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Field and Contestation of Religious Identity: Christian Responses to the Rise of Islamism in Post-Reformation Indonesia

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Abstract

This study explores the response of Christianity, particularly among protestant leaders, to Islamism in Indonesia during the post-reform period. It uses a qualitative approach, using in-depth interviews and literary materials. The research uses grounded theory to understand how the public sphere serves as a platform for expressing conflicts over religious identities. The results show that Christianity perceives Islamism as a political division, triggering reactions and requiring strategies to establish boundaries and reinforce identities. Feedback from Christianity includes seeking state commitment, forming alliances with moderate groups, engaging in internal introspection, fostering national duty, and establishing daily institutions. The study suggests that Christianity's response to Islamism is a contestation within the cultural production arena, where both groups assert dominance through their distinct modalities. There is no unified Christian response to the growing spirit of Islamism, with demographics, memories, and experience as a social institution determining response variations.

Penelitian ini menggambarkan respons dan pengalaman Kekristenan, khususnya dari kalangan Protestan seperti yang direpresentasikan oleh para pendeta dan intelektualnya, mengenai fenomena Islamisme di Indonesia pada masa setelah reformasi di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan penggalian data berupa wawancara mendalam dan menggunakan bahan-bahan kepustakaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan "teori terpancang" untuk memahami ruang publik digunakan sebagai arena pertunjukan kontestasi identitas

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keagamaan. Penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa Kekristenan melihat fenomena Islamisme sebagai politik segregasi, atmosfir untuk membangkitkan reaksi dan strategi membangun batas serta menguatkan identitas. Respons balik diberikan oleh Kekristenan dengan; meminta komitmen negara, beraliansi dengan kelompok moderat, melakukan refleksi internal, membangun komitmen kebangsaan, dan mengkreasi institusi keseharian. Respons Kekristenan atas Islamisme hadir sebagai kontestasi pada sebuah arena produksi kultural, dimana keduanya mencoba untuk hadir dengan modalitas yang dimiliki masing-masing. Tidak ada respons tunggal dari Kekristenan atas meningkatnya semangat Islamisme, dan varian respons itu sangat tergantung pada pada demografi, ingatan serta pengalaman mereka sebagai sebuah institusi sosial.

Keywords: Christianity; contestation; field; Islamism; religious identity

Introduction

Following the 1998 Reform, social and political developments in Indonesia gave equal space for all elements to participate in developing ideas, concepts, and social group construction. During the New Order era, there was little chance for opposition to the government, but reform allowed everyone to express their views. The democratization era was marked by the resurgence of diverse ideologies, identities, and other interests suppressed under the New Order period. Islamism was one of many who benefited from this social and political transformation.

Apart from activities at the juridical-political level (Hilmy, 2010), the rise of Islamism in Indonesia post-reformation was also manifested in the socio-cultural dimension. The actors in this movement include members of society outside of parliament who pursue different techniques while pursuing the same aim, namely the entire adoption of Islam at all levels of life, including social and cultural aspects (Nashir, 2013). Aside from being pushed by organized groups, awareness of the need to anchor Islam as a whole is spreading and expanding in levels of society without organizationally linked with significant groupings. Reflections on what is called Islam are presented in the domains of pop culture (Heryanto, 2015), fashion (Smith-Hefner, 2007), economics (Sakai, 2019), halal tourism, and sharia housing. Not only on the public side, Islamization also targets the private side. Borrowing a

term from Nancy Smith-Hefner (2019), Islamization also occurs in the aspect of intimacy or "Islamizing Intimacies." Because it applies to authentic daily life, we call this phenomenon "Everyday Islamism."

Another explanation for the rise of Islamism is the mechanism of creating an open marketplace of ideas, which leads to the decline of traditional Islamic authority, the emergence of new rules using social media tools or taklim councils (majlis taklim), and the rise of new preachers and groups affiliated with religious and political elites (Arifianto, 2020). Martin van Bruinessen (2013) refers to the growth of this group as a "conservative turn" (see also Fogg, 2015). Although the emergence of this group does not necessarily reflect the broader tendency of Indonesian Muslims (Qurtuby, 2020), acts of intolerance in the name of religion do occur regularly.

Christians are frequently victims in locations where Islamic groups predominate. They feel threatened, as they did during the New Order (Mujiburrahman, 2006). Regulations and everyday life in general are to blame for this threat. The performative reinforcement of Islamic identity in public areas establishes obvious boundaries between societal elements of various religious affiliations.

The study's first goal was to look at responses from Christians by studying their personal experiences while dealing with Islamist groups and understanding their social and theological background to obtain more diversified opinions. The central subject of this article is how Christianity has responded to the advent of Islamism in Indonesia. What are their reactions to the situation? How does arena theory (culture production) see Christianity's response to the growth of Islamism?

Studies on the phenomenon of the rise of Islamism in Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto have clearly described several phenomena, including accompanying attributive factors: solidarity among Muslims, preaching like propaganda, and forming alliances with politicians (Sebastian & Arifianto, 2018), links between radical Islamist movements and the Middle East (Lim, 2011), and shifts in Islamism that target socio-cultural aspects (Sakai, 2019). Another study, "Peaceful Islamists" (Hwang, 2009), successfully identified a distinct face of this organization.

The primary perspective of modern-day connections between Islam and Christianity is conversation activities between the two groups (Lattu, 2014) and how Indonesian Muslims respond to Christianity (Ropi & Federspiel, 1999). Dialogue is a form of reaction from one group to another. But there are some follow-up questions here: with whom do they converse? Islamist organizations on their own or in collaboration with other Islamic groups? Is discussion still an option in a group that has experienced long-term trauma?

Investigation of Islamism Several ways have been explored to investigate Islamism. Hilmy (2010) expands on the concept of three factions representing Islamists in terms of democracy. Jamil (2021) used a social movement approach to examine the fall of civic Islam, which coincided with the growth of Islamism. Arifianto (2020), like A'La (2018), finds a growing wave of Islamism through a discursive approach to religious authority.

Islamism is a worldwide phenomenon, not a local one. The responses given vary as well. Anti-Islamism movements (in the sense of radical Islam) are every day in Europe (Sedgwick, 2013; Schulman, 2009). The East Asian perspective draws opposite conclusions, as seen by Korean society's reaction to Muslims wearing the veil in Seoul (Eum, 2017). The response to Islamism is inextricably linked to Muslims' social standing. The European phenomenon has a distinct experience with Islam that differs significantly from Indonesia's. As a result, the responses given vary.

Christianity and Islamists have a fractious relationship. Exclusive Muslim organizations perceive Christian groupings to have a Christianization agenda in all of their operations (Husein, 2005). In the situations of Maluku (Hasan, 2008; Qurtuby, 2016) and Poso (Barron et al., 2009; McRae, 2013), communal conflicts with religious subtleties have severe effects in the shape of many victims. Following that, the subject of disagreement between Islamists and Christian groups was the politics of enforcing sharia norms and their derivatives (Buehler, 2016). The Islamist movement spread with two key messages: anti-Christian or anti-apostasy propaganda and the Islamization of public areas.

Richard M. Daulay (2015) describes how Christianity responded to the emergence of Islamism in Indonesian politics. Concerning Political Islam,

Daulay recommended church members influence the nation's ethos, educate citizens on specific topics through political education, support specific parties without being partisan, and engage in political lobbying. Chapman (2007, 2012) makes numerous ideas in the broader context of Islamism. Christianity can examine situations in which Islamist groups form with theological issues because there is where someone is inspired to act while also acknowledging that this group relates to political issues. Another option is to encourage more moderate Islamic groups to reinterpret Islamic teachings and find a middle ground between the demonization of Islam and political correctness, which can be more naive at times. Another recommendation from Chapman is that Christians hunt for loopholes so that they can act as peacemakers while staying away from "Christian Zionism." Reaching out to Muslims out of respect and love rather than fear demonstrates a more sympathetic perspective. Finally, Christians must ready themselves for "hard talks" with Muslims and Islamist groups.

Examining the emergence of Islamism as a phenomenon with political and socio-cultural characteristics on the one hand and the response of Christian groups who frequently oppose Islamists on the other is an area of research that has yet to receive much attention. This discussion, which looks at how public space becomes an arena for religious identity contestation, must be added to the books described above.

The research that has been examined spans a wide range of topics. First, consider Christianity's (political) response to Islamism in both the global and Indonesian contexts. Second, because the studies focused on Islamism's political dimensions, the approach is directly or indirectly related to the problem, such as democracy, social movements, or authority. Third, dominating research on Islamism and Christianity frequently focuses on the conflict side, such as regional rules based on Islamic law.

This study will focus on research questions that can be answered by reading past studies on the emergence of Islamism in Indonesia. What method do they use to submit feedback? How should the Christian response be viewed in the context of the public contestation of religious identity? The

response of Christianity to the growth of Islamism, in theory, would be primarily dictated by their experience and level of involvement with the group.

After providing background, previous studies, and research focus, this article will review the perspective used to analyze the study object. The discussion continued by describing the research method and then explaining the data obtained. Data in Christian group responses built the debate to draw findings and conclusions.

Islam and Islamism are two different things. Islamism is a form of interpretation of Islam, but not Islam itself, because it is a form of political ideology (Tibi, 2012). Tibi characterizes Islamism in six ways: seeing Islam as the state structure, making Jews the adversary, constitutional Islamism in democratic space, the progression of jihad towards jihadism, the shariatization of the state, and the claim to authenticity. Tibi sees Islamism as a religionized politics as much as a political issue. Although Islam implies certain political values, this is not true of the state form.

Tarek Osman reads that some researchers see Islamism as an ideology and analyze it. Others see militant groups as an important force in Islamism, which assumes militantism produces struggles and worsens social situations. Other studies see Islamism as one of the participants in democratic transitions, especially in the Middle East region. Osman himself argues that Islamism is a complex phenomenon, with different worldviews, leaders and supporters, and varied constituencies. However, Osman said, it always reflects social phenomena with deep historical and cultural foundations.

In its face in the contemporary era, Islamism is recognized as an ideology, movement organization, and form of government (Mozaffari, 2007). Islamists, or those who promote the ideology of Islamism, are committed to taking political action to implement their agenda (Emerson in Martin & Barzegar, 2010; Piscatori, 2000), which expands the definition, not only political action but of public action. Because of its extensive dimensions, Islamists employ not only the political arena but also socio-cultural issues to achieve their goals. These two levels can sometimes exist

independently; nevertheless, if mass mobilization becomes a stable habit, it has the potential to be capitalized politically. One can only see one aspect of Islamism in the literature. By relying on Emerson's (2010) theoretical views (in Martin & Barzegar, 2010), this article wants to read Islamism as a religious ideology implemented through total "public action" in political, social, economic, and cultural aspects. In short, as Emerson explains, Islamism in this article is defined as an Islamic ideology that seeks to apply Islamic ideology at all levels of life entirely. This understanding is available to understand Islamism.

Reading the phenomena of Islamism from the standpoint of Christians and perceiving it as a contestation of identity in the public realm is a depiction that earlier academics have neglected. This study attempts to fill a gap in the study of Islamism as a phenomenon with political and socio-cultural characteristics by examining it through the lens of Islamism's position as a "public action" and "political action," as well as Christianity's response to this phenomenon. These two groups are present in an arena, adding capital to the competition. The unit of analysis in this study is the arena of cultural creation (religious identity).

Pierre Bourdieu describes the arena of cultural production as "… the area par excellence between the dominant factions of the dominant class, which sometimes quarrel with each other personally but more often between producers who want to defend their "ideas" and satisfy their tastes and the dominated factions who were involved in the struggle." (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 102). This conflict, Bourdieu says, "integrates into one arena various socially specialized sub arenas, specialized markets completely separated from social space and even geographical space, where different fractions of the dominant class can find products adapted to their tastes." (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 102).

This study employs a qualitative technique, which is a research method that generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people as well as observable behavior. Materials derived from books, articles, and documents become additional sources. In addition to employing library materials, data mining came from in-depth interviews. Interviews

were performed with carefully chosen sources. Respondents are persons with expertise and knowledge in the central theme. Purposely chosen respondents came from areas with a majority Christian population (Papua, West Papua, Manado, Pematang Siantar), areas with a balanced composition and a long history of conflict (Maluku), and respondents who have experienced discrimination in places where Christians are a minority population (Java and Aceh).

Informant selection is required to acquire a range of perspectives to investigate how Christianity responds to the growth of Islamism. This categorization was based not only on majority-minority relations but also on the dynamics of the intensity of the conflict. The premise is that Christian groups who have had long-term confrontations with Islamic groups will have different opinions of Islamism than Christians who are the majority in one location.

Reverends and academics are the most common backgrounds for respondents' activities. Not only is the choice influenced by their social background, but their involvement also influences it in responding to the research object (individually and institutionally). As a result, the generated data is intended to depict the field situation accurately. Regarding regional representation, categorization based on majority-minority relations also contributes to many replies.

All the information gathered is relevant to the issues the author will address and then examine. Data analysis is organizing and categorizing data into patterns, classifications, and fundamental units of description to find themes and create concepts provided by the data. The author used a descriptive analysis method, which is a research method used to provide information (descriptions) about circumstances or events in presenting an interpretation of the data acquired. This method is helpful to describe the concept as it is to obtain a sense of what it contains. The use of social theories to assist in explaining occurrences will be carried out here as a study in the field of social sciences. The arena theory established by Bourdieu will be used to investigate and study the realm of religious identity contestation in evaluating the phenomena of the emergence of Islamism.

Response to the Rise of Islamism

Christians interpret the phenomenon of the rise of Islamism in various ways. These differences in perception happened because of social backgrounds that shape personal experiences and differences in local government responses and demographics. Most informants expressed their objection to the implementation of religion-based regional regulations. Also, they expressed concern over actions that directly victimized Christians on the nation's commitment, which is based on the spirit of the constitution and respect for the right of religion to worship. In aspects related to Islamization in the socio-cultural part, the Christian response generally illustrates the importance of reading this phenomenon as a debate between social, economic, and political interests. There is room for this group to carry out counternarratives.

In investigation of how Christianity responds to the growth of Islamism, informant selection is required to acquire a range of perspectives. This categorization was based not only on majority-minority relations but also on the dynamics of the intensity of conflict. The premise is that Christian groups who have had long-term confrontations with Islamic groups will have different opinions of Islamism than Christians who are the majority in one location.

This strategy is manifested in various forms according to their response to the rise of Islamism. The counternarrative is depicted in multiple ways in the section discussing how Christianity provides feedback. In areas where Christian groups are the majority, discourse has emerged to introduce regulations drawn from Christian values. Another counternarrative, as a response to the rise of Islamism, is shown by returning to a cultural philosophy that can become a common ground for both Islamic and Christian groups.

The Wahid Foundation collected data from 2009 to 2018. It identifies Christian groups as the most vulnerable to infringement of religious and belief freedom, aside from those branded heretics. Christians were subjected to 96 breaches committed by state actors and 117 by non-state actors. In

addition to the community setting (Christians), the church has been the victim of state (80) and non-state (92) acts. Most state acts are in place of worship limitation/closure/sealing, religious punishment, neglect, restriction or ban of religious activities, and discrimination. Meanwhile, non-state actors engage in intimidation, hate speech, physical attacks, misdirection, forbidding activities, and restricting or shutting places of worship.

Aside from that, Christians have become victims of the establishment of religious-based regional regulations, such as Circulars, Decrees, Regional Regulations, Governor Regulations, Mayor Regulations, or Regent Regulations, which also create concerns from Christian groups. The discriminatory regulations adopted cover a wide range of topics that are not limited to Christian groups. However, when it comes to Christian groups, these principles can be divided into two categories: direct and indirect consequences. Regulations prohibiting activities and places of worship (read: churches) can be found to target Christian groups explicitly. Meanwhile, measures that are not directly related but demonstrate the spirit development of Islamism in attire, religious skills, anti-immorality, and other regulations.

Malang City Government's Letter of Termination of Diaspora Church Worship Activities in Kidul Dalem Village in 2010; Jepara Regency Government's Letter regarding the termination of Gereja Injil in Tanah Jawa (GITJ) activities, Dermolo Village, Kembang District, Jepara Regency, Central Java in 2013; and Letter from Government Pangkep Regency, South Sulawesi sealing Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Selatan (GKSS). This situation progressively suggests that Islamization has occurred at the structural level, indicating the strengthening of Islamism (Alamsyah, 2020).

This technique takes numerous shapes depending on how they respond to the growth of Islamism. The counternarrative is depicted in multiple ways in the section describing how Christianity gives feedback. In locations where Christian organizations predominate, a discourse has evolved to implement rules based on Christian ideals. As a response to the rise of Islamism, another counternarrative is demonstrated by reverting to a cultural philosophy that can serve as a common ground for both Islamic and Christian organizations.

One region in Indonesia that has badly experienced conflict in the name of religion is Maluku. Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, Chairman of the Daily Management Council of the Maluku Protestant Church Synod (GPM) for the 2020-2025 period, described the conflict that occurred in 1999-2000 as "the sorrow of religions" (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021). The resurgence of the Islamist movement will significantly disrupt the reconciliation process that is being developed, not to mention the issue of spatial politics carried out by the government after the conflict, which has the potential to prolong segregation.

The emergence of Islamism at the everyday level can be described as an intermediate step towards creating an Islamic society before becoming an Islamic state. The creation of an Islamic community came with all the attributes attached, such as posters or information boards that read "You are entering an Islamic base," "You must dress in Islamic clothing here," policies, and others, including halal labeling.

Elifas added;

> "People (Christians) in Maluku ask, does sago flour have to have a halal label from the MUI? I processed a congregation on Seram Island that produces sago flour, but when it is marketed, it has to have a halal label... I contacted the MUI chairman, who said he could handle that. (but) the question from church members is, 'Does sago have to be labeled halal?' Even though people in Maluku, both Christians and Muslims, know how to process it. But finally, if you want to enter the wider market, like it or not, you must follow these rules. "Well, what I mean is that this is a sociological instrument. First, a society was formed whose Islamic style was dominant, and one day Christians were able to accept it and become part of Islamic society because they were used to (Islamic) symbols" (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021).

However, Elifas said that sociological conditioning depends on the actor who was the subject. If the actor does this as part of a political interest, creating the atmosphere is a mobilization strategy to achieve his political interests.

In contrast to the Maluku region, where communal conflicts occur between two parties who have almost equal power, Christians often become victims when they become a minority, such as in Java, Sumatra (except in

certain parts of North Sumatra), and South Sulawesi. Palti Panjaitan, pastor of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP) in Bekasi in 2013, said that this Islamist group was a threat (Palti Panjaitan, interview, July 16, 2021). Apart from refusing to allow his church to stand, Palti Panjaitan himself also received threats and was pelted with stones and dirt (Ali-Fauzi et al., 2011). However, he was reported because he was considered to have committed minor abuse and committed an unpleasant act in December 2012.

> "I see that the rise of Islamism is motivated by truth claims, that the truest religion is Islam, so everyone must convert to Islam if the political factors are just playing a role. But the most dominant is the theological factor" (Palti Panjaitan, interview, July 16, 2021).

Like Palti Panjaitan, Erde Berutu, a pastor who served at the Pakpak Dairi Protestant Christian Church (Gereja Kristen Pakpak Dairi GKPPD) Aceh Singkil, Special Region of Aceh from 2008 to 2015, experienced a similar incident (Erde Berutu, interview, July 16, 2021). Several churches in its place were sealed and damaged in 2012 and then again in 2015 (Siadari, 2015). Those on behalf of the Singkil Islamic Ummah asked the government to arrest Erde Berutu, who was considered defamatory. Erde is both a witness and a victim of the rise of Islamism at a very tragic level. Christians in Aceh Singkil have become victims of Islamists both through direct action and regulation.

> The development (of Islamist groups) has been visible since 2012... there are new people from that village who graduated from the Middle East. Since the Tsunami, there has been government assistance and cooperation. They are sent to school outside, but apparently, they are not screened" (Erde Berutu, interview, July 16, 2021).

The situation of Christians in Aceh Singkil is becoming increasingly difficult at the daily level; Islamization is taking place. One of them is in the field of education. When attending elementary school (SD) in the 1980s, Erde had to receive lessons on Islamic religion. No matter how much he passed the exam and managed to answer all the questions correctly, in the education report book, the maximum score obtained was only 6 (the highest was 10). Until the 2015s, local Christians could only surrender to the comprehensive Islamization project without being able to put up

"resistance." For Christians in Aceh Singkil, Islamism is a daily phenomenon that makes them feel afraid and threatened.

> "From a long time ago until nowadays, I still memorize Surah al-Fatihah because it was our breakfast. When you start (school) you have to do al-Fatihah. Want to go home (to school), al-Fatihah (again). I already knew well by heart" (Erde Berutu, interview, July 16, 2021).

In Palopo City, South Sulawesi, the local mayor issued Regional Regulation Number 07 of 2006 concerning Animal Husbandry and its Control (revised by Regional Regulation Number 6 of 2019). This regulation explicitly states that pigs cannot be kept and bred in the Palopo City Area (article 3 and article 4). Even though it does not directly limit worship, prohibiting pig farming for Christians is like creating conditions to eliminate daily life practices that are closely related to their traditions, habits, or culture (Mandi Tandi, interview, July 21, 2021).

Situations where Islamization occurs at the structural or cultural level reflect the concerns of large groups about the reduction in their authority and supremacy. The practice of Islamization at all levels, including daily life, is a way to maintain dominance and supremacy so as not to lose the "market" (Minggus Minarto Pranoto, interview, July 28, 2021).

However, daily practices in public spaces can be accepted as theologically derivative activities. It is, for example, reflected in the concept of Islamic transactions or finance. This concept is relatively acceptable in practice by some Christian groups; however, there may be differences between the conceptual level and its implementation.

It happens because Islamist groups or the government, which wants support from certain circles, use domestic language in public spaces. If the substantive side is used as an object, there could be a point that brings them together. Palti Panjaitan, HKBP pastor who moved from Bekasi to Pematangsiantar in 2018, said,

> "If (what is meant by) halal (is), for example, no prostitution or gambling, I agree. But it is better to use language that is acceptable to all" (Palti Panjaitan, interview, July 16, 2021).

Christianity's response to the strengthening of Islamism in various areas of life, as reflected in what was conveyed by several sources above, illustrates three main points. First, this phenomenon can further strengthen segregation, whether in regulatory aspects, direct acts of violence, or daily practices. Socially, some networks have the potential to be disconnected because one and the other are not in the same physical space. Apart from opening up more space for intense horizontal conflicts, segregation will prolong the recovery process in certain areas that have experienced identity conflicts. Second, the rise of Islamism triggered a reaction that, if not managed, may again give rise to more widespread identity politics. Third, creating highly symbolic nomenclature (Islamic or Shar'i) is a way to build boundaries and strengthen group identity. Symbolic capital is created, so it can be transformed into symbolic power.

Opening the Space of Encounter: A Counter-Response

Christianity, as described by the interviewees, generally agrees that Islamism does not represent Islam in Indonesia (Minggus Minarto Pranoto, interview, July 28, 2021; Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021; Erde Berutu, interview, July 16, 2021; Ronald Helweldery, interview, July 17, 2021; Bastian Nanlohy, interview, July 14, 2021).

This struggle is not the will of the majority of Muslims. Even so, the presence of a small group was quite disturbing. There are two reasons for this. First, even though it does not represent a larger Islamic group and often experiences defeat at the national level, the Islamist movement has found momentum at the local level. Second, the success of implementing sharia legislation in several places, as well as discriminatory actions against minority groups, raises questions about national commitment.

The diversity of responses shown by Christianity in reading about the rise of Islamism depends on many aspects. Apart from environmental or demographic matters (Bastian Nanlohy, interview, July 14, 2021; Ronald Helweldery, interview, July 17, 2021) another influencing factor is the memories and experiences of a group interacting with other groups (Elifas

Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021; Mandi Tandi Pare, interview July 21, 2021). The three descriptions of responses regarding Christian groups in the previous section are an extensive scheme that opens up space for other answers apart from Christians' responses.

Christianity responded to the rise of Islamism with several variants, starting from internal criticism to demanding state promises (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021; Palti Panjaitan, interview, July 16, 2021).

Even though the phenomenon of fear and hatred still appears (Osman & Waikar, 2018), that is not the only response that makes Christianity locked up and unable to do anything.

The dynamics of the group's rise, which inflamed the spirit of Islamism, also created awareness for internal reflection. Christianity cannot accept the agenda of the Islamist movement, which means, at the same time, a plan with the same characteristics as that group also does not have to be shown (John A. Titaley, interview, July 16, 2021). The transformation of Christianity in the context of Indonesian society is an absolute prerequisite for opening relations between groups (Titaley, 2020).

Christianization, like Islamization, is a practice that often becomes an obstacle to dialogue. On that basis, internal reflection is a step to look again at the mission of Christianity in Indonesia (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021). For example, when viewing text. Narratives about violence exist in the holy scriptures and reports or verses about peace (Palti Panjaitan, interview, July 16, 2021). Restoring the vision of religion as a source of peace is part of the follow-up to internal reflection in Christianity.

In a more specific context, Christian groups in Maluku are well aware that the protracted conflict must end (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021). The politics of segregation created by the state by differentiating the physical space between Muslims and Christians is not helpful enough for change in the long term. The residue of the long conflict is still quite pronounced because the involved groups still control specific spaces, even though they are small in scope. In areas where exclusive groups

still exist, the need to increase the intensity of interaction becomes very pronounced.

The interaction starts from a transactional aspect, where there is no question about the identity of the agent involved.

> "(The dialogue started from) something very transactional initially, for example, in terms of sales and services. People continue living, and so on. So, if they (Muslims) have a motorbike taxi, don't hesitate to take the motorbike taxi, for example. "That's so that the transactional (aspect)... if you can run it, you can enter and you can communicate" (Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, interview, July 21, 2021).

Maintaining consistency and being loyal to the process is vital because the communication built to eliminate suspicion can only be felt slowly. Worries will always exist, but a meeting point or meeting center can be created gradually. Another case, EM gave an example, is in groups in traditional markets. Muslim traders generally source basic materials from Christian farmers or vice versa. Encounters that occur in "everyday institutions" have the potential to thaw relationships (Soedirgo, 2021).

Manado, Papua, and West Papua are cities and provinces with large (majority) Christian populations. Christianity's response to Islamism in the region is often a reaction to what is happening at the national level or elements of Islamic groups at the local level. Christian groups in Manokwari, West Papua, pushed for a Draft Regional Regulation on the City of the Bible in 2017-2019, although it never became a regulation (Ronald Helweldery, interview, July 17, 2021; Bastian Nanlohy, interview, July 14, 2021).

Meanwhile, in Manado, the masses rejected Fahri Hamzah's arrival on May 13(Kompas, 2017) as a result of demonstrations in Jakarta demanding the criminalization of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok (Governor of DKI Jakarta), who was deemed to have blasphemed Islam. Fahri Hamzah was also present at the demonstration on November 4, 2016 (Pratama & Ahmad, 2016).

The role of the state in building politics is also important. The deradicalization carried out against former combatants in Maluku is something that Christianity hopes for, apart from increasing interaction

between citizens of different religions. Government management often falls on majorocracy sentiment, a government run by the power of the majority vote, not the common interest (Titaley, 2013).

During the mobilization, which was a response to the phenomenon of Islamism in Jakarta, for example, demonstrators in Manado, of course, the majority of whom were Christians, unfurled the banner "NU (Nahdlatul Ulama, ed.) is our friend" (Denni Pinontoan, interview, July 17, 2021).

The result also confirms Christianity's perception of two things: Islamism is not Islam, and there are Islamic groups that can be invited to ally, namely moderate groups. Collaborating with moderate groups was also carried out by those who had experienced victims, such as Pastor Palti Panjaitan or Erde Berutu.

Another way to respond to Islamism is to return to cultural philosophy. In the Javanese, Maluku, Minahasa, Batak, or Papuan communities, a cultural sentiment is actually a common land, especially in these Christian and Islamic groups. Christianity proposed exploring cultural values to examine how these religions have the same footing.

Thus, several strategic steps are Christianity's response to the phenomenon of the rise of Islamism. First, hope for the state to carry out its constitutional mandate; second, ally with moderate groups to build synergism; and third, build internal reflection on reading sacred texts or Christian practice. Fourth, make national commitment a cornerstone in building interfaith relationships. Fifth, return to the philosophy of culture. Sixth, build daily institutions that allow encounters.

Christianity's Response to Islamism: Perspectives on the Arena of Cultural Production

According to Bourdeau, the arena is a separate social universe with functioning laws not tied to the laws of functioning of politics and the economy (a different social universe having its own rules of operating independently of those of politics and the economy) (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 162). There, actors compete to gain power on the one hand, and on the other hand, also need resources in this contestation.

A habitus must be possessed and encourages someone to enter that field, that game, and not another to enter an arena (philosophical, scientific, etc.) where an actor can control the game. According to Bourdieu (1977), habitus is "a set of dispositions that incline agents to act and react in certain ways, orienting their worldview even while not determining it." The action in question can be speech or body gestures, while the reaction can mean appreciation, dislike, or insult. Habitus are social values and dispositions, which are internalized and form ways of thinking and personality, then manifested in praxis.

The rise of Islamism, as reflected in Christianity's response to various phenomena within this circle, can be observed within the framework of habitus. After the reform, a habitus developed among these Islamists. In its various forms, this habitus then describes the symbolic aspects of the Islamist movement. Body gestures or language become actions that become the agent's disposition. Nomenclature (*syar'i*), diction (*hijrah*), or calling (*akhi, ukhti*) represent a new habitus that is reflected in daily actions. In a further context (react), there is a struggle or desire to establish a state, legislation, or regulations based on the formal principles of Islamic teachings. The habit is popular among Islamists and shapes self-worth. These values become the worldview of a group, individual, or agent.

There is a minimum of knowledge, skill, or 'talent' to be accepted as a player. Entering the game means trying to use that knowledge, skill, or 'talent' in the most profitable way. In short, the 'investment' of one's capital (academic, cultural, symbolic) in such a way as to derive maximum benefit or 'gain' from participation. Under normal circumstances, no one enters a game to lose (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 8).

To enter an arena, you need capital as a resource that must be owned. The ability to read the arena will significantly influence the agent's strategy in winning the fight. As described above, there is a tendency for shifts in the arena or stage where the Islamist movement shows its role. Whether operating at the political or socio-cultural level, the Islamist movement has accumulated four at once: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic

(Bourdieu, 1991). In the context of the rise of Islamism, it is possible to create a space that links one capital to another.

Bourdieu said one form of symbolic capital is political capital. Agents use certain symbols as capital to convert economic, social, and cultural capital or one/two of the three. With this capital, the agent enters the arena to fight. Bourdieu added the role of language as an instrument for creating symbolic power. The trend to speak or present Islamist nomenclature is the instrument, apart from, of course, the belief that someone who becomes a leader must be "those of the same faith."

In the early days after reform, the main arena was the national level, the desire to change the constitution by presenting the Jakarta Charter as a symbolic instrument. Social and economic capital is crucial in the electoral political stage. However, as illustrated above, winning over the national political scene takes time and effort.

This situation encourages a change in field concentration from national to local levels in legislative politics. Because the arena of battle is more distributed, Islamism is not only at the political level but also at the everyday level; a practice that is expected to become a new habitus with inspiration or worldview originating from this Islamist group. In areas where Muslims are the majority, Islamism is the dominant discourse. However, in other places, resistance from Christians to the address of Islamism has, of course, emerged. The field then becomes a stage where contestation of identity and capital is created. This symbolic capital can also help explain the phenomenon that occurs in many regions where there are many Sharia-based regulations proposed or issued precisely in areas where parties that are not based on religion are the majority or winners of general elections.

Conclusions

This research seeks answers to three central questions concerning Christianity's response to the rise of Islamism following the Indonesia's Reformation era in various aspects of life. It reveals three key observations based on multiple sources. First, the phenomenon of the strengthening of Islamism, whether manifested in regulatory measures, direct acts of violence,

or daily practices, tends to exacerbate societal segregation. Second, the upsurge of Islamism elicits reactions that, if not effectively managed, may fuel broader identity politics. Third, the adoption of highly symbolic nomenclature, such as 'Islamic' or 'Shar'i,' emerges as a strategy to delineate boundaries and fortify group identity.

In response to these dynamics, Christian groups have employed various strategic measures. Firstly, they express a reliance on the state to fulfill its constitutional mandate. Secondly, there is a tendency to form alliances with moderate groups to foster synergies. Thirdly, there is an emphasis on internal reflection regarding the interpretation of sacred texts or Christian practices. Fourthly, making a national commitment serves as a foundational element in cultivating interfaith relationships. Fifthly, a return to cultural philosophy is advocated. Lastly, the establishment of everyday institutions that facilitate encounters is promoted.

If viewed from an arena perspective, Christianity's response to Islamism is portrayed as a contestation within the cultural production arena. Both groups strive to assert their presence through distinct modalities. The arena becomes a battleground for contesting religious identity, with each group vying for dominance. The Islamist group, in particular, prepares four capitals—economic, social, cultural, and symbolic—to establish its presence in the arena.[w]

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