

PANCASILA AS THE BASIS OF INDONESIAN STATE

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Ideology, which is defined by A.S. Hornby as “a set of ideas that form the basis of an economic or political theory or that are held by a particular group or person,”¹ is very significant, indeed vital, for the survival of a nation because it gives it a distinct national identity, pride and strength that can inspire it to achieve its social and political goals.

Thus, in politics, a political ideology becomes a dynamic prime mover in the life of a political organization or institution, as well as in the political life of a state or nation because it functions “to unite people in political organization for effective political action.”² Furthermore, “the goal of ideology is to arouse feelings and incite action, and the power of an ideology derives from its capacity to capture the human imagination and mobilize and unleash human energies.”³

Like the founding fathers of other states, those of the Republic of Indonesia realized that a national ideology is indispensable in determining the social and political development of a state. With the approach of independence in 1945, the Indonesian people needed a national ideology that could unite, motivate and mobilize them to work together to achieve the goals which independence would bring within their grasp. They were challenged to introduce into an independent Indonesia social, economic and political development programs which would allow the country to survive as one of the world’s modern nations. Within this context, a national ideology was truly

¹ A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 616.

² Reo M. Christenson et al., *Ideologies and Modern Politics* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1975), 6.

³ *Ibid.*

needed because it would provide a focus to the nation of Indonesia in the face of the challenge of the future.

Shortly before Indonesian independence, which came on August 17, 1945, the representatives of the Muslim Nationalists and the leaders of the Secular Nationalists were confronted with several major ideological questions: What was the philosophical basis needed for a free state of Indonesia to satisfy the aspirations of its multi-religious groups and all the political trends existing within it? What kind of a national ideology was to be employed to maintain national unity, integrity and stability in an independent Indonesia? Secular nationalist ideology? Islamic ideology? Was Islam acceptable to the Secular Nationalist group and could it be used as a basis of the state? Was secular nationalism acceptable to the Islamic faction and could it be employed as a national ideology? Was there any other alternative acceptable to both?

Before going further to discuss this matter, it will be necessary to begin with a survey of the major players in this process. Of these, two in particular already mentioned above, namely the Secular Nationalists and the Muslim Nationalists,⁴ need to be introduced, since they will often be referred to, particularly in the first chapter. What I mean by “Secular Nationalists” is a group of Indonesian political leaders – Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus or others – who firmly rejected religion as the basis of the state, even though they were not personally secularists, nor lacking in religious sentiments, tendencies and affiliations. They simply chose not to use religion as a political ideology or as a political system, but rather restricted it to their personal lives.

⁴ Saifuddin Anshari uses these two terms in his “The Jakarta Charter of June 1945: A Gentleman’s Agreement between the Islamic and the Secular Nationalists in Modern Indonesia,” (M. A. thesis, McGill University, 1976). Deliar Noer uses the term “the Muslim Nationalists” and “the Religiously Neutral Nationalists,” while Bernhard Dahm employs the term “the Moslems” and “the ‘Secular’ Nationalists” whose meanings are basically the same as Anshari’s. See Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1940-1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 216-295; Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, trans. by F. Somers Heidhues (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 262.

In contrast, what I mean by “Muslim Nationalists” is a group of Muslim leaders who, deeply committed to their faith, believed that Islam should be used as the basis of the state. They believed that religion and state cannot be separated since there is no separation of worldly matters and other-worldly affairs in the teachings of Islam.

These ideological concerns were discussed in the sessions of the Investigating Body for the Preparation for Indonesian Independence which had been founded under Japanese sponsorship as a realization of their promise to give independence to the Indonesian people. This promise had been made by the Japanese colonial rulers in an attempt to gain support from the Indonesian people, because they were in trouble, militarily, with the Allies in the Pacific War. The Japanese in Indonesia explored every avenue in their effort to win the war against the Allies, one of which was to mobilize Indonesian Muslims to take part in military training in line with what Harry J. Benda called “Nippon’s Islamic grass-roots policy.”⁵ However, the Japanese were finally defeated by the Allies on August 15, 1945, without involving Indonesian Muslims in the war.

The establishment of the Investigating Body took place on April 29, 1945 and coincided with the birthday of the Japanese Emperor, Tenno Heika.⁶ The declaration of the Japanese intention to grant independence to the Indonesian people had been made by Japanese Premier Kuniaki Koiso, successor to Premier Tojo, before the Japanese parliament on September 7, 1944.⁷

Installed on May 28, 1945 by the Japanese Military Commander in Java, the Investigating Body held its sessions in two phases. The first ran from May 29 until June 1, 1945, and the second from July 10 until July 16, 1945.⁷

⁵ Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1960), 134.

⁶ Muhammad Yamin, *Pembahasan Undang-Undang Dasar Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Prapanca, n. d.), 239.

⁷ Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, eds., *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 6 (Jakarta: Departemen P & K, 1984), 66. See also Benda, *The Crescent*, 173.

The Investigating Body consisted of 62 members in all. Later, six men were added so that the members of the Investigating Body numbered 68, most of whom were Javanese. There was however a Japanese member named Ichibangase who served as its junior chairman and extraordinary member as well.

The Investigating Body sessions, which took place in the Pejambon Building, Jakarta, discussed all important matters relating to the establishment of a free state of Indonesia, for example, the form of the future state, its boundaries, its constitution, and its philosophical or ideological basis. As far as the present study is concerned, the latter will be given special attention, without neglecting other relevant historical events.

Let us take a close look at the composition of the membership of the Investigating Body. According to Prawoto Mangkusasmito's account, of its 68 members, only 15 (about 20 percent) were Muslim Nationalists who really voiced Islamic political interests, while the majority (80 percent) was Secular Nationalists.⁸ This indicates that political power was not balanced between the Muslim Nationalists and the Secular Nationalists in the Investigating Body.

The representatives of the Muslim Nationalists were, among others, K.H. Mas Mansur, Abdul Kahar Muzakir, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, K.H. Masjkur, K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim, Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, H. Agus Salim, Sukiman Wirjosandjojo, K.H.A. Sanusi and K.H. Abdul Halim.⁹ Their educational backgrounds varied. Some, such as Agus Salim and Sukiman, were educated in the western school system and belonged to the Modernist Muslims, while others, such as Wahid Hasjim and Masjkur, were educated in the *pesantren*¹⁰ and brought up in the circle of the Traditionalist Muslims.

⁸ See Prawoto Mangkusasmito, *Pertumbuhan Historis Rumus Dasar Negara dan Sebuah Refleksi* (Jakarta: Hudaya, 1970), 12.

⁹ Muhammad Yamin, ed., *Naskah Persiapan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945*, vol. 1 (Jakarta: Yayasan Prapanca, 1959), 60-61.

¹⁰ The *pesantren* is a traditional Islamic educational institution which uses books written by the '*ulamâ*' of the medieval period. The *pesantrens* are huge in number and scattered in many areas of Indonesian villages, especially in Java. For a discussion of the *pesantren* tradition, see Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta:

As for the representatives of the Secular Nationalists, these included Radjiman Wediodiningrat, Soekarno, Mohammad Hatta, Professor Soepomo, Wongsonegoro, Sartono, R.P. Soeroso, Dr. Buntaran Martoatmodjo and Muhammad Yamin.¹¹ All of the latter had received a western education. The chairman and vice-chairman of the Investigating Body were Radjiman Wediodiningrat and R. P. Soeroso, a fact which shows that the leadership of the Body was no doubt in the hands of the Secular Nationalists.

The political discussions between the Muslims and Secular Nationalists regarding all matters relating to the establishment of a free state proceeded well enough, except for the debate on the philosophical basis and ideology of the state. On the form of government, for example, Abdul Kahar Muzakir tells us that about 53 members voted for a republic, while seven voted for a kingdom.¹² Once the issue of the philosophical basis and ideology of the state was addressed, however, the ideological clash between the two groups became sharp and heated, especially between the Muslim Nationalist faction and the Christian Nationalist group, since it inevitably involved religious sentiments. The representatives of the Traditionalist and Modernist Muslims were firmly united against the Secular Nationalists in the political debates in the Investigating Body sessions.

In his capacity as the chairman of the Investigating Body for the Preparation for Indonesian Independence, Radjiman Wediodiningrat put a vital question to its members: What was the philosophical basis to be used for a free Indonesia? In response to this issue, Soekarno¹³ (a leading Secular

LP3ES, 1982). This book is a translation of his Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the Australian National University in 1980.

¹¹ Yamin, ed., *Naskah*, vol. 1: 60-61.

¹² *Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia dalam Konstituante*, vol. 3 (Bandung: Konstituante Republik Indonesia, 1958), 36.

¹³ Soekarno was born on June 6, 1901 in Surabaya, East Java. His father was R. Soekemi Sosrodihardjo, a Javanese, and his mother Idayu Nyoman Ray, a Balinese. From his childhood Soekarno had exhibited his diligence and intelligence. When he was a student in Surabaya, he established a politically oriented organization called Trigoro Darmo which attracted many students. His stay in Surabaya with H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto (1883-1934), a Muslim intellectual and then leader of the Sarekat Islam, heavily influenced his future political career. In 1921

Nationalist) delivered a speech in the session of the Investigating Body on June 1, 1945, in which he proposed five principles or Pancasila:

Nationalism
Internationalism or Humanitarianism
Deliberation or Democracy
Social Welfare, and
Belief in God.¹⁴

The representatives of the two groups, after a long and tense debate, reached a historic political compromise, or a gentleman's agreement, in the form of what Yamin called the Jakarta Charter.¹⁵ In this Charter Soekarno's Pancasila was reformulated to read as follows:

Belief in God with the obligation to practice the *sharî'a* for its adherents,
Just and civilized Humanity,
The Unity of Indonesia,
Democracy which is guided by inner wisdom in unanimity arising out of deliberation amongst representatives, and
Social Justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia.¹⁶

Soekarno graduated from the Institute of Technics of Bandung as an engineer. He then plunged himself into political activities by founding in 1927 a political party called the PNI (Indonesian National Party) with the main aim of struggling for Indonesian independence. Due to his political activities, he was imprisoned by the Dutch at Sukamiskin and then banished to Endeh and sent into exile at Bengkulu in 1939. Together with Mohammad Hatta, he was known as the proclaimer of Indonesian independence of August 17, 1945. In 1948, following their second military action, the Dutch arrested Soekarno and sent him into exile at Berastagi. Soekarno served as the first president of Indonesia from 1945 until his fall in 1966. He died in Jakarta in 1970 and was buried in Blitar (East Java). For detailed accounts of Soekarno, see *Sukarno: An Autobiography as Told to Cindy Adams* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965); Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, trans. from the German by Mary F. Somers Heidhues (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969); Solichin Salam, *Bung Karno Putra Fajar* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1982).

¹⁴ Yamin, ed., *Naskah*, vol. 1: 61-81.

¹⁵ The full text of the Jakarta Charter can be read in Yamin, ed., *Naskah*, vol. 1: 709-710. For a detailed discussion, see Saifuddin Anshari, "The Jakarta Charter of June 1945: A History of the Gentleman's Agreement between the Islamic and Secular Nationalists in Modern Indonesia," (M. A. thesis, McGill University, 1976).

¹⁶ Yamin, ed., *Naskah*, vol. 1: 154.

Shortly before the opening of its first formal meeting on August 18, 1945, Hatta proposed changes to the draft of the preamble of the Constitution and its body, since he had received strenuous objections to the phrase “with the obligation to practice the sharî‘a for its adherents” from the Christian circle living in the eastern parts of Indonesia. While the Christians admitted that such a clause applied exclusively to the Muslim community, they considered it discriminatory against all minority groups. They threatened to remain outside the Republic of Indonesia if the Islamic clause remained. Finally, the Muslim Nationalists and the Secular Nationalists agreed to change the draft of the preamble of the Constitution and its body.

Their agreement resulted in the removal of the Islamic phrase as well as all Islamic sentences in both the preamble of the constitution and in its body. Fundamental changes in the body of the constitution were made. Article 6 now became “the president of the Republic of Indonesia should be a native-born Indonesian,” without the requirement that he or she be “an adherent of Islam” as had been previously agreed, and article 29 came to read “the State based on Belief in the One and Only God” from which the previously agreed words “with the obligation to practice the sharî‘a for its adherents” were removed.¹⁷

Even the word *mukaddimah* (an Indonesian word derived from Arabic) in the preamble was substituted with the word *pembukaan* (an original Indonesian word), both of which in fact mean preamble. This too came as a result of pressure from the Secular Nationalists, who could not understand why an Arabic word should be used in this context when a perfectly good Indonesian word already existed. In commenting on this matter Deliar Noer remarks, regretfully, “as if references to what was regarded as Islamic were contrary to national aspirations.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Yamin, ed., *Naskah*, vol. 1: 400-410.

¹⁸ Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1978), 12.

This modified constitution was finally approved and was henceforth known as the 1945 constitution. Thus, the new version of the first principle of Pancasila read “Belief in the One and Only God” instead of “Belief in God with the obligation to practice the *shari‘a* for its adherents.” This change was also different from Soekarno’s concept which simply ran, “Belief in God.” The key words or vital attribute “the One and Only” used for God are in conformity with the beliefs of Muslims and reflect the basic view of *tawhīd*.

With the acceptance and application of Pancasila as the basis of the Indonesian State, Indonesia has been commonly known as the Pancasila State. Indonesia is neither a secular nor theocratic state.