

# After Shari'ah: Islamism and Electoral Dynamics at Local Level in Indonesia

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## Abstract

In recent years, scholars have considered that in addition to the ideological factor, the implementation of shari'ah in Indonesia is caused by voter mobilization. In other words, shari'ah regulatory policy at local level is influenced by the interests of local politicians to influence voter preferences in seeking votes and winning elections. This article reviews some of the theses by analyzing Islamism and electoral dynamics in two regions which implement many shari'ah regulations. This article deals with the latest trends "after shari'ah" (as being or has been applied), looking for similarities and differences, as it predicts the future by correlating local shari'ah and electoral issues in Aceh and South Sulawesi. The article found that there is a tendency for local politicians to no longer use shari'ah issues as the primary means of mobilization to influence voters. It is also found that the Islamic shari'ah no longer affected voter preferences at grassroots level in both Aceh and Sulawesi, despite the growing trend of public display of religiosity in Muslim societies in general. This phenomenon, while it explains an apparent shift in movement of local actors, it as well suggests a similar shift in the Muslim community's attitude toward shari'ah

politics. Conceivably there is an increasing recognition of the politics of welfare over that of shar'iah politics that is now being massively displayed in the electoral politics in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Shari'ah, Islamism, Indonesian politics, Aceh election

## Introduction

The democratic transition that took place in Indonesia led to the return of religion in politics, as evidenced by many Islamic laws (shari'ah) established by the state, especially at the local level (Machmudi, 2008; Hefner, 2011; Buehler 2016). The implementation of shari'ah in Indonesia is actually done by those who are affiliated with the state, using the election as an Islamization strategy. In turn, we found that local politicians are the main actors behind the implementation of shari'ah law. Recently, Pisani and Buehler (2017: 735) argue that there are two motivations of the elected politicians to implement the shari'ah, namely, ideological beliefs and voter preferences. The first explains the course of shari'ah law as an ideological impetus after the politicians are elected while the second is the politicians' response to voters' demands or preferences. In another essay,

Buehler (2016) concludes that for the sake of mobilization of voters, politicians encourage the implementation of shari'ah regulation to gain support from Islamist groups. Meanwhile, Bowen (2013) argues that Islamic Shari'ah practices have very loose variety based on provinces, regencies and municipalities, making it difficult to capture polls or draw conclusions on local election results. He uses a historical perspective to see the championing of the shari'ah as a form of historical nostalgia of the struggle for independence against the Dutch, the Jakarta charter, the autonomy struggle against the central government, and the debate on religious relations in state law and politics. So, when one was born in the post-reform era of decentralization to regulate public morals in local practice, his/her acceptance is heavily dependent on local customs and agreements.

The present study reviews the theses of Pisani, Buehler, and Bowen above by analyzing electoral dynamics with shari'ah issues at local level. The study covers the latest trends after shari'ah, as it is being or has been applied, looking for similarities, differences, while it predicts the future by correlating local shari'ah and electoral issues in Aceh and South Sulawesi. The selection of these two regions is based on the fact that both are strong with their implementation of the shari'ah law in Indonesia. The Indonesian Law Number 11 of 2006 marks the start of shari'ah laws in Aceh, whereas in South Sulawesi, although not as strong as in Aceh, this area has quite a strong presence of shari'ah law as well. In addition, these two areas were the former bases of the Darul Islam (DI), the historical Islamist movement that had always wanted to establish an Islamic state of Indonesia. To see the motivation of local politicians and voters in relation to shari'ah laws, a number of local elections became the object of this research, namely the election of regional heads (*pilkada*) in 2015 and 2017.

This article is interesting because it tries to find the correlation between shari'ah and local elections. In reviewing the general arguments

related to shari'ah and local elections, we asked the main question whether or not shari'ah is a tool that influences voter preferences in local elections. In answering that question, this article looks at how the idea of Islamic shari'ah in Aceh and South Sulawesi of contemporary era. Further questions asked include why and how shari'ah cannot influence voter preferences in areas that have been implementing shari'ah long enough? What are the fundamental issues affecting voter preferences that shift shari'ah to a dominant campaign tool? And how does the definition of shari'ah in the context of elections correlated with popular support so as it influences voter preferences? The answers to these questions are used to look for similarities, differences, and future of shari'ah in Indonesia.

### **Islamism, Post-Islamism and Elections: Concepts and Practices**

Often, Islamic politics conceptually is understood in two frameworks of analysis, Islamism and post-Islamism. Islamism is defined as an ideology and movement to create an Islamic state, for example the implementation of shari'ah in life of the state and society. As an ideology, Islamists believe that the political order must be run on the basis of Islamic order. It can be said that Islamism places the unity of religion and the state as the foundation of ideology. As a movement, the perspective of Islamism can be categorized into three types: fundamentalist Islamists, tend to use resistance even with violence to establish an Islamic state; neo-fundamentalists, apolitical or inclined movement to bring personal piety - although the aim is not to establish an Islamic state, this movement in its practice is capable of morally encouraging the movement of Islamism; and the last, reformist Islamists, also aim to establish an Islamic state but doing it gradually, peacefully and constitutionally by engaging in elections (Bayat, 2013).

Next, comes a new concept namely post-Islamism. Post-Islamism is defined as the ideology and movement of the privatization of

Islam in life of the state and society. According to Bayat (1996, 2013), post-Islamism is a conscious effort to conceptualize and strategize rationality and modalities beyond Islamism in social, political, and intellectual realms. It is not anti-Islamic or secular, but it is an attempt to integrate religiosity or piety and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and independence. The goal is to assimilate Islam with individual freedom, as well as democracy and modernity. In short, if Islamism is defined by a mixture of religion and responsibility, post-Islamism emphasizes religiosity and rights while still supporting the active roles of religion in the public sphere (Bayat, 2013). This concept justifies the relationship between Islam and democracy that is defined with the culture of plurality as a concept that goes hand-in-hand in coloring the relationship between state and society and among society.

Related to the above explanation, in the context of Indonesia, the first conclusion emerged that Islam and democracy are two things that cannot be implemented simultaneously, which in turn causing the emergence of movements to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia (Nashir, 2013). In the early days of independence, the Islamist movements in Indonesia were dominated by fundamentalist Islamist groups through Darul Islam which had goals to change the state ideology and establish an Islamic state. Aceh and South Sulawesi were two base areas of Darul Islam that had experienced conflict and violence over the idea of Islamism.

However, post-reform with the presence of democratization and decentralization, there was an effort to incorporate Islam in the state constitution (Hilmy, 2010; Hefner, 2013). Evidenced by the strengthening of Islamism flow at the local level in encouraging shari'ah law policy. At the national level, this reformist Islamist group was marked by the presence of the Justice Party, which later changed into Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), while at local level various reformist Islamist groups were also established such as Committee for the

Preparation of Enforcement of Islamic Syariah (KPPSI) in South Sulawesi. The purpose of this group is to legalize shari'ah as law both in the form of regional regulations (*perda*) or regulation of the regional head (*perkada*) at the provincial and regencial levels. However, it is interesting that at the local level, shari'ah regulations were more often done by politicians affiliated with secular parties especially Golkar (Buehler, 2013). The results of Buehler's (2016: 10-11) study mentions that up to 2013 there were at least 443 shari'ah regulations issued, indicating that 85 percent (29/34) of all provinces have approved at least one shari'ah law at the provincial, regencial or municipal levels. Provinces with the most shari'ah regulations were West Java - including Banten - (103), West Sumatra (54), South Sulawesi (47), South Kalimantan (38), East Java (32) and Aceh (25).

The later conclusion assumes that the essence of democracy does not conflict with Islam, especially since the majority of Indonesians are Muslims. This second conclusion assumes that Islam in Indonesia can go hand in hand with democracy. The previous Islamization movements in Indonesia from extra-parliamentary efforts turned into intra-parliamentary efforts. These efforts can be maximized with popular support given by the community through elections that build voter preferences. Although to obtain electoral legitimacy is often done through the mobilization of voters, and eventually, politicians also accommodate the interests of Islamist groups by fighting for the implementation of shari'ah regulations in exchange for political support during elections (Bush, 2008, Buehler, 2016).

In other contexts, Indonesia also displays the latest trend on the idea of post Islamism (Hasan, 2013; Heryanto, 2014). Post-Islamism is associated with the rise of a new Muslim middle class, which adopts the symbols of Islam (piety) as an expression of modern culture in the public sphere. The lifestyles that display piety and modernity simultaneously become the way of Muslim middle class exhibits Islamic symbols

and identities, mostly through popular culture. The phenomenon of hijab (*hijabers*), Islamic films, grand zikir (*zikir akbar* or *pengajian*) in mosques to the training of piety in five-star hotels, the emergence of famous Islamic preachers (*da'i*) on television, and various activities of da'wah in YouTube and social media is a cultural religiosity of community shown to public sphere. This recent conclusion suggests that the growth of popular Islamic culture has offered an alternative to Muslim community in actualizing their religious beliefs and practices, and in general they also have a pluralist view: being religious without having to do with shari'ah law.

### **The Shari'ah Waves in Aceh and South Sulawesi**

Although it was actually long before the founding of the state of Indonesia, the idea of shari'ah had been presented in the lives of local communities in Indonesia. However, the formal spreading of shari'ah regulations in new areas began after 1999 or after the fall of Suharto, where decentralization laws were introduced and made local governments then had the authority to make wider regional regulations. In turn, the provincial and regencial governments used this power by applying shared regional regulations on religion and morality. Most Islamic activists called it a shari'ah nuance. Shari'ah regulations under this decentralized regime mostly governed the relationship of morals and Islamic life such as prohibiting drinking, gambling, prostitution, as well as promoting zakat paying, Quran learning and Islamic clothes (Bowen, 2013; Buehler, 2016). However, these shari'ah regulations were spread unevenly across space and time, not all regions implemented the same rules. Until 2013, 62 percent of all shari'ah regulations were implemented in only six provinces: West Java, West Sumatra, South Kalimantan, East Java, South Sulawesi and Aceh (Buehler and Muhtada, 2016: 267-268). These six areas were known to have a strong Islamic sociological history and background, as Bowen (2013) says

that shari'ah rules can be applied only if it is "accepted" into local practice and acts as custom and become local elite deal. As mentioned earlier, the last two areas are the focus of our explanation in this section.

The implementation of shari'ah in Aceh today is inseparable from the influence of the Darul Islam Aceh (DI / TII) rebellion in the 1950s commanded by Daud Beureu. The purpose of the movement was the Islamization of the Indonesian republic. The movement did not get enough support and negotiations with the central government. Further rebellion in Aceh by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) fronted by Hasan Tiro no longer used shari'ah as the main issue underlying the movement as DI/TII in Aceh did. There was a shift from Islamism to nationalism in Aceh (Aspinall, 2007). As time passed, the Islamic element gradually became less important for most of the movement than Acehese nationalism. The cause of Islam was no longer the footing of GAM's movement was global politics, where post-cold war political magnet moved to the West. The GAM elite itself felt the need for Western support in their founding and political movements since GAM was established in Indonesia in 1976.

Aceh nationalism focuses on "Java" as the subject of colonialism towards Aceh, thus making Java and the central government as common enemies. The presence of Java to Aceh is only to take Aceh's natural resources, without any significant advantage to Aceh, even the injustice experienced by Aceh. Islam is only a symbol to touch the sensitivity of the Acehese people to engage in GAM directly or assist GAM work indirectly. Even the conflict between GAM and ulama in times of conflict were inevitable in understanding Aceh's conflict struggle. It is not surprising that post-conflict, the confrontation of *ulama* and ex-GAM was clear because the majority of *ulama* did not support GAM movement.

During the conflict period, in 1999 the central government allowed Aceh Province to have



Table 1: Shari'ah law in Aceh of 2001-2016

Regions (Province/Regency/ Municipality)	Total	Year
Aceh Province	27	2000 (1), 2002 (2), 2003 (3), 2004 (4), 2007 (2), 2008 (3), 2009 (1), 2013 (2), 2014 (3), 2015 (3), 2016 (4)
Banda Aceh Municipality	15	2000 (1), 2002 (2), 2004 (1), 2007 (1), 2008 (1), 2010 (3), 2011 (2), 2012 (1), 2013 (1), 2015 (1), 2016 (1)
Langsa Municipality	2	2012, 2014
Lhoksemawe Municipality	1	2013
Subussalam Municipality	1	2010
Bireuen Regency	2	2004, 2008
Aceh Tengah Regency	1	2014
Aceh Barat	1	2010
Aceh Barat Daya Regency	1	2009
Pidie Regency	3	2010 (2), 2011
Pidie Jaya Regency	1	2009
Aceh Besar Regency	1	2010
Aceh Utara Regency	3	2004, 2005, 2015
Aceh Tenggara Regency	2	2003, 2012
Aceh Tamiang Regency	5	2003, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013
Aceh Jaya Regency	1	2003
Aceh Singkil Regency	3	2006, 2010 (2)
Simeulu Regency	3	2008, 2012, 2013
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	

an Islamic policy in government, the shari'ah regulations were legalized in 2001 by a law on Special Autonomy. The regulation ultimately regulated personal moral and religious matters. The central government considered shari'ah regulations as the solution to the conflict in Aceh. The post-reform political shift in Indonesia (the reign of Abdurrahman Wahid) used Islamic symbols and policies to weaken separation movement in Aceh (Aspinall, 2007).

The implementation of shari'ah continues to this day, as evidenced by the 15 *Qanun* (Islamic law) about shari'ah that have been ratified in Aceh for 16 years (2000-2017). Aceh also has shari'ah policies (*wilayatul hisbah*) to discipline the shari'ah violations occurred in Aceh (Haryanto, 2014). The following is the comparison of the number of Qanun about shari'ah.

The table 1, above shows that Shari'ah-related regulatory products from before and after the direct election of regional heads increased

considerably - the first *pilkada* of 2005. Indonesia, especially Aceh which runs regional autonomy in the regional management causing directly elected local governments to more freely generate the appropriate policy with the specific context of Aceh, including in the implementation of shari'ah regulations.

Meanwhile in South Sulawesi, the idea of shari'ah can be traced back in three stages of the shari'ah wave. First, it began in the early 17th century marked by the acceptance of Islam as the religion by kingdoms in South Sulawesi. Legalization of shari'ah in this first period, one of which is sara' (shari'ah), served as part of norm and value of social culture and behavior of individual in society and state (Mattulada, 1983: 234). However, shari'ah in this early period was only as a symbol of religion, not in the true sense of Islamic shari'ah. The next wave of shari'ah occurred in the early days of Indonesian independence after the idea of shari'ah drowned with the power of Dutch

colonialism. In this second stage, through the main character of Qahhar Mudzakkar, South Sulawesi was trying to implement Islamic law by establishing an Islamic state, better known as DI/TII (Harvey, 1989). The idea of shari'ah at this stage then led to resistance causing conflict between the state and DI/TII. For about a decade or more, the idea of shari'ah was then re-immersed in the presence of Suharto's power. Along with the fall of Soeharto, the third wave of shari'ah re-emerged during the post-reform era.

The third wave of shari'ah in South Sulawesi began with the establishment of the Committee for the Preparation of Enforcement of Islamic Syariah (KPPSI) in 2000. Those involved in KPPSI were the descendants of DI/TII members in the past, one of whom was Aziz Qahhar Mudzakkar, Qahaar Mudzakkar's son, elected in several periods as the head of KPPSI (Haryanto, 2014: 121). This institution is the most influential

group by the issuance of a number of shari'ah regulations in various regions in South Sulawesi (Juhannis, 2006). This is due to the fact that many politicians in South Sulawesi are interested in joining themselves in this institution, such as Amin Syam (the Governor of South Sulawesi), Patabai Pabokori (the Regent of Bulukumba), Ilham Arif Sirajuddin (the Mayor of Makassar), Syafrudin Nur (the Regent of Pangkep) La Tinro La Tunrung (the Regent of Enrekang) and Nadjamuddin Aminullah (the Regent of Maros). A number of shari'ah rules have been issued in regions led by those politicians since 2001.

Up to 2012, shari'ah regulations in South Sulawesi amounted to 47 shari'ah laws spreaded across 13 out of 24 regencies (Buehler, 2016: 216, 219). The first shari'ah regulations were issued in 2001 in Maros, Barru, and Gowa regencies while the last shari'ah law in 2012 was in Makassar.

Table 2: Shari'ah law in South Sulawesi 2001-2012

Regions (Province/Regency/Municipality)	Total	Year
Province	2	2011, 2006
Bantaeng	1	2005
Barru	2	2001, 2005
Bulukumba	6	2002, 2003 (3), 2004, 2005, 2006
Enrekang	2	2005, 2005
Gowa	3	2001, 2003, 2011
Jeneponto	2	2005, 2006
Luwu Timur	2	2007 (2)
Luwu Utara	2	2005 (2)
Maros	8	2001, 2002, 2005 (3), 2006 (2), 2007
Pangkep	2	2006, 2007
Selayar	2	2007 (2)
Sinjai	1	2007
Soppeng	1	2006
Bone	1	2008
Makassar	6	2003, 2006 (3), 2007, 2012
Palopo	1	2006
Parepare	2	2007 (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	

Based on the overall explanation in this section, there are differences in shari'ah law trends in Aceh and South Sulawesi (see diagram 1). If the shari'ah law continued to be issued until 2016 in Aceh, in South Sulawesi shari'ah law only issued until 2012. In South Sulawesi there was a shari'ah law spike in 2005-2007, which was the initial period of direct *pilkada* applied in Indonesia, but it declined drastically in subsequent years and no shari'ah regulations were issued after 2012. So far, shari'ah regulations in South Sulawesi have not been revoked but none have been implemented optimally. Slightly different from Aceh, shari'ah regulations have a fairly stagnant trend and continue to survive this time.

In conclusion, Islamism at the local level experienced ups and downs started with the formalization of kingdom version, then disappeared with the existence of colonization and then reappeared in the form of armed revolutionary upheaval and then drowned as the movement diminished. But then another form of political model emerged after the reform where its dynamic is determined by a pragmatic and temporary electoral process. In short, shari'ah in Indonesia is having its ups and downs according to political development. In the study of social movements, the phenomenon of Islamism can be defined as a political opportunity structure.

### Local elections in Aceh and South Sulawesi: between Shari'ah and Welfare Issues.

Approaching the 2017 regional elections, especially in Aceh, there was a link between shari'ah and welfare issues. The facts that Aceh elections in 2017, as a region implementing shari'ah regulations, has no longer made issue of shari'ah as a major factor in influencing voter preferences. Although the issue of religion has risen approaching the *pilkada* in 2015, starting from the demonstration performed by those who were pro-*ahli sunnah wal jamaah* (aswaja) Imam Syafii school, the regulations on stick and azan twice at Baiturahman Great Mosque during Fridays by The Scholar Association of Aceh Daya (HUDA), Ulama Council of Nanggroe Aceh (MUNA) and the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) to mention Muzakir Manaf as the end-time "Umar Bin Khatab", church burning of in Singkil and the demonstration performed by Islamic Care Youth Students Association (PPI) Aceh Singkil in urging the government to close unlicensed churches. The pattern of campaigns used also increasingly showed the formation of political piety in public, through grand zikir, turban costume, including artists of Islamic songs, even engaging ulama to participate in political campaign for certain candidates. The following table describes 6 pairs of candidates for governor and deputy governor of Aceh along with the supporting parties and the dominant issues used by the candidates.

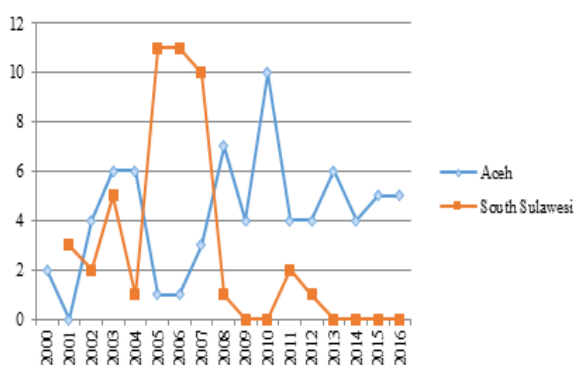


Diagram 1: Comparison of Shari'ah Trends in Aceh and South Sulawesi

Table 3: Candidates and Issues in *Pilkada* Aceh 2017

Candidates	Parties	Issues	Vote	Information
Tarmizi Karim - Teuku Machsalmina Ali	Golkar, Nasdem, PPP	The self-reliant, prosperous, cultured and dignified New Aceh based on Islamic values	16,85%	Incumbent
Zakaria Saman - Teuku Alaidinsyah	Independent	Development and strengthening Aceh economy	5,52%	Challenger
Abdullah Puteh - Sayed Mustafa Usab	Independent	Enforcement of Shari'ah thoroughly, Agricultural Revolution and Bureaucratic Reform	1,75%	Incumbent
Zaini Abdullah - Nasaruddin	Independent	Aceh's superior, innovative and without corruption development	6,92%	Incumbent
Muzakir Manaf - Teuku Al Khalid	Partai Aceh, Gerindra, PBB, PKS	The Aceh Struggle, Helsinki MoU and Shari'ah	31,80%	Incumbent
Irwandi Yusuf - Nova Iriansyah	PNA, Demokrat, PDA, PKB, PDIP	Peace, prosperity through a clean and serving government	37,15%	Incumbent

Table 3 reinforces the explanation in the previous section that there was a coalition in integrating candidates for governor without consideration whether they were from Islamic and non-islamic parties. Even the composition of the coalition of 2 Islamic parties and 3 non-religious parties in supporting Irwandi Yusuf and Nova Iriansyah did not touch the issue of shari'ah as the flagship program. Of the 6 candidates, only 50 percent of candidates who used shari'ah issues and symbols and attributes of campaigns using Islamic symbols as a commodity campaign to influence voter preferences, namely Tarmizi Karim with the pattern of grand zikr, Abdullah Puteh by including ulama and the issue of Islamic law enforcement often campaigning in Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren*, and the last is Muzakir Manaf who massively used ulama and groups of *ahli sunnah wal jamaah* in the hope to gain votes from students of *pesantren* and grassroots community. The other three candidates were more dominant using welfare issues (populism), bureaucratic reform

and service and corruption. But of the three candidates who dominantly used welfare issues, they continued to use Islamic symbols explicitly, such as by including ulama, as Irwandi Yusuf did, and including Islamic song artist, Opick as Zaini Abdullah did.

In addition to the political candidates, there were several things that make the issue of shari'ah no longer affected candidates to win the 2017 election in Aceh. First, there was a gap between the issue of shari'ah with profile or track record of the candidates, so that the shari'ah is not a major factor affecting people's choice. People began to do sortings, which one was political Islam (limited only as a label) and which one was Islamic politics (encouraging Islam to be regulated in state structure). Political Islam is an Islamic label used to read or is textually read attached to the image of candidates used before regional elections. Shari'ah is separate from candidate's daily actions. For example, when the grand campaign, Muzakir Manaf always



brought shari'ah issues especially related to Aswaja (*ahli sunnah wal jamaah*), but there was no line to separate men and women who attended it. Other candidates such as Irwandi Yusuf who did not bring shari'ah issues, has a line to separate men and women during his campaign.

Second, there was a shift in defining shari'ah by the people, where the people interpreted shari'ah and politics as two different things and had no correlation to each other. This fact illustrates the wave of Islam in the New Order era once again, where Islam is only a cultural fact not a political fact. This is reinforced by some communities who fully support shari'ah as a culture, but do not choose Islamic politicians or candidates who bring the issue of shari'ah in the electoral arena.

The reason for this is that shari'ah in Aceh has been existed earlier than the local electoral democracy such as in direct election of regional heads.

*Shari'ah has become the culture of Aceh people, before the state formalized the shari'ah. So, it is natural that shari'ah issue does not affect the choice of the people during the elections (Interview, Arif Rahman, KWPSI, Banda Aceh, July 21, 2017).*

Another reason is during the early reform, people considered choosing Islamic parties and politicians were part of jihad, but nowadays assessment of a candidate will consider the candidate's vision and mission, programs, track record, even the profile in everyday life. Community assessment have shifted since there are candidates who used shari'ah as a label only. In the implementation of shari'ah, there is a text received by the community with appropriate living norms. If there is an inappropriateness, then the public will assess the person or group that carries the label as the main thing. All Acehnese support shari'ah culturally (not related with the state). But in the context of regional election, people will

not make shari'ah as a single factor to support a candidate. As long as the candidate does not campaign to "reject shari'ah". If the discourse of shari'ah rejection is used by a candidate, it is certain that all Acehnese will not vote for him, and will definitely take the opposition against the candidate (inferred from an interview with Teuku Zulkairi (RTA), Banda Aceh, July 27, 2017).

Third, the shift of paradigm-related shari'ah took place because the state and religious leaders in their practices, did not integrate shari'ah issues with social conditions, so there was a space between social life and shari'ah. When the implementation of shari'ah by the state does not relate the more dominant shari'ah practices engaging personal dimensions of society, without relate it to the dimension of social conditions in which it is formed, support for shari'ah in relation to politics will decrease. It can be seen from the regulations related to shari'ah, which is produced by the government, which is more dominant to engage personal dimensions such as *aqidah*, worship, *jinayat*, guidance and *aqidah* protection and others. Shari'ah in Aceh is seen in two dimensions. The first is cultural dimensions, such as *aqidah*, *munaqaha*, worship *mahda*, which are not influenced by politics. Second is structural dimensions, which involve the state to design and run shari'ah in total. This second dimensions there are some problems, because shari'ah has not covered all aspects of life. So, the issue of welfare is separate from the issue of shari'ah, whereas the spirit contained in shari'ah is the prosperity of society. In the process of implementation, shari'ah further extends to cover social and welfare aspects. It has an impact on the understanding of shari'ah and the alignment of society to shari'ah in the structural or political dimensions.

Fourth, the above phenomenon is getting stronger with the dominance of welfare issues that shift the shari'ah issues. Some candidates displayed programs featuring prosperity, such as free health care, public services, educational scholarships, and others as shown in the table

above. Even the welfare issues coincided with the campaign style of “*blusukan* (impromptu visit)” to achieve popular support from community, such as doing *blusukan* to traditional markets, visiting patients in hospitals, visiting poor homes and others. Ultimately, public image of generosity was formed regardless of the cycle of suffering.

Fifth, the Islamic movements in Aceh did not have same voting towards one candidate. Some of the Islamist groups personally spread to several candidates with varying considerations on their candidates. Whether Muhammadiyah, Nahdatul Ulama, Rahbithah Thaliban Aceh (RTA), Coalition of Shari’ah-Supporting Journalists (KWPSI) and several other Islamic organizations in Aceh. The voices of the Islamic activist movements in encouraging shari’ah became the dominant discourse of Aceh’s elections was indirectly influential. In addition, secular groups were not so frontal to affect the shift of shari’ah as a dominant issue.

All the five factors above were the cause of the shift of shari’ah issues into welfare issues. In addition, there was a tendency of separation between politicians, political parties and the sharpen islamic ideology has made shari’ah issues get no more attention from public.

Meanwhile, the regional elections had been held simultaneously in 11 regencies in South Sulawesi on December 9, 2015. Of the 11 regencies, 7 of them were regencies that have issued shari’ah regulations namely Maros, Bulukumba, Pangkep, Gowa, East Luwu, North Luwu, and Barru. We tracked one of the regencies organized the election which had the highest number of shari’ah regulations, Maros and Bulukumba. Further analyzes will address the dynamics of regional elections and shari’ah issues in those two regencies.

In the 2015 election, the promises of politicians on the implementation of shari’ah in the *pilkada* were not found, but they also avoided the anti-shari’ah issues. Shari’ah became a neutral issue.

According to one of the KPPSI declarators – who once was the Secretary General of KPPSI - said:

*Among the candidates, none of them was close to shari’ah struggle structurally, but personally when they met with shari’ah activists they would express their support although not formally. The issue of shari’ah was no longer interesting for society, and now that the welfare issues emerged, it was realized by KPPSI that was why KPPSI launched the shari’ah cooperative. (inferred from an interview with Aswar Hasan, Makassar, July 20, 2017).*

The vanish of shari’ah issues in recent years is due to several factors. First, when Aziz Qahhar Mudzakkar, Amir (Chairman) of KPPSI lost in South Sulawesi elections in 2007. The 2007 regional elections showed that KPPSI was not so politically strong, and on the other hand Aziz and KPPSI activists still have to overcome serious obstacles to win in politics struggle, especially if they consistently place the implementation of shari’ah as their political agenda (Mujiburrahman, 2013).

Second, politicians who initially encouraged shari’ah law in Maros and Bulukumba as well as in most other areas in South Sulawesi were politicians from secular parties. The goal was to mobilize voters. The absence of strong ideology as a structural base because the idea of shari’ah was born only from the choice of personal political action of a regent. For example, Andi Nadjamuddin Aminullah, Maros Regent for two periods from 2000-2010 was so strong in campaigning shari’ah law before the 2005 election. This is seen by the number of shari’ah regulations legalized at the beginning of the second period when he was directly elected (see table 2). However, in the 2015 election the shari’ah idea was not included in the campaign program of the candidate (see table 4). Another interesting example, Patabai Pabokori, a former of Bulukumba regent for two periods known as the most successful regent in implementing shari’ah in South Sulawesi who is now the

Table 4: Candidates and Issues in Pilkada Maros of 2015

Candidates	Parties	Issues	Vote	Information
Muh. Imran Yusuf - Said Patombongi	PBB, PKS, Hanura	Development of Natural Re-sources Management	2,67%	Challenger
A. Husain Rasul - Sudirman Sirajuddin	Gerindra, Demokrat	Prosperity and Justice	29,61%	Challenger
Hatta Rahman - A. Harmil Mattotorang	PAN	Development and Welfare	67,71%	Incumbent

Chairman of Partai Berkarya (Functional Party) in South Sulawesi founded by Soeharto's son, Tommy Soeharto. Whereas simultaneously Patabai Pabokori now is the Chairman of Lajnah Tanfidziyyah of KPPSI. Partai Berkarya is a secular party which its colors of attributes and symbols are similar to those of Golkar Party.

The last, Islamic activists in this regard are Islamic groups experiencing strong resistance from secular groups. In Maros and Bulukumba, the ones who campaign anti-shari'ah issues comes from Islamic groups affiliated with NU or NGOs associated with the pluralism movement such as LAPAR. These groups consisting members of young generation with college education background.

In turn, the current movement of Islamism is more about cultural struggle than just the issues of political structuralism tend to require momentum (political opportunity structure). This development according to claims of KPPSI member is a positive effect in da'wah about shari'ah where people finally start thinking about linking life with the rules of shari'ah spreading in society without attaching it to political aspects. According to him:

*In the past, people were still unfamiliar with shari'ah but with the struggle of KPPSI, they finally understood it and when its meaning experiencing derivation, that belongs to sociological problem but essentially the understanding of society is growing. So substantially, this value (Islamism) is developing but undergoing adaptation process. (inferred*

*from an interview with Aswar Hasan, Makassar, July 20, 2017).*

### Conclusion: Defining Local Islamism

The future of shari'ah at the local level will never disappear, visible from the dimension of time that goes hand in hand with the political dynamics. The results of their meeting will affect each other with the growing conditions in national politics. At other points, as long as the da'wah movement is alive, the idea of shari'ah is also alive in which its existence depends on its dynamics: fundamentalists, reformists, or even secular. Overall, shari'ah in Aceh is still visible while in South Sulawesi it has almost disappeared. In this context, several conclusions can be put forward to define local Islamism. First, in the context of Aceh and South Sulawesi, political opportunity structure is crucial to the entry of Islamic waves to get a place in public. In this case, there are three structural opportunities, namely the period when Islam was spread through traders during the Islamic empire, and post-independence and post-reform. Especially Aceh, the beginning of reform was the period when conflict became the main trigger of the rise of Islamic Shari'ah. Second, politicians who have been encouraging shari'ah law are secular politicians. Or Islamic politicians who merged into non-religious parties to gain popular support from community. The goal is only to mobilize voters. There is no strong ideological base. Islamic activists in this case are Islamic groups experiencing a shift from the ideological movement to the pragmatic direction. Where Islamic groups themselves are personally

spread to all candidates without considering the shari'ah issues as political consideration. Third, pragmatic political orientations such as money politics and programmatic politics are getting stronger at grassroots-level. The cause is the issue of rationalization of shari'ah and the policy of welfare integration which cannot be done by the state (local government) and politicians (political parties). So, it sees shari'ah and Islamic programmatic as are two different things. Finally, the significant shift from Islamic politics to political Islam. The emergence of urban middle class with consumerism and modernity cultures have encouraged religious practices into private piety in public, as well as in Aceh and South Sulawesi. This phenomenon crystallizes Islam as a label or symbol into a habit. So it no longer defines Islam as an ideology, but rather to the politicization of symbols that indicate identity.

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