watch (HRW), Ibid.

47   Max Regus, The State of Silence: Indonesia's Religious Discrimination, *Open Democracy,* August 5, 2014, Link. *https://www.open-democracy.net/max-regus/state-of-silence-indonesia%E2%80%99s-religious-discrimination*

from their village, community and lands. The local government has claimed that this is a strategic policy to prevent further violence against the group. Tragically, it amounts to their destructive displacement. Until today, they are still living in "risky and precarious conditions." They cannot claim and enjoy the benefits of democratic values and citizenship.[48]

A climax in the attacks on the group happened on February 6, 2011. The Indonesian public and international community were shocked by the murder of Ahmadiyya members in Cikeusik, West Java. Three members of the Ahmadiyya were killed in the violent clash. The tragedy caught the attention of national and international communities. But this was not the only outrage of 2011.[49]

Many complaints were heard about the lack of free space on the political landscape for the Ahmadiyya. In some areas, the group was not consulted in the process of public policy making and was said to have no right to demand that it should be part of the political process and receive the benefits of development. They are excluded from the whole mechanism and process of policy making. In a more radical statement, religious minority groups—based on the case of the Ahmadiyya as an example—are the target of political exclusion.

Protection, distribution of justice, and welfare do not reach the members of Ahmadiyya and other religious minorities, as the state is influenced by the strong force of radical groups in making special policies and regulations. Again, the Ahmadiyya do not have control over the implementation of a protection framework made by their political representatives and the state. It seems—based on the signing of the 2008 joint decree—that the central government has made their decision through the pressure of some Islamic groups. The Ahmadiyya could not negotiate their position under the strong force and pressure shown by MUI and other Islamic radical groups. This can be explained by stressing the phenomenon of the majority domination in political space. This makes it hard for the Ahmadiyya to express their feelings, views, and needs. They cannot enjoy an equal negotiation when some Islamic groups and institutions control the overall mechanism of the arrangement of the joint decree.

The violence experienced by the Ahmadiyya minority justifies the domination of religious majorities at the local level.[50] Accordingly, the members of the Ahmadiyya have lost political and legal certainties, including the basic right to be actively involved in the social and political process. The political process is controlled by the majority and thus is inclined to omit the Ahmadiyya.[51] In some cases, the Ahmadiyya are recognized as citizens despite having lost many sub-

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48 Mary E. McCoy, Purifying Islam in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: Corporatist Metaphors and the Rise of Religious Intolerance, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2013, pp. 275-315.

49 Dani Muhtada, State and the Protection of the Minority Rights in Indonesia: The Case of the Ahmadi Group, In: *1st International Conference on Indonesian Legal Studies (ICILS 2018)*, Atlantis Press, 2018.

50 Elaine Pearson, Indonesia's growing religious intolerance has to be addressed, *http://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2014/feb/06/indonesias-growing-religious-intolerance-has-to-be-addressed/* (Accessed 16.06.2016).

51 Melissa Crouch, *Law and Religion in Indonesia: Conflict and the Courts in West Java*, Routledge, New York, USA, 2013.

stantive rights. For instance, they have limited direct participation in the political process, as local governments have restricted their members from involvement in the democratic process. This situation strongly connects with the practice of liberal democracy (secular politics) in contemporary Indonesia.[52]

Concluding Remarks

Based on the case of the Ahmadiyya, some main points can be made at the closing of this article. First, Indonesia as a "pseudo-secular state" deals with the problem of an inclusive democracy which describes how rights and justice exhibit a tight coherence with the protection of (religious) minorities, including the Ahmadiyya. Inclusivism defines an "open space" for religious minorities to claim justice not because it is written in the law system but because they intrinsically have the right. The significance of this inclusive society and politics will be manifested in the appearance of the state for receiving and placing minorities in the constellation of social, political, legal, economic and cultural sphere. At this stage, Indonesia will face a concrete challenge in managing "the tension within", which is practicing secularism in the one hand and religious consideration on the other. In fact, this is an unresolved problem and complexity.

Second, this article concludes that religious minorities are disadvantaged groups both because they are small in size and because, in some instances, they are continuously excluded through social, legal and political processes. The subordinate position of religious minorities against the majority is the most dominant trend in the mechanisms and processes of politics.

However, it can be said that religious minorities and other minorities are progressive issues.[53] Such human tragedies associated with the presence of religious minorities demand the systematization of rights formulation and protection for the rights of other minorities. Identity politics is a further element in this discourse. Or, in a more concrete paradigm, religious minorities have more contact with the contextualization of the rights in the area of political development and power relations. The inclusive character of the social and political process is needed to provide a spectrum for the political protection for religious minorities.

Third, based on the case of the Ahmadiyya, the most important conclusion comes in relating to the future of religious minorities in Indonesia that need political incentives and social support. The regulatory system should recognize the status of religious minorities' demand for political protection from the state. It is suggested that the state needs to prosecute violations against religious minority groups.

As a future projection, however, we must continue to recognize that the inclusiveness of politics still requires that the state maintains its responsibility

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52   Marc F. Plattner, Populism, pluralism, and liberal democracy, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 2010, pp. 81-92.

53   Monica Mookherjee, Minority Rights, *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought,* Wiley-Blackwell, New Jersey, USA, 2015.

and obligations to control the attitude of majority organizations against minorities in many levels. This is not intended to turn into totalitarianism but rather to ensure that a fair and humane strategy can be applied in social and political circumstances. The state requires both strong legislative construction and a philosophical-ethical atmosphere at the social level to guarantee that minorities gain recognition and protection. The inclusive character of social policy is connected to the expansion of the opportunity for every people and also on how the state builds a fair political space of the peripheral society members such as religious minorities. Inclusive space will provide a wider chance for religious minorities to present their basic needs and political interests in a liberal democratic polity.[54]

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Макс Регус

ПСЕУДО-СЕКУЛАРНИ ПРОСТОР, МАЊИНСКЕ ВЕРСКЕ ГРУПЕ И РАЗЛОЗИ ЗА ИСКЉУЧИВАЊЕ: МАЊИНСКА ГРУПА АХМАДИЈА У САВРЕМЕНОЈ ИНДОНЕЗИЈИ

Сажетак

Овај чланак истражује однос религије и политике и последице које он има на мањинске верске групе у Индонезији. Рад се заснива на студији случаја тренутне позиције ахмедијске заједнице у оквиру индонежанске исламске већине. Тензија је проузрокована спефицичним условима: иако ова већински муслиманска земља користи демократију као политички систем, уплив верских политика је евидентан. Оваква ситуација директно угрожава постојање ахмедијске заједнице.

Кључне речи: Индонезија, демократија, ислам, Ахмадија, псеудо-секуларно, мањине, искључивање