Indonesian Journal Of Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (IJIIS)
Vol. 1, no. 2 (2018), pp. 59-89 DOI: 10.20885/ijiis.vol1.iss2.art3

DANCING WITHIN THE NATION-STATE: AN ILLIBERAL DEMOCRATIC WAY FOR INDONESIAN ISLAM

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Abstract

This paper argues that Indonesian Islam has been failing in gaining strategic position in economic and political realms throughout Indonesia's independence. Sadly, Indonesian Islam has no design of strategy required to turn around its current falling position. This paper proposes a question on how the disappointing results in economic and political realms happen in such a long period of time, 1945 – 2018. Finally, the paper offers a temporary proposal to gain strategic performance of Indonesian Islam economically and politically. The proposal contains a mid-term strategic design and considers global environment surrounding Indonesia. This paper therefore gives significant portion in the element of strategy that is rarely found in the current literature. Thus, the solution will focus on the economic and political dimension.

Keywords: *Indonesian Islam, political Islam, economic and social position*

A. Introduction

Islam is a world phenomenon. Since 1979, the world—especially the West—had never missed the chance to continually keep an eye on

countries with Islamic background, especially those which were related to the development of political Islam—commonly labeled as Islamist ideology or Islamism.[1] The 911 bombing in United States had made the West became a lot more aware. The Arab Spring, which started in 2011, and the emergence of ISIS have nurtured the West's interest on Islamic movement. The East had also started to learn, but with much lower intensity.

Religion can no longer be marginalized in political realm as shown in secularized and modernized world's project. Religion – along with ideology and identity – becomes a significant variable in analyzing and formulating a policy. Religion matters. In the past, these three factors were mostly seen as merely dependent "epiphenomenal" factors, an effect of other materialized factors. In the Middle East particularly, Danahar satirically says that "Religion, not nationalism or Arabism, is now the dominant force."[2] He also convincingly adds that "God has returned to the Middle East." Moreover, God plans to stay for some time. Islam, at present, simply put, is long lasting.

Indonesian Islam, in particular boundaries, is also in a spotlight. It is surely in a much lower scale, even though there is a tendency to improve steadily. Historically, Islam is almost always in a marginal position – it rarely has a significant role – if it is seen from the overall Islamic world. Indonesian Islam is far from the center of Islam (at that time), the Middle East or Arab. Indonesian Islam is seen (by the Middle East or Arab) as not "the real Islam" or "pure Islam".[3]

Nevertheless, recently – especially, since the governor election of Jakarta – Indonesian Islam's position, academically moves closer

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1 See Shadi Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016); Shadi Hamid, *Temptations of Power: Islamists & Illiberal Democracy in a New Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

2 Paul Danahar, *The New Middle East: The World After the Arab Spring* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 3.

3 Azyumardi Azra, "Islam Indonesia: Kontribusi Pada Peradaban Global. Prisma, Vol 29, No 4," *Prisma* Vol. 29, no. 4 (2010): p. 90, http://www.prismajurnal.com/journals.php?pg=1.

to the center. Some scholars (like Fealy,[4] Hadiz,[5] Hasan,[6] Mudhofier, Yasih, and Hakim,[7]) see Indonesian Islam is turning to the extreme right, becoming an Islamic populist right, and democratic paradox phenomenon. The development of Indonesian Islam is interesting and turns out to be 'serious' matter, when Indonesian Islam competitively competes with liberal democracy. At least, as it is seen from the parameter of liberal democracy. Consequently, Indonesian Islam becomes a victim – disturbing democracy.

The increasing attention on Indonesian Islam is also in-line with the increasing role of Indonesia in the Middle East. For example, the Indonesian government and people give continuous support for Palestine's independence. Later, Indonesia has been also actively involved in seeking for peace solution in Afghanistan. More importantly, Indonesian Islam, or Islam with the Indonesian characteristic, is commonly seen as the face of tolerant and peaceful Islam; therefore, it is expected to be a pillar in the return of Islamic civilization in the world. In Azra's term, "Indonesian Islam, with its distinctive *washatiyah* character, has made it possible to be a model and has a significant role in strengthening global democracy as well as a more peaceful world civilization."[8] It becomes a promise that is difficult to be proven, even in the near future.

At the same time, Middle Eastern Islam seems to have an indistinct future. Some countries, with alarming numbers, are in conflict or even in constant civil war. Nasr implies "Over the last seven years, social

4 Gregory Fealy, "Indonesian Politics in 2011: Democratic Regression and Yudhoyono's Regal Incumbency," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies (BIES)* Vol. 47, no. 3 (2011): pp. 343–351, https://doi.org/10.1080/00074918.2011.619050.

5 Vedi R. Hadiz, "Indonesia's Year of Democratic Setbacks: Towards a New Phase of Deepening Illiberalism?," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies (BIES)* Vol. 53, no. 3 (September 2, 2017): pp. 261–278, https://doi.org/10.1080/00074918.2017.1410311.

6 Noorhaidi Hasan, "Ideologi, Identitas Dan Ekonomi Politik Kekerasan: Mencari Model Solusi Mengatasi Ancaman Radikalisme Dan Terorisme Di Indonesia," *Prisma* Vol. 29, no. 4 (2010): 3–24, http://www.prismajurnal.com/journals.php?pg=1.

7 Abdil Mughis Mudhoffir, Diatyka Widya Permata Yasih, and Luqman-nul Hakim, "Populisme Islam Dan Tantangan Demokrasi Di Indonesia," *Prisma* Vol. 36, no. 3 (2017): pp. 48–59.

8 Azra, "Islam Indonesia: Kontribusi Pada Peradaban Global," p. 83.

upheavals and civil wars have torn apart the political order that had defined the Middle East ever since World War I."[9] Only few Islamic countries in that region can peacefully and sustainably develop – in terms of politic and national security, despite the fact that they are surrounded by countries with chaotic situation. Also – I personally find it a bit overrated – Allawi (2009: 250) asserts "Islamic civilization is now nearly bereft of most of the vital elements that had previously given it coherence and meaning. Whatever has remained is now undergoing its last crisis."[10]

B. Strategic Position of Indonesian Islam: Questions and Proposed Solutions

This paper presents three main questions. First, what Indonesia's achievements are after its independence. Achievements in this context are in social and political realms. In general, Indonesian Islam has improved quite significantly in social and cultural realms. However, this paper will not discuss this achievement, as it has been historically proven.[11] The author encourages further achievement in these realms; but there will be a fragile gap that needs to be supported by achievements in other realms.

This paper would like to claim that, at least temporarily, Indonesian Islam has been failing in gaining strategic position in economic and political realms throughout Indonesia's independence. Satirically put, Indonesian Islam has been fasting a long Ramadan, economically and politically. In addition, there is no assurance when the break-fasting will be. Sadly, Indonesian Islam has no design of strategy required to turn around its current falling position. When there are achievements made

9 Vali Nasr, "Iran Among the Ruins," *Foreign Affairs*, 2018, p. 108, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ articles/middle-east/2018-02-13/iran-among-ruins.

10 Ali A Allawi, *The Crisis of Islamic Civilization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p.250.

11 See Jati, Wasisto Raharjo, "Trajektori Populisme Islam Di Kalangan Kelas Menengah Muslim Indonesia," *Prisma* Vol. 36, no. 3 (2017): pp. 19–27, http://www.academia.edu/35510365/Trajektori_ Populisme_Islam_di_Kalangan_Kelas_Menengah_Muslim_Indonesia.

occasionally, they happen in critical situation or when the country is in a weak state. The first part of the paper will discuss this issue.

Secondly, as it should be, this paper proposes a question on how the disappointing results in economic and political happen in such a long period of time, 1945 – 2018. The second issue is not specifically discussed here, with some academic consequences. Nevertheless, we need to be aware of the fact that there are plenty of sources that already discuss this issue. Unfortunately, the sources are scattered in various places and disciplines. This paper avoids to discuss the second issue in order to prevent misunderstanding – that happens repeatedly.

Therefore, the paper goes straight to the last part, that is a temporary proposal to gain strategic performance of Indonesian Islam economically and politically. Thus, the proposal contains a mid-term strategic design and considers global environment surrounding Indonesia. Therefore, this paper gives a significant portion in the element of strategy that is rarely found in the current literature – as much as the author can find. Thus, the solution will focus on the economic and political dimension.

C. The Long Ramadan: Enjoying Marginalization?

Islam, for several times, has been the main theme in *Prisma* –a popular scientific magazine in Indonesia. For some reasons, there is no need to explain the significance of discussing this matter. Two of *Prisma*'s editions are regarded appropriate to describe the fate of Indonesian Islam and the needed outline to turn around its depraved fluke. In June 1990, *Prisma* issued an edition under the theme "The Long Ramadhan: Political Islam under the New Order." That is the condition of Indonesian Islam, especially Political Islam, under the New Order: a prolonged fasting with an uncertainty of break-fasting time. It seems that the portrayal still suits not only during the New Order regime, but also before and after the regime. In the previous edition, *Prisma* issued "Islam in Indonesia: In Search of a New Image." This theme can be interpreted as a need of strategic renewal in Indonesian Islam.

Simply put, as written by Mahasin in his editorial note "…. the New Order has successfully completed the domestication of political Islam"[12]; it is difficult to refute. In the two previous Orders, similar condition also occurred. In his other note, Mahasin uses "trauma" in cultural and political context to portray repeated and streaked saddening loss of Indonesian Islam. Long after that, the same word used by Azra to describe Indonesian Islam. He says, "In a very long period of time, the political journey of Indonesian Islam is full of unpleasant traumatic experiences; this is significantly affected by the actualization of political Islam."[13] More importantly, Azra adds that "this traumatic experience not only took place during Dutch colonialization, but also shortly before and after the country's independence." The remaining logic question emerges, at least stated by Mahasin, "…. how long does this long Ramadan last?"[14] A detailed discussion will be presented as follows.

D. Indonesian Islam in the Old Order: A Failure in the Major and Minor Convergence Thesis

Short after the 1945 claim of independence and Indonesia was in its Independence Revolution, Political Islam can be described in an unfortunate condition, compared to the nationalist group. Significant roles were played by Muslims in preserving independence during the revolution, yet it seemed to be easily forgotten. Ricklefs says that in the pursue of gaining independence, "Islamic organizations gave full support to the Revolution."[15]

This is one of unique features of Indonesian Islam and labeled by Kuntowijoyo as "*psychological crisis*".[16] After giving its "contribution", Muslims are always left behind, it seems that Muslims are only useful

12 Aswab Mahasin, "The Long Ramadhan," *Prisma: The Indonesian Indicator* Vol. 49, June (1990): p. 2.

13 Azra, "Islam Indonesia: Kontribusi Pada Peradaban Global," p. 84.

14 Mahasin, "The Long Ramadhan," p. 2.

15 M.C Ricklefs, *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java, c 1930 to the Present.* (Singapura: NUS Press, 2012), p. 70.

16 Kuntowijoyo, *Identitas Politik Umat Islam* (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1997), p. 210.

during the peak of crisis. Fortunately, Muslims do have "psychological crisis," a survival skill during crisis that is no longer applicable after the crisis passed." It is probably because normality is an odd term among Muslims in that era.

In other words, political Islam has lost. It could be seen when the country was led by non-Islamic politicians in addition to the removal of "seven words" in the first principle of *Pancasila*. Another proof was in the number of Islamic politicians in KNIP cabinet. More importantly, crucial positions in provincial levels were also losing.[17]

Various downfalls that Indonesian Islam experienced found a hint of cure, since in the 1950s until the end of Constitutional Democracy the performance of Political Islam slowly recovered.[18] In 1950 – 1956, three (yet, Ricklefs mentions four) Prime Minister positions were in the hand of Islamic politicians.[19] The result of 1955 General Election, commonly referred as a free and open election, led to a big win of two Islamic parties – Masyumi and NU (Nahdhatul Ulama) – so that these parties claimed sufficient parliament seats, along with PNI (Par*tai Nasional Indonesia*/Indonesian National Party) and PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*/Indonesian Communist Party). Both Masyumi and PNI gained big parliament portions, 57 seats (22.2% of the total seats) although PNI won the most seats. Some said Masyumi leaders mostly disappointed with the result, since they expected a higher result.[20] Ricklefs even stated that "Some Masyumi leaders felt that Islam's progress to national power was now blocked….".[21]

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17 Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam Dan Negara: Transformasi Gagasan Dan Praktik Politik Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2009), pp. 98–104; See Also Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia* (Singapore: Equinox Publishing, 2010), pp. 159–273.

18 See Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

19 M.C Ricklefs, *Religious Elites and the State in Indonesia and Elsewhere: Why Takeovers Are so Difficults and Usually Don't Work in "Encountering Islam: The Politics of Religious Identities in Southeast Asia,"* ed. Hui Yew-Foong (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2012), pp. 17–46.

20 Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Islam Dan Pancasila Sebagai Dasar Dasar Negara: Studi Tentang Perdebatan Dalam Konstituante* (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), pp. 165–168.

21 M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), p. 238.

Even though politically in turbulence, the relationship between Islam and the nationalist group in the beginning of independence era was pretty much well. It was probably caused by the need to create and maintain the newly-achieved independence. The nation's character building and economic improvement were expected to be chief priorities, despite the fact that these noble hopes would not be easily manifested, as phrased by Feith, "*nation building and economic progress*."[22] The first part was more easily designed than the second one.

However, in the verge of 1948 PKI's coup in Madiun – frequently referred to as a backstabbing act to the Republic – the relationship between Islam and the nationalists was no longer in harmony. The relationship of these two cultural-political segments got worse when numerous revolts that created stigma against Islam occured in several provinces, like, *Gerakan Darul Islam Kartosuwiryo, Pemberontakan Rakyat Aceh, Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (PRRI), and *Perjuangan Semesta Alam* (Permesta).[23]

The culmination point of the conflict resurfaced when there was a debate on the nation's constitution on *Konstituante* (Constituent) sessions after the 1955 General Election. Afterward, since 1959, Indonesia practiced the Guided Democracy (Demokrasi Terpimpin). PKI's coup in 1965 was regarded as a clear indicator to negative position of Islam to other society's segments, like PNI and PKI nationalists.[24] At the same time, Islam also failed to build a mutual relationship with the army.

22 Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, pp. 32–36.

23 See Barbara Sillars Harvey, *Permesta: Half a Rebellion*, Monograph Series / Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1977); Seen also Audrey Kahin, *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution: Unity from Diversity* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985).

24 See Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth Thomas McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2009); Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno: Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965* (Jakarta; Singapore: PT Equinox Publishing Indonesia, 2006); and Harold A Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

Most importantly, since 1947, Islam in Indonesia was no longer united in one political party, Masyumi. PSII (*Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia*/Indonesian Islamic Union Party) broke its allegiance with Masyumi and declared itself as an independent party. NU also made the same decision in 1952. The culmination of political Islam's downturn occurred in August 1960 when the government asked for Masyumi's annulment and finalized in September in the same year.[25] It seemed that only NU that was pretty much safe until the end of Guided Democracy, referred by Crouch as an era of "uneasy balance of power" between Soekarno, armed-forces, and political parties.[26] Division that occurred within PSI (Partai Sarekat Islam/Islamic Union Party) during pre-independence era happened again. The union among Muslims hardly ever happened – in PSI, MIAI, and Masyumi – that was hard to handle and maintain. It is the classic and latent problem of this issue.

There were some perspectives to explain why the performance of Indonesian Islam – socio-cultural Islam and especially political Islam – has its ups and downs. One common and dominant perspective at that time was a theory developed by Geertz related to three classifications of Javanese society: *abangan, santri*, and *priyayi*.[27] It was then known as the *aliran* (socio-religious stream) perspective in political culture. When Muslims united – both modern and traditional ones – and at the same time, there was no conflict with the nationalists, the performance of Indonesian Islam tend to be positive, and vice versa.

When Muslims unites internally and harmony between Muslims and *abangan* also *priyayi* is achieved (external unity), Kuntowijoyo labels it as Major Convergence Thesis.[28] On the other hand, when only internal elements of Muslim unite – modern, traditional, and puritan

25 Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia*, pp. 395–416.

26 Harold A Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 43–68.

27 See Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1960).

28 Kuntowijoyo, *Muslim Tanpa Masjid: Esai-Esai Agama, Budaya, Dan Politik Dalam Bingkai Strukturalisme Transendental* (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 2001), p. 328; Kuntowijoyo, *Identitas Politik Umat Islam*, pp. 216–218.

Islam – there is stream (*aliran*) convergence. The close proximity between *abangan* and *santri* is called cultural convergence. When *wong cilik abangan* (common people/lower level people) climbs up a status into *priyayi*, it is called social convergence. Therefore, major convergence occurs when there are three minor convergences take place simultaneously: *aliran*, cultural, and social. In other words, Muslims need to build sub-culture link – among *abangan, santri*, and *priyayi* – as well as inter sub-culture link – among modernists, traditionalists, and puritans. This is a long-term social *da'wah* that surely is not easy.

From the Independence Revolution to the end of Old Order, at least there were three interesting facts about Indonesian Islam, seen from the perspective of politics. Firstly, the cultural gap between *santri* and *abangan* – both PNI and PKI – got wider. Secondly, and more importantly, *santri* was not in a dominant position in the *politik aliran* (stream politics), as stated by Ricklefs as "the santri-abangan balance."[29] Abangan could give a fierce persistent as seen in its social-politics position, before its fall in the end of 1965. Finally, Islam's internal relation got broken when Masyumi was no longer the only Muslims' representation. Major Convergence Thesis could not be manifested, as well as its minor convergences. This unfortunate position continued until the end of 1980s and first part of the New Order.

E. Historical Repetition during the New Order: From Political Islam Into Socio-Cultural Islam

History (may) be repeated, even though its detailed narration is not the same. This is what happened to Indonesian Islam during the New Order regime. At least, the repetition occurred in two points. First of all, Kuntowijoyo called it psychological crisis syndrome among Muslims in Indonesia during the New Order with a clearer indication. Along with armed forces, Islam –especially traditionalists and university students – had a significant role in the establishment of the New Order. Strangely, they got nothing from the long history of this regime. They

29 Ricklefs, *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java, c 1930 to the Present.*, pp. 80–115.

were even left behind by their colleagues and attached with constant negative stigma: their political rivals always threatened them, a way of saying that Muslim politicians were potentially dangerous rivals. It is an important fact, since these politicians failed to get any portion of the country's development and they were also left behind – no longer regarded as colleagues.

Although he never said it openly, Soeharto's sympathy to *Aliran Kepercayaan* (traditional Javanese form of mysticism) affected quite negatively in the relationship between Soeharto and Indonesian Muslims in the first part of the New Order.[30] Consequently, yet not surprisingly, the New Order officials, from the beginning of the era, indicated that they were more contented to work with non-Islam-related groups. People with different religions (other than Islam), who are more educated at that time, got much bigger portion in the administration. This constant is clearly stated by Ricklefs as "It was also notable that, in the early years of the New Order, several senior figures in the military, bureaucracy and elsewhere were Christians to a degree that overrepresented the Christians proportion of the population."[31] He also adds that this reality increased prejudice among Muslim leaders that the new government actually had no sympathy to Islam.

During pre-independence and Independence Revolution, Muslims literally gave significant contribution, although there were efforts to bring them down. Shortly, in the same period, political Islam failed to gain what had been constantly fought for. The result was very devastating, up to depressing level. Therefore, in the post-independence time – by the end of 1930s – they were "forced" to shift from politics to social arena. This shift did not occur during the Old Order era.

Nobody expected that the New Order soon so strongly established: returning political stability and improving the country's economy. By the beginning of the era, various problems piled up: economic, security,

30 *Ibid*, p. 124
31 *Ibid*, p. 124

and political problems. Soeharto, known as the Smiling General, came unpredictably as a prime leader and "softly" took over the country's administration. As described by Roeder, "THE NAME SOEHARTO meant nothing to the world and to many Indonesians until October 1, 1965. On this day, the life of an unknown Indonesian soldier, within a couple of hours, turned from obscurity to fame."[32]

There are two indicators to point out the failure in this political aspect. However, the failure to rebuild Masyumi by the beginning of the New Order seems to be the most obvious indicator. Though there was hope and optimism inside the party, it turned out that the long and winding process had shattered the effort. Ward asserts "Thus it was that supporters of Masyumi were optimistic about their party's rehabilitation: By December 1966, it was anticipated that Masyumi's rehabilitation would occur shortly."[33] In the end, there was a new party named *Partai Muslimin Indonesia (*Indonesian Muslim Party/Parmusi) without any formal leaders of Masyumi.

It could be said that some of the armed forces, especially hardliner ones, were the main components of the New Order that had negative perspective upon political party, particularly Masyumi. During the Old Order, political party seemed to be source of political imbalance, even though the regime was proven to be an impressive democracy era. Crough says "Army officers in general had little respect for most of the party politicians who had been prominent during the Guided Democracy period, and they regarded the political parties as patronage machines serving limited sectional interests. Having gained control of the government for themselves, the army leaders had no intention of handling power to the political parties in the name of "democracy."

32 O. G Roeder, *The Smiling General. President Soeharto of Indonesia.* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1969), p. 1.

33 Ken Ward, *The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia,* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2010), p. 35; See also Nasir Tamara, "Sejarah Politik Islam Orde Baru," *Prisma* Vol. XVII, no. 5 (1988): pp. 42–43.

The (long) history of (part of) Muslims who had formal relation with Islam and the state in pre-independence time[34] and debating period in *Konstituante* (Constituent)[35] could be the reason for some members of armed forces not to trust the "loyalty" of Muslims to the country, particularly to Pancasila. DI-TII and PRRI-Permesta rebellions strengthened this disbelief,[36] while some found it too much. The unhealed wound, says Tamara.[37] Mahasin labels it as political scars that were difficult to cure. He further explains it as "haunting stigma of a fanatic group."[38] Masyumi's distinctiveness that always in-line with law and democracy corridor was simply forgotten.

A new hope sparked on 6 January 1967 when "Suharto made it clear that he would not countenance rehabilitation of Masyumi," a gentle reply memo to Prawoto Mangkusasmito. On the 7th point of the letter, he stated that "for the sake of juridical, state administration, and psychological reasons that has brought to the establishment of ABRI (the armed forces), ABRI cannot accept the rehabilitation of ex-Masyumi party".[39] In the end, *Partai Muslimin Indonesia* (Parmusi) established in 20 February 1968 after some changes in the party's body.

This failure – to some extents – brought a constant implication in the form of difficulty among Muslims to politically unite. There was no single case of Muslim's unity during New Order era. If there was one group that was relatively close by the beginning of the New Order, the other groups would make distance or even became opposing groups. Similar pattern happened in the middle and end of the regime. When one approached, the other would slowly stay away.

34 See Marcus Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam and the State in Indonesia: From Turbulent Transition to Democratic Consolidation* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), 2009), pp. 75–78.

35 See Fachry Ali, "Akomodasi Non-Politik Islam Indonesia Dalam Struktur Orde Baru," *Prisma* Vol. 20, no. 3 (1991): p. 89; and Maarif, *Islam dan Pancasila sebagai dasar dasar negara*.

36 David Jenkins, *Suharto and His Generals: Indonesian Military Politics 1975-1983.* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1984), pp. 6–12; Ward, *The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia,* p. 35.

37 Tamara, "Sejarah Politik Islam Orde Baru," p. 35.

38 Aswab Mahasin, "Marhaban," *Prisma* Vol. XIII, no. Extra (1984): p. 2.

39 Tamara, "Sejarah Politik Islam Orde Baru," p. 43.

At this point, the New Order gained the most benefit from this fragmentation. The more civilians detached from one another in higher level, particularly Islamic civil politicians, the more chances for armed forces to take bigger roles. The one with the most benefit was armed forces, as proposed Mietzner in his book *Military Politics, Islam, and the State in Indonesia*. The New Order, certainly, did not need to maintain any relationship with two big Islamic groups: modernists and traditionalists.[40] It only needed to stay connected with one group; thus, the required political stability would be reached.

A quite dramatic change in strategy took place in the end of the New Order era. Muslims shifted their attentions from fully politics to Islamic social perspective. The shift marked by the establishment of new social organization namely *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* (Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals/ICMI) in 1990. The political position of ICMI was hard to be precisely predicted – as Mietzner describes, between dynamically establish and shift in the scale of "rebellion and collaboration"[41]; however, Ali estimates that Muslims' choice to stay away from practical politics and to walk the social way resulted in a more sustainable economic and political performance.[42] It will happen at the right momentum; that is the fifth wave of Islamic thinking in Indonesia. It is a lot softer and kinder: cosmopolitan, international, and educated, as predicted by Abdullah.[43]

F. Local Muslim Entrepreneurs: Being Put Aside

Vertical mobility through education attained by most Indonesian, especially local Muslims, during the New Order era deserved to get appreciation, a blessing for Muslims in general. Achievement in this mobility was a substantial way to fix the economic and politics' position, as well as Islamic civilization in Indonesia. They could surely

40 Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam and the State in Indonesia*, pp. 78–86.
41 *Ibid,* pp. 163-169
42 Ali, "Akomodasi Non-Politik Islam Indonesia Dalam Struktur Orde Baru," pp. 87–96.
43 Taufik Abdullah, "Pemikiran Islam Di Nusantara Dalam Perspektif Sejarah: Sebuah Sketsa," *Prisma* Vol. 20, no. 3 (1991): pp. 16–27.

get prestigious positions in Indonesia's managerial decisions, although they might seem awkward to do so. There were still perceptions that these new religious leaders had not enough competence, both academically and socio-culturally, at the time they became Indonesian leaders: an acceptable or normal condition.

Hence, this new vertical mobility could only happen in one way and seemed to ignore – or to deny – another old yet glorious way. These young leaders prepared the needed provisions to accompany their journey through education. Genealogical footprints of middle and upper class Muslims – education, hajj, and trades – that developed throughout the long history of Nusantara, changed into a narrower path.[44] The many opted paths had changed into a single path. Business and economic lines that grew rapidly in 15th century and run for more than two hundred years which reached their golden moments in 1620s, in the context of Southeast Asian trades,[45] had certainly been left behind. What an incredible loss to our civilization, that lately – during Reform era – started to be recalled and appreciated.

What Muslim entrepreneurs experienced during the New Order era could be said as historical repetition of a similar condition in the beginning of 17th century. In the past, the policy of Colonial government was one of the main reasons; next, it was the New Order's policy, as concluded by Robison.[46] He also adds the need of further studies, as "It other words, it is likely that the old Muslim petty bourgeoisie is being replaced by a more '*abangan*' petty bourgeoisie, to the Geertz's category." Muhaimin proposes similar idea, "Many local entrepreneurs successfully establish modern factories with big capitals, yet, none of

44 Wasisto Raharjo Jati, *Politik Kelas Menengah Muslim Indonesia* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2017), pp. 37–47.

45 Anthony Reid, *Asia Tenggara Dalam Kurun Niaga 1450-1680: Jaringan Perdagangan Global Asia Tenggara* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2011), pp. 309–376; Anthony Reid, *Sejarah Modern Awal Asia Tenggara: Sebuah Pemetaan* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2004), pp. 287–311; See also Alicia Schrikker and Jeroen Touwen, *Promises and Predicaments: Trade and Entrepreneurship in Colonial and Independent Indonesia in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015).

46 Richard Robison, *Indonesia the Rise of Capital* (North Sidney: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd., 1987), p. 328.

the capitals come from traditional Muslims textile producers in the area of Pekalongan and Majalaya (West Java)".[47]

A shift in the business position among Muslim entrepreneurs might be caused by the New Order's immediate need to recover the country's economy. Therefore, economic development was a priority, despite the choice of required strategy, instrument, and medium. After recovering the economic condition in a relatively short time, the course directed to a sustainable economic development. This development was primarily based on three main principles namely *Trilogi Pembangunan*, such as, politics stability, development, and equity.

Foreign and domestic capital owners – usually Chinese minority that had many advantages since Colonial era – got the Order's prime attention. The government mainly relied on them – not to describe it as depended on them – to run the country's economy.[48] They became main actors in economic development. Local entrepreneurs, particularly, Muslim entrepreneurs, were left behind, because they did not get any chance and involvement in achieving higher and faster economic condition. In the end, it could be clearly seen who sneaked into main positions in the administration and who were constantly aside.[49] Touwen and Schrikker predicted that Indonesia would endure with this unique economic condition. They added that it was pretty much impossible to identify Indonesian economy without knowing its political economy and economic actors based on their ethnicity.[50]

The Order's choice of strategy got more obvious by the mid-1970s, even though the indication could be seen from the beginning of the New Order era, especially when the Foreign Investment Law established.

47 Yahya A Muhaimin, *Bisnis Dan Politik: Kebijaksanaan Ekonomi Indonesia1950-1980* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial, 1991), p. 182.

48 See Sritua Arief and Adi Sasono, *Ketergantungan Dan Keterbelakangan: Sebuah Studi Kasus* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan bekerjasama dengan Lembaga Studi Pembangunan, 1984).

49 See Richard Borsuk and Nancy Chng, *Liem Sioe Liong's Salim Group: The Business Pillar of Suharto's Indonesia* (Singapura: ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, 2017); Robison, *Indonesia the Rise of Capital*, pp. 271–322; Joe Studwell, *Asian Godfathers: Money and Power in Hong Kong and South East Asia.* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007), pp. 249–256.

50 Schrikker and Touwen, *Promises and Predicaments*, pp. 3–14.

By the mid-1970s, correction to government's development strategy started to surface. In the end of 1974, the reason of using such strategy was clarified by Radius Prawiro as "Native entrepreneurs will not be helped by providing them with facilities. Attempts will be focused upon eliminating attitudes of dependence on facilities and stressing persistence in specific lines of business".[51]

In the previous year, Radius Prawiro had clearly stated the reason of choosing the aforementioned economic strategy.[52] He explained that "The issue has been further complicated by the *pribumi-non-pribumi* problem…. Foreign capital is being attacked mainly because of the rapid growth of Japanese capital and Japanese domination of the markets, which can be seen every day. Some groups in society do not approve of the influx of foreign capital and want to see this current reduced. However, the government, which has promised facilities and peaceful conditions to foreign capital in order to promote domestic economy, cannot agree with this view." Prawiro added that "…. indigenous Indonesians insisted they needed special assistance to help them catch up with their more established foreign and domestic competitors."[53]

Does it indicate that the during the New Order era there was no local/indigenous entrepreneurs that became successful and rich? No, it does not. Some of these successful entrepreneurs were those who ran businesses from Old Order era and well-adapted to the changing political situation. The others were completely new entrepreneurs, with backgrounds like small-medium scale, military family, or bureaucrat's businesses. Thus, they were mostly *abangan* entrepreneurs, not the *santri* ones – referring to Geertz's classic and popular classifications.

The demoted position of local entrepreneurs could also be observed in the small roles they played in KADIN (*Kamar Dagang dan Industri*/

51 Robison, *Indonesia the Rise of Capital*, p. 323.

52 Radius Prawiro, *Indonesia's Struggle for Economic Development: Pragmatism in Action* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 159–160.

53 *Ibid,* p. 163

Chambers of Commerce), an entrepreneur's association established during New Order era. The reducing popularity of GKBI (*Gabungan Koperasi Batik Indonesia*/Joint Indonesian Batik Cooperatives) could be used as a notable added indicator in the weakening of Muslim entrepreneurs' roles. GKBI's weakening was actually a domino effect of Muslim entrepreneurs' powerlessness in textile industry.[54] Hill also adds in a different note that "Whereas the textile industry was once the strong hold of santri business groups, cooperative and the state, *non-pribumi* investors have dominated the industry since 1966; over 90% of the garment export quotas are estimated to be in *non-pribumi* hands." Traditional cigarette industry, including tobacco industry, which in the beginning was the business field among small and middle scale Muslim entrepreneurs, also faded away.[55] Top three of big and modern cigarette factories were owned by non- Muslim entrepreneurs.

G. Political Islam during Liberal Era: Heading to a Dead-End?

Another chance came in politics. It could be described as the excitement among Indonesian Islam, particularly Islamic politicians – some named it Islamism or Islamists – in the early Reform era.[56] The sudden fall of New Order in 1998, followed with political democratization, had opened up unlimited chances for everyone to actively participate in the country's management. Political liberalization started shortly after Habibie became president, replacing Soeharto. In the Reform era, both economics and politics were liberated.

54 See Hal Hill, "The Economics of Recent Changes in the Weaving Industry," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies (BIES)* Vol. 16, no. 2 (1980): pp. 83–103; Makarim Wibisono, "The Politics of Indonesian Textile Policy: The Interests of Government Agencies and the Private Sector," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies (BIES)* Vol. 25, no. 1 (1989): pp. 31–52.

55 Lepi T Tarmidi, "Changing Structure and Competition in the Kretek Cigarette Industry," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies* Vol. 32, no. 3 (1996): pp.85–107.

56 See, for example Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*; Hamid, *Temptations of Power: Islamists & Illiberal Democracy in a New Middle East*; Masdar Hilmy, *Islamism and Democracy in Indonesia: Piety and Pragmatism* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010); Benhard Platzdasch, *Islamism in Indonesia: Politics in the Emerging Democracy* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009).

This new open political space – after a relatively long period of political control – is used quite frantically by Indonesian Islam. This kind of phenomenon not only happens in Indonesia. Islamic countries in the Middle East also experienced similar condition, as Hamid describes, "Under repression, Islamists put aside and postponed their dream of an 'Islamic state,' which they have little use for when their fundamental liberties were denied."[57] He further asserts that in the opposite condition, "The opening of democratic space fundamentally alters the political landscape of countries in transition, creating conducive conditions for the "Islamization" of public discourse."

Hence, this condition is in contrary to *inclusion-moderation hypothesis*, that is commonly used to explain the Islamists' politics attitude. The hypothesis identifies that Islamists tend to get more radical during repression, and get softer (in term of ideology) when democracy advances. Based on the Middle Eastern phenomenon, Hamid (2016) asserts that there is Islamic Exceptionalism phenomenon, which generally means that Islam is extraordinary and no compares, since it never crosses path with politics.[58]

Shortly after the Reform era started, there were many political parties established. Some were based on Islam, the others were based on other religions.[59] Since then, any effort in understanding politics and democracy in Indonesia is always linked to religion. Religion is no longer put aside in politics. "It is time to 'bring religion back,' but with care and caution, taking into account the historical richness and diversity that have long been a staple of the Islamic tradition," says Hamid, in a way to understand politics in Islamic countries.[60] Likewise, Indonesia is no exception. Researchers can no longer depend on

57 Hamid, *Temptations of Power: Islamists & Illiberal Democracy in a New Middle East*, p. 4.

58 Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*

59 See Kacung Marijan, *Sistem Politik Indonesia: Konsolidasi Demokrasi Pasca-Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2010), 308–309.

60 Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*, p. 14.

secularization theory to claim that religion, ideology, and identity are marginalized phenomena and will be kept away in a country's politics. Democracy, which is likened to liberalization, does not entirely take root in Indonesia. Religion comes as an in-between variable, as Zakaria in Marijan books points out, can be the cause of establishment of *illiberal democracy* phenomenon.[61] In another term it is a democracy paradox.[62]

In addition, interestingly yet ironically, the return of democracy in Indonesia seemed to be too late, seen from the third wave of world's democracy revival that occurred in 1974 – 1990.[63] In this period, Held states that "Democracy has become the leading standard of political legitimacy in the current era."[64] The process of democracy revival in Indonesia took place when there was recession in the world's democracy. Diamond asserts "The very year that Indonesia became a democracy, 1999 marked the beginning of what I believe has become a significant democratic recession in the world, though not yet (fortunately) a full 'reverse wave of democracy', which Samuel Huntington (1991) defines as a period of time in which the reversal of democracy significantly outpaces the transition democracy."[65] Therefore, there was a prediction saying that the future of Indonesian democracy was indistinct: it could lead to further democracy's consolidation and expansion or vice versa.

Indonesian Islam, especially political Islam, still could not learn from its past. There were still new Islamic parties. Sukma, for instance, states that "one important feature of Indonesian politics since 1988

61 Marijan, *Sistem politik Indonesia*, p. 306; See also Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*, p. 250.

62 See Jonathan Fox, "World Separation of Religion and State into the 21st Century," *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 39, no. 5 (2006): pp. 537–569.

63 See Samuel P. Huntington, Democracy's Third Wave in Robert A Dahl, *Democracy Sourcebook* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016); and see also Samuel P Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

64 David Held, *Models of Democracy* (Malden: Polity Press, 2006), p. x.

65 Lerry Diamond, *Indonesia's Place in Global Democracy in "Problems of Democratisation in Indonesia: Elections, Institutions and Society,"* ed. Edward Aspinall and Marcus Mietzner (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), pp. 24–25.

has been the return of Islam as a potent of political force."[66] However, the source of disagreement in the pre and early independence and New Order resurfaced in the Reform era: for instance, traditional and modern. There was not only disagreement between Indonesian Islam's internals, but also a latent conflict between Indonesian Islam and nationalists. In other words, as stated by Marijan, stream politics that emerged in the early independence era and relatively faded during the New Order, reappeared and found its more apparent form.[67] The major convergence thesis that Kuntowijoyo formulated got harder to come into reality.

Consequently, the performance of Islamic parties did not improve optimally, not to say it as disappointingly, when it was measured from votes earned in four General Election during the Reform era.[68] Sukma states similar opinion, "…. analysts also pint to the fall in the Islamic and Muslim-based parties' share of the vote as evidence of declining significance of the Islamic factor."[69] These results were regarded much worse than the 1955 General Election's result. Islam surprisingly no longer became a determinant factor in 2004 and 2009 Presidential Election, especially in 2009 election. Mujani and Liddle state that "The lack of significance of religious factors was particularly evident in the 2009 presidential election." Sukma adds that "In 2009, none of the presidential or vice-presidential candidates had backgrounds as leaders of Islamic parties or organizations." [70] The result improved in 2014 Presidential Election.

These developments did not make Indonesian Islam, particularly political Islam, achieve economically and politically strategic positions. Indonesian Islam usually achieved strategic positions – as it always had – during transition periods. Shortly after the country's independence,

66 Rizal Sukma, *Indonesia's 2009 Elections: Defective System, Resilient Democracy in "Problems of Democratisation in Indonesia: Elections, Institutions and Society,"* ed. Edward Aspinall and Marcus Mietzner (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), p. 63.

67 Marijan, *Sistem politik Indonesia*, p. 306–308.

68 *Ibid,* p. 316

69 Sukma, *Problems of Democratisation in Indonesia*, p. 63.

70 *Ibid,* p. 64

Masyumi was in a strategic position and gained four prime minister's posts. Ricklefs mentions that "From then until March 1956, during the heyday of the first experiment in parliamentary democracy, Masyumi was either the major party or one of the major parties in all five cabinets.[71] Masyumi held Prime Ministership in four of these governments." Strengthening political positions can also be seen during the early years of New Order. This achievement was actually far behind those in 1950s. in those two moments, Indonesia was seen in weak state. It was not surprising if the country could not do many things. It included the country's leaders in those transition periods.

Strategic position also achieved in the early Reform era. B.J. Habibie who was a representation of Indonesian Islam, became president in 1998 – 1999. In the following period, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) was chosen and became president in 1999 – 2001. Both served when Indonesia – again – were in weak states, right after economic, politics, and social crisis. These achievements were actually similar to those in the past. Being in-charge during transitions, according to Ricklefs, does not bring significant and positive implication to Indonesian Islam.[72]

Recent development indicates that Indonesian Islam moves to the right side. It is commonly labeled as populist Islam or right populist Islam. This kind of movement easily develops when there is a crisis, especially a severe one. What does it mean? Does it lead to a new way or even a dead-end?

H. (Temporary) Proposal of Main Strategy: Moderate Political Islam

With a bit oversimplifying, based on the social-political attitude of Indonesian Islam movement so far, there are two main categories: political Islamic movement and cultural Islamic movement. The goals of these two models are dissimilar, almost diametrical. Political Islam

71 Ricklefs, *Religious Elites and the State in Indonesia and Elsewhere: Why Takeovers Are so Difficults and Usually Don't Work in "Encountering Islam: The Politics of Religious Identities in Southeast Asia,"* p. 26.

72 *Ibid*, p. 17-46

almost always aims to the establishment of Indonesian Islam state or caliphate. This movement will always become the opposition to the lawful government, since Indonesia's independence. It can be said that Indonesian Islam is an outsider in its own country. In fact, being an opposition is a common choice made by global political Islam movement.

Cultural Islam, on the other hand, aims to in an Indonesian Islam society. This type of movement opens up chances to cooperate with the lawful government. This movement may seem anti-politics. Is there any possibility, when the Islamic society comes into reality, of continuing it into a country's domain? However, these two movements seem to be closer – economically – to socialism. Intensive and regular dialogue between these models does not seem like to happen. What can be seen in the surface is each model tries to bring out its excellent perspective. If there is a dialogue, it tends to occur accidentally without any appropriate preparation.

Nevertheless, we need to know that each model is never been solitary and comprehensive. There are modifications in it. In political Islam, there are ideologically radical groups, which disagree with Western democracy model. This is surely not the movement's path. Another group tends to be more moderate, which walks along the Western democracy model; though, some experts presume insincerity in it. There is only prediction that this kind of model exists in cultural Islam. When there is one, it may be labelled as progressive cultural Islam, which may be closer to moderate political Islam.

A main problem with no certain answer is why Islamic movement always has political nuance. There are efforts to detach Islam from politics. Western countries' experience demonstrated the success of these efforts. Yet, history has proven that Islam and politics were inseparable – in global scale or in Indonesia. It is hard to distinguished, as Hamid explains, "The first is that Islam is, in fact, distinctive in how

it relates to politics. Islam is different".[73] He then elaborates that "the distinctiveness brings consequences"… a reply of the Western model –Protestant reformation followed by an enlightment in which religion is gradually pushed into private realm – is unlikely." Consequently, Hamid concludes it as "Islamic Exceptionalism." To make it real, he asserts that Islamists are Islamists for a reason. Here, there needs to be a focal point.

Therefore, it is pretty much impossible for Islam to fully detach from politics, in one sense. On the other hand, this is the main reason why there is no positive and sustainable dialogue between political Islam and other elements in Indonesia – modern secular group, nationalists, and other religious groups. It is also obvious that the need of dialogue comes from both sides, not merely the interest of political Islam. From another group's perspective, political Islam has always been a distracting variable – as long as it still has different goals than the existence of Indonesia nation-state. In this kind of opposing position, it is quite certain that Kuntowijoyo's convergence thesis model will never occur. Latent instability is unavoidable. Political Islam will always be the source of instability from the right side. It turns out to be dormant problem for both sides and can never be properly solved.

Thus, Hamid proposes, globally, a twin strategy. First, political Islam is being modernized by leaving behind the goal of establishing separated Islamic country or caliphate. Also, it should not wait for moments to realize this goal. Political Islam should be there to support the existing nation-state. It can exist and even dance (read: freely participate) in it.[74] This is what he calls as moderate political Islam. Even though Hamid sees political Islam has so far failed, Roy foresees

73 Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*, p. 5.

74 Shadi Hamid, William McCants, and Rashid Dar, "Islamism After the Arab Spring: Between the Islamic State and the Nation-State" (Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, 2017), pp. 8–11, https://www.brookings.edu/research/islamism-after-the-arab-spring-between-the-islamic-state-and-the-nation-state/; See also Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*

possibility of political Islam's transformation to be more nationalistic, labeled as "Islam-nationalism."[75]

In contrast, moderate political Islam does not need to be urged to mimic liberal politics' democracy model. Secondly, political Islam needs to have options to implement illiberal democracy. If there are Islamic teachings that are not in accordance with liberal democratic values, negotiated solutions need to be formulated, not to make it 'special' – for instance, management of religious practices, Islamic economics, etc. – that can be compromised in proper political moments.

Hamid's idea inspired by Islam's condition in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia that is going global.[76] It is not an entirely new situation for practical politics (*politik praktis*) in Indonesian Islam. Political Islam simply requires affirmation and consistent implementation. This choice of strategy is the third alternative, when the previous two strategies – have been implemented in a relatively long time – are no longer applicable; political Islam and cultural Islam cannot maximally perform.

If moderate political Islam – which may also be labeled as progressive cultural Islam – has constantly operated, it can lead to the formation of two moderate political Islam groups. For the meantime, there is no precise label for these groups. Old moderate political Islam and new moderate political Islam? However, both can be regarded as nationalists Islam. All are operated – once again, danced – in the corridor of nation-state and agreed political system. There will be no politically potential victim, as what happened throughout these years. Political Islam, by far, is almost always in a victimized and overpowered position. This gap can be used by opportunists to further marginalize Indonesian Islam's position. It seems like there are those who belong to nationalists Islam and the others who are less nationalists. When everyone turns out to be nationalist, political competition becomes

75 Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: Tauris, 2007), p. 26.

76 Hamid, *Islamic Exceptionalism - How the Struggle Over Islam Is Reshaping the World.*, pp. 31–34.

fairer for there is no more ideological disorder. Each of these categories will certainly work with other groups; nonetheless, it is quite hard to imagine that these two work hand-in-hand. Thus, it should be seen as a new normality. Therefore, what we have now is a competition of political skills and programs.

I have to emphasize that this paper offers a temporary solution that requires reconsideration. Nevertheless, it should not take much time.

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