Conservative Turn and Islamic Populism: Challenges Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in Contemporary Politics

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Abstract: This article objectives explore the main challenges of Indonesian democracy after the 2019 presidential election, namely the revival Islamic conservatism and populism, which seem to have seamlessly integrated into the Indonesian political praxis. This article to the authors attempt to the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama response rise the conservatism and Islamic populism contextualizing the contemporary democratic politics in Indonesia. This article uses a qualitative writing method by taking data from articles written by previous authors from journals that have been published according to the topic of this article after the 2019 election took place. The issue of conservatism, and Islamic populism will continue to develop if the moderate Islamic forces of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) do not rise to the occasion in Indonesia's political and religious life. After all, the country's democratic life depends invariably on the maintenance of civility and the non-discriminative nature of the Islamic agenda held dearly by the two influential organizations. Should the moderate forces of Indonesian Islam weaken, then conservatism and populism would no doubt prevail. This article objectives explores the main challenges of Indonesian democracy after the 2019 presidential election, namely the revival Islamic conservatism and populism, which seem to have seamlessly integrated into the Indonesian political praxis. Conservatism and populism in Indonesian politics nothing useful in grassroots but only in the political elite. In this article objectives to the authors attempt to the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama response rise the conservatism and Islamic populism contextualizing the contemporary democratic politics in Indonesia. This study recommends that the study of Islamic populism in relation to Indonesian politics after the 2019 election be an expanded study in terms of network and actor issues. So that a new role was found that contributed to the populism movement in Indonesia.

Keywords: Conservatism; democracy; Islamic Populism; moderation.

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan membahas dua hal utama, pertama, tantangan utama demokrasi Indonesia pasca Pilpres 2019, yakni kebangkitan konservatisme dan populisme Islam, yang seolah-olah telah menyatu dengan mulus ke dalam praksis politik Indonesia. Kedua, dalam tulisan ini juga penulis berupaya membahas tentang Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama dalam merespon kebangkitan konservatisme dan populisme Islam yang mengkontekstualisasikan politik demokrasi kontemporer di Indonesia. Artikel ini menggunakan metode penulisan kualitatif dengan mengambil data dari artikel yang ditulis oleh para penulis sebelumnya dari jurnal yang telah dipublikasi sesuai topik artikel ini setelah Pemilu 2019 berlangsung. Artikel ini menemukan bahwa pasca Pemilu 2019, Indonesia menghadapi banyak perubahan dalam kehidupan politik dan agama. Dalam kehidupan politik, politik identitas mulai dimanfaatkan untuk mendapatkan dukungan suara elektoral. Sementara itu, dalam kasus agama, muncul kekuatan konservatisme dan populisme Islam sehingga menyebabkan terganggunya demokrasi elektoral. Isu konservatisme dan populisme Islam terus berkembang jika kekuatan Islam moderat Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) tidak muncul dalam kehidupan politik dan agama Indonesia. Jika kekuatan moderat Islam Indonesia melemah, maka konservatisme dan populisme tidak diragukan akan menang. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan

agar kajian tentang populisme islam kaitanya dengan politik Indonesia pasca pemilu 2019 menjadi kajian yang diperluas dalam hal isu jaringan dan actor. Sehingga ditemukan peran peran baru yang turut berkontribusi dalam gerakan populisme di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Konservatisme; demokrasi; Islam Populis; moderasi.

1. Introduction

Following the 1998 political reform, Indonesia has held democratic presidential elections regularly in 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019. As a result, the pre-reform political constellation has drastically changed (Aspinall, 2013). Every post-New Order presidential election have always been marked by intense political upheavals (Aspinall, 2013). The political system has also transformed from authoritarianism to democracy (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2015), perpetuating ethnic and religious competition and conflict (Brubaker, 2009). Spreading of rumors and defaming political candidates intending to compete in the presidential elections were often observed. Recurring issues on communism, anti-Islam, pro-liberalism, pro-capitalism were often hurled during these presidential elections (Mujani, 2019).

The 2019 presidential election was marked by an exceeding level of slander related to communism, liberalism, capitalism, and anti-Islam, subsequently creating political fear, intolerance, and political hatred (Menchik, 2019). It should also be kept in mind that there has been a revival of Islamic populism and conservatism Indonesia (Arifianto, 2020). The ideology of Islamism has expanded with the infiltration of conservative groups in campuses targeting the youths (Arifianto, 2018). This has led to the contestation of Islamic practices between the conservatives and the moderate progressive Muslims as represented by Muhammadiyah and NU proponents (Arifianto, 2017).

Islamic populism can be said to be a threat to Indonesian democracy (Hara, 2017). Its origin is related to the populist Arab Spring in 2012 (Hadiz, 2016). The wave of demonstrations against the dethroned Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahya Purnama (Ahok) in 2017 is a case in point, where the efficacy of the Islamic populist movement reached its objective. Jakarta is considered as one of the focal points of Islamic populism in Indonesia. The movement is supported by conservative groups such as the Islamic Defenders' Front (Front Pembela Islam/FPI), Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and a new outfit called the National Movement to Defend the Fatwa Ulama (Gerakan Nasional Pembela Fatwa/GNPF).

Islamic populism became a major challenge for the Joko Widodo administration during his first term in office in 2014-2019 (Mietzner, 2015), where the contestation between the narrative of Islamism and anti-Islam developed during the 2019 elections (Poole et al., 2019). Islamic populism was in fact the vehicle used by presidential contender Prabowo in 2014 and 2019. Prabowo was previously a son in law of president Suharto, who controlled the country for more than 32 years (Edward Aspinall, 2015). t is conceivable to think that the revival of political Islam is a product of the political heritage from the Cold War era (Hadiz, 2011).

Indonesia had experienced decades of authoritarian rule, during which democratic free and fair elections were never held. Under the Soeharto regime, all aspects of Indonesian politics were strictly controlled. Civil society organizations, including religious and non-governmental ones, were not given sufficient space for participation (Fakih, 1996, p.12).

Government apparatus monitored civil society activities applying the anti-subversion law. The military controlled the government and dominated civilian activities and interactions. Indonesia was a state with absolute power, that could control its citizens' activities—often with fatal consequences (Heryanto, 2004 p.49).It dominated citizens' political activities and limited their political articulations in public spaces. Critical thinking was hampered by the centralistic policies of the state.

After the political reform in 1998, elections were held regularly to promote a democratic transition of power (Dhakidae, 2003, p.134). Civil society organizations, meanwhile, began to exert power in public arenas. Such organizations were also primary drivers of Soeharto's resignation on May 20, 1998; such power had never been wielded before (Wicaksono, 2018). Civil society organizations were able to exert control over the state, as political actors sought to avoid their attention and potential charges of

human rights violations (Majdid, 1999). Muhammadiyah and NU in Indonesia contribution to democratization.

Based on the original survey data and interviews, as well as case studies that reveal the preferences of Muhammadiyah and NU leaders, similar to the argument made by Jeremy Menchik, their values are compatible with both democracy and authoritarianism (Menchik, 2019). This argument builds on Robert Hefner's canonical book (Hefner, 2011). Which presciently unearthed a pluralist movement among Islamic intellectuals. This movement celebrates mutual respect, individual autonomy, and volunteerism, thereby providing the social infrastructure for Indonesia's democratic culture. Hefner said after the 2019 election in Indonesia, democracy and Civil Islam depend on Muhammadiyah and NU so many questions were posed to Indonesia following Arab Spring's democratization in Muslim Middle Eastern countries. Hefner questions the prospects for democracy and pluralist citizenship in Muslim-majority nations that have re-emerged in recent years (Hefner, 2019). Many analyses in World events have played a major role in the questions' revival. By early 2013, the hopeful dreams of the 2011 "Arab Spring" had given way to the somber realization that in all but one of the Arab Muslim nations (Zeghal, 2016), progress toward pluralist democracy had ended. In some countries, Islamic populism is a sign of various democratic expressions emerging from the masses, responding to the presence of states that are considered authoritarian.

Islamic populism in Indonesia has become an interesting and wriggling phenomenon after the 2019 elections. This is due to the strengthening of undemocratic political allegations from the power elite and conservative groups which are nonmainstream Islam in Indonesia. Islamic populism in Indonesia is a symptom of countries in the Middle East and Africa and the growing authoritarianism in Europe. This article uses a qualitative writing method by taking data from articles written by previous authors from journals that have been published according to the topic of this article after the 2019 election took place.

2. Result and Discussion

Challenges Muhammadiyah and NU

In the past decade, the phrase "conservative turn" has become widely used to describe the condition of Indonesian Islam. This conservative turn traces its roots to the beginning of Indonesia's political reform in 1998, when public spaces became dominated by "Islamic activities" such as worship groups, *dzikir* (devotional recitations), book exhibitions, fashion shows (particularly hijabs), and use of Arabic. Although this conservative turn is not always indicative of violence, it is undeniably part of the democratic contestation of public space and the rise of Islamism (Bruinessen, 2013). Although this conservative turn is widely identified as having resulted in the rise of Salafi and puritanical Islamic movements, it has also affected political discourse. The very form of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia has been publicly challenged, with calls for an Islamic State (such as those expressed by Ismail Yusanto from Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia receiving widespread attention (Arismunandar, 2019).

This extreme conservatism, which has advocated for the implementation of sharia law throughout Indonesia, has only received the support of a minority of Muslims. According to the Indonesian Survey Agency (Lembaga Survei Indonesia/LSI), in 2005, 85.2% of Indonesian Muslims continued to support the state ideology of Pancasila. This number had fallen to 81.7% by 2010, 79.4% by 2015, and 75.3% by 2018. In other words, as stated by Ardian Sopa—a researcher at the Denny J.A. Survey Agency—over the past thirteen years, approximately ten percent of Indonesians have become disenchanted with Indonesia's national ideology. There is concern that this number will continue to decrease over the next decade.

These numbers were produced through a survey conducted in Indonesia's 34 provinces between June 28 and July 5, 2018. It applied multistage random sampling to reach approximately 1,200 respondents, with a margin of error of ±2.9%. Selected respondents were then interviewed in accordance with a guideline prepared by LSI. Complementing this survey, qualitative analysis was applied to data collected through focus group discussions and in-depth structured interviews with

informants. This survey showed a clear decline in Indonesians' loyalty to Pancasila, as well as a clear increase in their desire for sharia law. Over the past thirteen years, the number of Indonesians desiring sharia law has increased 9%—from 4.6% in 2005, 7.3% in 2010, 9.8% in 2015, and 13.2% in 2018.

Conservatism that developed from the 2014 to 2019 elections had an impact on the demand for the implementation of Islamic law in several regions (Hasyim, 2019). Such events show that conservatism groups in some regions have political power because they gain space and support from local political elites who are interested in getting voter in legislative elections and regional elections at the local level with the existence of, support from local elitist politics and even businessmen and entrepreneur of the Islamic concervatism movement do not stand alone (Hasyim, 2019). This is the challenge of Muhammadiyah and NU as Islamic organizations that promote moderate Islam, so it is contrary to anti-democratic groups (Menchik, 2018).

The effects of this conservative turn have also been felt within mainstream Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah, as seen in that organization's 2005 Congress in Malang. During this congress, the organization's more conservative elements came face-to-face with progressive elements. Conservative delegates campaigned against the pluralism and liberalism that they perceived as promoted by the organization's progressive elements; ultimately, the progressive elements were unable to advance their own agenda (Burhani, 2018). Today, Islamists promote their political narratives through slogans such as *Aksi Bela Islam* on social media, they have been opposed by activists who use hashtags such as *#StopIslamism*. Their narratives, these new channels for asserting power, both groups have relied heavily on religious and ethnic issues. These groups, which to some extent are equally radicalized, have continued their political contestations through Indonesia's presidential elections (Poole et al., 2019).

Reflecting on these conditions, Indonesia's political development since its 2019 election has been stymied by the rampant practice of Islamic identity politics. During the 2019 election, both candidates were backed by parties with non-religious ideologies. Nonetheless, one of the candidates was perceived as representing Islamic interests, and thereby received the political support of Muslims. This is a clear indicator of the power of Islamism in post-reform Indonesia (Arifianto, 2020). Islamism has become a conservative ideology in Indonesian politics, one that has contrasted with the secular ideology—particularly the promotion of electoral democracy—that is employed by some of the country's largest parties (Mujani & Liddle, 2009).

Sebastian and Nubowo state that the resurgence of conservatism in Indonesia after the Presidential Election is a sign of extremism that will threaten Indonesia's democratic conditions after the 1998 political reform. Accordingly, it needs to gain attention from moderate Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU so that Indonesian democracy is not hampered (Sebastian, L. & Nubowo, 2019). His indicates that Indonesia's democracy has changed. Democracy, as signified by freedom, non-violence, social justice, and human rights, has been hindered by an unwillingness to acknowledge or respect people with different opinions, political choices, or religious beliefs. Furthermore, although to some extent democracy and tolerance have been developed, the freedom created by democratization has resulted in vigilantism and active discrimination and hatred against persons with different political and religious beliefs.

The strength of conservative groups encourages symbolic piety activities through non-religious campuses. They tirelessly convey Islamic messages indicating that progressive groups contain dimensions of hatred, intolerance, and immoderation (Arifianto, 2019b). This is an incredibly strong movement pertaining to the rise of conservatism after political reform took place in Indonesia. Young people from HTI and the KAMMI become agents of the extremism movement in Indonesian campuses (Arifianto, 2019b). The development of conservatism will also become a means of re-Islamization in Indonesia after political reform and general elections (Arifianto, 2019a). Developments, the conservative group has garnered positive responses from the middle class and mothers who thirst for Islamic preaching (Hasan, 2014). The presence of conservative groups in the field finally contested each other with the power of progressive Muslims in the public sphere. (Hasan, 2017).

The revival of conservative Islam, consequently, consigns Muhammadiyah and NU a heavy responsibility to campaign for moderate Islam in the Indonesian public sphere. Muhammadiyah as an Islamic organization that does not participate in party politics will be eagerly awaited for its contribution in delivering moderate Islam messages in the face of conservative Islam after the 2019 presidential election in Indonesia (Nashir et al., 2019). Within such contemporary Muslim politics, Muhammadiyah clearly supports Pancasila as the sole ideological foundation of the state, which is immutable. Pancasila as the state ideology should continue to be strengthened, supported and maintained for the sake of national unity (Astutik, 2015). As a significant religious force in civil society, Muhammadiyah does not follow party politics, nor does it support any certain political group. It does, however, support *politik kebangsaan* (politics of the nation), which constantly strives for equality, justice, rule of law and fairness in economic distribution. Only through this strategy can Muhammadiyah be a significant force in civil society and be influential in Indonesian politics (Nashir et al., 2019). Meanwhile, NU is a moderate Islamic force that carries Islam Nusantara as part of the Indonesian Islam campaign which is different from Islam carried by conservative forces. NU is also not part of a political party, even though it contributes to advancing Indonesian politics.

The challenge here is for Muhammadiyah and NU to work together to build a civil society that is independent, both economically and politically, which will ultimately undermine the conservatives, who insist on the formalization of the sharia in Indonesia (Hilmy, 2013). Failure to do so, the conservative forces may well sway the bulk of the Muslim community. This is where the social services of Muhammadiyah come into play and is significant to sway the voters and larger Muslim public (Burhani, 2019). Aside from that, the government of Indonesia needs to push for religious moderation (Burhani, 2018), And for that, Muhammadiyah and NU are strategically located, with their humongous membership and number of followers across the country (Bush, 2014). They could in fact become the first line of defense against the revival of conservatism in Indonesia (Asyari, 2007) and to prevent the rising intolerance (Arifianto, 2017). For Muhammadiyah, the choice has been decided upon, which is to support the non-sectarian politics of the nation to achieve Islamic moderation (Nashir et al., 2019). Both Muhammadiyah and NU are known to be transit houses for conservative groups, which use the social media as their political arena (Herdiansah et al., 2018). These conservative forces have also been quite successful in mobilizing the young Millennials (Hasan, 2009b; Arifianto, 2018c)

Rising of Islamic Populism

Indonesia's 2019 election also experienced what identified as "Islamic populism". Islamic populism refers to the existence of a movement carried out by community groups led by Indonesian Islamic figures such as Rizieq Shihab, Ismail Yusanto, Hidayat Nur Wahid and Bahtiar Nashir. By defines Islamic populism as a new approach to doing politics that emerged in Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries following the Arab Spring in 2011. In Indonesia, Islamic populism has been advocated by non-mainstream Islamic groups, namely those with far fewer members than Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (Bush, 2014)

The religious contestations that ultimately resulted in Anies Baswedan winning Jakarta's 2017 gubernatorial election over incumbent Ahok were also evident in Indonesia's 2019 presidential election, when Jokowi and his running mate Makruf ran against Prabowo and Uno. Prabowo-Uno were supported by Islamist groups such as the FPI, led by Rizieq Shihab; the GNPF, led by Bahtiar Nasir; Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, led by Ismail Yusanto and Al-Khathaah. These Islamic organizations were among the candidates' strongest supporters, signifying that political Islam has become a significant force since Indonesia began its political reform in 1998 (Institute Policy Analysis of Concflict, 2019)

This Islamism was also evident in the politics of religion during Indonesia's 2019 general election. Its rise has been a challenge to moderate Muslims and democrats in Indonesia (Mudhoffir & A'yun, 2017). It has grown in part due to a *fatwa* requiring Muslim leadership, which has been supported by *ulama* (religious leaders) who held sporadic demonstrations at the National Monument in Jakarta since 2016. During these mass gatherings—which were held even in the lead-up to the 2019 presidential election—thousands of Muslims gather and pressure the government to advance their interests

(Arifianto, 2018). These demonstrations have been identified as extensions of the protest movements that were initiated after Ahok was accused of blaspheming and defaming Islam during a speech at the Thousand Islands in 2017. Several protests that occurred in Indonesia, such as in West Java, Padang, West Sumatra, Medan, Bengkulu, East Java, and Surabaya actually provided an explanation that Islamism in the form of populism was becoming a very clear phenomenon in Indonesia. They moved from several provinces by using Islamic issues to build religious sentiments among Muslim community members.

Islamist Group

Islamist groups are very popular in Islamic society because they often use sensitive issues from Indonesian and international Muslims to campaign for the Indonesian Islamic public. The issue of oppression or violence in the Rohingya, Uigur, Thailand, Moro and Palestine as a political commodity to build empathy for Indonesian Muslims. The Islamists seem to be struggling in defending the marginalized, discriminated against and receiving less attention from the current political regime in a country. This includes the case of Indonesian politics, where the majority of the population is Muslim. However, Islamic parties do not get support from the majority of the Muslim population, including the Islamic organizations Muhammadiyah and NU.

These popular Islamist movements have challenged more mainstream religious organizations like Muhammadiyah and NU and challenged the political legitimacy of the moderate Islam they represent. Citing a *fatwa* from the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia/MUI), these non-mainstream movements have claimed the authority to promote and implement specific *fatwas* in practical politics, and used this authority to sponsor a series of protest movements (Arifianto, 2020). The writers argue that, if such Islamist movements continue to thrive in Indonesia, this will detrimentally affect Indonesian democracy and erode the religious authority of Muhammadiyah and NU. As such, even though the government cannot stop these Islamist movements altogether, it must recognize the substantial threat they pose to electoral democracy. As they gain increased power in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, political, religious, and ethnic tolerance in Indonesia suffer; Islamist movements cannot readily navigate the reality of contemporary politics (Mujani, 2019).

Islamic populism in Indonesia signifies the fusion of ideologies, which have made the country to be seemingly buoyant and floating (Mujani et al., 2012). The sad reality is that Indonesia is mostly dominated by transactional politics, which has significantly raised the cost of political recruitment or to become a legislator (Muhtadi, 2019). Some have maintained that the era of *reformasi* has given rise to oligarchy and money politics (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019). Politics has also been perceived as threatening religious ideology (Fossati, 2019; Menchik & Pepinsky, 2018) and the *Aksi Bela Islam* has become an integral part of the Indonesian Islamic body politic (Ahyar & Alfitri, 2019).

The debate over Islamic populism continuing until present. Even the terminology has many meanings and interpretations Hadiz (2016). Hadiz, (Hadiz, 2016)it is part of the revival of Islamic party politics in the post-Cold War (Hadiz, 2011). However, the use of the term Islamic populism in this article refers to political force, which employs religious sentiments in post-reform electoral politics. Such activities are carried out by PKB which becomes a political party on the basis of the initiative of the kiai, even though currently PBNU states PKBU is not NU. Therefore important to note Islamic populism is highly relevant and a potential game-changer in that it is an effective vote-getter (Winston, 2007). If such practice is mainstreamed and Islamic populism is unhindered, it is plausible to think that authoritarianism may return to Indonesia with the support of intolerant religious groups that is against diversity (Campbell et al., 2018).

Islamic populism became increasingly influential in the lead-up to the 2019 presidential election, during which polarization along religious and political lines was prominent. Political parties were popularly categorized as "Islamic" or "Nationalist", and these parties backed their own candidates in head-to-head competitions (Wicaksono, 2018). Such a tendency initially gained prominence during the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, which was contested by Ahok, backed by "nationalist" parties, and

Anies Baswedan (backed by "Islamic" parties) (Vermonte, 2017). During this election, Ahok was accused of blasphemy, citing a comment he had made regarding Surah al-Maidah, Verse 51. The resulting controversy and religious tension provided the political capital needed to guarantee Anies Baswedan's electoral victory (Vermonte, 2017; Wicaksono, 2018).

Islamic groups' use of places of worship (mosques, prayer groups, etc.) for practical politics represents a significant step backwards for Indonesian democracy. It signifies an increased practice of identity politics, religious sentiments, and of ideological contestations (Anthony, 2017). According to Grzywacz, previously the "notion regarding the role of Islam in shaping national identity of Indonesia shows that the post-colonial nation of Indonesia is made of three elements that shape its national Identity: language; ideology (*Pancasila*); and shifting away the Islamic ideology and political projects from the state politics" (Grzywacz, 2013). However, Islamic organizations in present-day Indonesia have influenced local and presidential elections, contrasting them significantly with similar political processes under the New Order government (Anthony, 2017; Wicaksono, 2018).

Without a strong awareness from Muhammadiyah and NU in responding to the growth and development of Islamic conservatism and populism, Indonesia will slowly become one of the breeding grounds for conservatism and Islamism that is no longer developing in the Middle East. The Middle East is currently changing from conservatism to changes that lead to secularism, thus separating firmly between the rights of citizens in religious matters with the rights of citizens in politics of citizenship. Such changes will certainly have an impact on politics in the Middle East and Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Therefore, Muhammadiyah and NU occupy a very important position for the development become a competitor to conservative groups, especially of conservatism and Islamism in Indonesia after the 2019 Election until the upcoming 2024 Election.

3. Conclusion

The practice of identity politics, as well as the resulting social polarization of elections, reflected a broader contestation between the political ideologies of religious conservativism and secular nationalism. In Indonesia's 2019 presidential election, religious conservativism was promoted by non-mainstream Islamic groups such as FPI and the 212 Alumni, under the coordination of GNPF-MUI. These groups held their own congresses, during which religious leaders—predominantly "new Islamic authorities" such as Abdullah Gymnastiar, Yusuf Mansyur, Felix Siauw, and Abdul Somad—officially stated their support for Prabowo Subianto's presidential campaign. Conversely, members of mainstream Islamic organizations (i.e. Muhammadiyah and NU) tended to back Jokowi.

It may be assumed that religious and ethnic issues will continue to be exploited in future Indonesian elections, and that such identity politics will inform public policymaking and constrain non-normative religious and political practices. As a result, the country's democracy will likely remain illiberal; similarly, political and religious freedoms may be stifled. The greatest challenges to Indonesia's democracy, including its presidential and legislative elections, are Islamic populism, and the conservative turn. These phenomena, found throughout Indonesia, have resulted from great disruptions at the global level and Muslims' failure to respond appropriately, creating not only active violence but also threats to the future quality of Indonesia's democracy. Although it has successfully implemented liberal electoral democracy, Indonesia has yet to create a tradition of respect and tolerance for people with different political choices, religious beliefs, and ethnic backgrounds. In the era of Islamism, this poses a substantial threat to the future of Indonesia's democracy; the emergence of "sharia police" and other acts of intolerance threaten harmony in Indonesia and amongst Muslims. There are Muhammadiyah and NU its very important supporting ideas moderate Muslim in Indonesia under conservatism and Islamic populism.

The limitations of this study have not elaborated on broader predictions that will occur in the 2024 elections about the Islamic populism movement in Indonesia related to the tendency of authoritarianism from power politics which is assumed to be increasingly strong in Indonesia. In addition, this study also does not discuss broadly about nonmainstream Islamic groups in Indonesia.

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