Contemporary narratives of leftist islam movements in Indonesia and Turkey: A comparative analysis

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Abstrak

This research analyses the contemporary narratives of leftist Islam movements being developed as a counter-narrative to dominant Islamic discourse in Indonesia and Turkey. These leftist Islam movements were introduced under different circumstances in the two countries. In Indonesia, leftist Islam was initially promoted by Islamic scholars who were interacting with Marxist references. This was shown in the cases of Haji Misbach, who was one of Indonesia's – and the world's – first leftist Muslim figures. In the case of Turkey, some leftist Islamic movements were inspired by the modern Turkish Marxist movement, which emerged in the middle of the twentieth century and was eventually combined with Islamic elements. This research argues that as both Indonesian and Turkish governments are consolidating their modes of authoritarian neoliberal governance, combined with increasing religiosity, the narratives of leftist Islam are re-emerging as a way to provide socio-political criticisms and to formulate alternative ideas on the role of Islam in improving the livelihood of Muslims in Indonesia and Turkey. This research engages with several cases of leftist Islamic movements in Indonesia and Turkey. In Indonesia, this research takes the examples of FNKSDA (Nahdliyyin Front for Natural Resource Sovereignty) and its media outlet Islam Bergerak (Islam on the Move) which have had an important role in organising leftist Islamic movement in Indonesia during the 2010s. In the case of Turkey, we examine the role of Antikapitalist Müslümanlar (Anti-Capitalist Muslims), also known as Kapitalizmle Mücadele Dernei (Association for Fight against Capitalism). This research identifies the socio-political origins, main ideas, goals, and strategies of the contemporary leftist Islam movements in Indonesia and Turkey.