

## ISLAMIC DISCOURSE IN THE MODE OF POPULISM

Fahmy Farid Purnama  
Institut Agama Islam Darussalam (IAID) Ciamis  
e-mail: fahmy.farid@yahoo.co.id

### Abstract:

*This article attempts to elaborate the trajectory of ummah consciousnesses that attached to contemporary Islamic discourse in the mode of populism. In contemporary world which technology forms and accelerates human life, populism has become a tool of progressives, of reactionaries, of democrats, of autocrats, of the right and even of the left. Its adaptability lies in the 'empty heart' of populism: populism lacks a commitment to key values. By conceptualizing the phenomenon as dynamic and ideologically variable within the discourse horizon, this article seeks to a better understanding of the trajectory of Islamic discourse in the mode of populism, its causes and implications of the populist turn in contemporary world.*

**Keywords:** *Populism, ideology, post-truth, Islamic discourse, technological culture.*

### INTRODUCTION

Adapting Derrida's spectrophetic hauntology when illustrating Mark's ideas, that *'a spectre is haunting the contemporary Islamic discourse—the spectre of populism*. Nowadays, the topic about populism widely discussed. Even so, according to Gregor Fitzi, although we often refer to populism as a consistent research topic, there still no consensus about the articulation of the concept of populism.<sup>1</sup> Every scholar seems to have their own definition of populism, depending on their interests and academic backgrounds. No wonder, the social sciences are struggling with how properly to *conceptualize* and *theorize* populism.

According to Taggart, populism is a difficult, slippery concept. Populism has been a tool of progressives, of reactionaries, of democrats, of autocrats, of the right and even of the left. It lacks features that would make it more tangible. The reason for its adaptability lies in the 'empty heart' of populism: populism lacks a commitment to key values. While other ideologies contain, either implicitly or explicitly, a focus on one or more values such equality, liberty, and social justice, populism has no such core to it. Populism's natural position is as an adjective

---

<sup>1</sup> Gregor Fitzi, "Populism: An Ideal-Typical Assessment", in *Populism and The Crisis of Democracy*, Gregor Fitzi, etc. (ed.) (London & New York: Routledge, 2019), p. 47.

attached to other ideas that fill the space at the empty heart of populism.<sup>2</sup> At this point, Taggart assumes that populism is an ideology that lack its core values and had an 'chameleonic character' which always adopting the colours of its environment.<sup>3</sup>

In a simple analysis, by placing populism as an ideological issue, as Taggart did, populism relatively easy to analyze. As an ideology, populism could simply be identified as a set of ideas that cohere into an overarching worldview that shapes people's actions. According to Bonikowski, the problem, however, is that unlike most ideologies, populism is based on a rudimentary moral logic. In other words, populism does not offer a worldview; at best, it offers a simplistic critique of existing configurations of power.<sup>4</sup> But in a deeper analysis, by placing populism in a horizon of discourse, populism is more complex than just ideology.

Beside the 'chameleonic character' which form our way of thinking and acting, populism also affects the value of truth where popular truth trumps objective truth. At this point, 'post-truth' is the inevitable next step, which 'truth' is nothing but the product of popular emotions. That means, in post-truth reality, the idea that feeling something matter more than fact; which some things are true irrespective of how the people feel about them. As a consequence, the 'truth' shifts from being a substantive to a procedural notion.

In the modern age, when technology forms and accelerates human life, the reality of post-truth even become more massive. Illustrated by Heidegger when unfolding the situation of the modern (post-modern) reality, *the fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture (Bild)*.<sup>5</sup> As a philosopher who struggles with the problem of fundamental ontology that focuses on *Dasein's*

---

<sup>2</sup> Paul Taggart, *Populism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), p. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Taggart, *Populism*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Bart Bonikowski, "Three Lessons of Contemporary Populism in Europe and the United States", in *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Luiza Silva (ed.) (US: Brown University, 2016), vol. 23, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture", in Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), p. 134.

(Being-in-there) issues,<sup>6</sup> Heidegger's expression implies a radical change in the level of reality, even beyond the realm of metaphysical (ontology) discourse.

Metaphysical discourse in the realm of classical philosophical thought which seeks to investigate the most original, true, primordial, and universal basis of the reality of everything, is immediately confronted with a tumultuous situation with parody of images. Borrowing Lèvin's interpretation in *The Opening Vision*, Heidegger's phrase illustrates an 'exceeding' reality which is termed 'ontology of picture' or 'ontology of image'.<sup>7</sup> Images become so identical with the essence of modern metaphysics. This gives us an understanding that populism and the world as picture determine and accelerate each other.

In relation to the development of contemporary Islamic discourse in the mode of populism, the illustration above gives us an initial understanding that the central conception of Islamic populism is that of the *ummah* as proxy for 'the people'. Based on some issues described above, this article attempts to elaborate the trajectory of *ummah* consciousnesses that attached to contemporary Islamic discourse. By conceptualizing the phenomenon as dynamic and ideologically variable within the discourse horizon, this article seeks to a better understanding of Islamic populism, its causes and implications of the populist turn in contemporary world.

### **'What Is Populism?' The Ideational Issue**

Populism has its first and foremost origin within the context of political competition<sup>8</sup> which deals with the political capacities of the 'people'. The political

---

<sup>6</sup> *Dasein* is a typical term in Heidegger's phenomenological thought which is often translated as *Being-in-there*. Other than that, the term *Dasein* is also used to indicate several other meanings, such as *Being-in-the-world* or *Existing-in-the-world* and *Being-toward-death*.

<sup>7</sup> David Michael Lèvin, *The Opening of Vision*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition (New York & London: Routledge, 1988), p. 119.

<sup>8</sup> According to Hadiz, in Europe, populist politics have been associated closely in recent years with anti-immigration tendencies represented by politicians like the *Le Pens* in France, *Fortuyn* and *Wilders* in the Netherlands, and by the lately vigorous *Far Right* in Nordic countries like Norway, Sweden and Finland. It has been analysed as a major challenge to liberal forms of politics throughout the Continent. In Australia, Pauline Hanson's bellicose One Nation Party once best represented a similarly xenophobic tendency, though there have been subsequent successors. There is no doubt that the xenophobia inherent in the anti-immigration position—as also expressed by many American politicians on the conservative side of the political spectrum—has been strengthened by deep-seated anxieties about the

context indicates, as Colliot-Thélène argued, that in so far as the *populus* of populism must have some kind of relation with the *demos* of democracy, an analysis of populism always engages a determined conception of democracy.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is nothing outrageous to rely on ‘popular sovereignty’ to demand, in the name of democracy, that the people have a say in the decisions that concern them. This, however, may serve populism in a negative sense as well as a positive sense, depending on intelligence capacities of the ‘people’. The political background also gives us an initial understanding that the term ‘populism’ can be examined through two directions. The first direction is a question about populism as a term or concept which characterize the present conjuncture. The second is a question about populism as a phenomenon in Islamic discourse and its relation with political thought.

As a concept, populism is an unusual and an ambivalent concept. To be an unusual concept considering that populism tends not to have an ideological framework as liberalism or conservatism which are based on well-articulated principles. To be ambivalent concept referring to its ‘chameleonic character’—populism can be used in a positive or negative sense as an adjective attached to other ideas. In a negative sense, populism associated with the irrationality of the ‘masses’, surface, low, ordinary consciousness, while in a positive sense with the sovereignty of the ‘masses’ against the corrupt ‘elites’ and the ‘system’. This explains why populist movement often be an episodic phenomenon. Therefore, its broad usage also creates confusion and frustration. This presents both an advantage and a challenge, for how to write about something that is still evolving, unusual and ambivalent.

Taggart gives an illustration that the effort to capture the essence of populism have sprung up at different times and in different places, but it is very difficult to see a consistent pattern. At different times and in different places it has been a

---

social and economic effects of globalisation (closely related to the decline of the welfare state), not least among the working and increasingly struggling middle classes of these societies. Vedi R. Hadiz, *Islamic Populism in Indonesia and The Middle East* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Cathérine Colliot-Thélène, “Populism as a conceptual problem”, in *Populism and The Crisis of Democracy*, Gregor Fitz, etc. (ed.) (London & New York: Routledge, 2019), p. 18.

force for change, a force against change, a creature of progressive politics of the left, the refuge of a measured defence of the status quo and a companion of the extreme right. Most have seen populism as specific to the context in which they are focused. The more ambitious have attempted to define populism in universal terms. Others have portrayed it as variegated—with no essence but with varieties. The difference between contextual, universal and variegated approaches to defining populism is due, in part, to the different types of work that deal with populism.<sup>10</sup> The best way to deal with the contested nature of the term populism is to work with a *minimal* definition which can help us to identify the main character of the phenomenon.

Through an ideational approach, Mudde defines populism as a ‘thin-centered’ ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite.’ Other than that, politics in the mode of populism should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.<sup>11</sup> The most important thing in Mudde’s definition lies in the way he defines populism as ‘thin-centered’ ideology that distinguishes it from ‘thick-centered’ or ‘full’ ideologies (e.g., fascism, liberalism, socialism). If ideology is a body of normative ideas about the nature of man and society that is related to a view of how the world is and should be, than ‘thin-centered’ ideology such as populism have a restricted morphology, which necessarily appears attached to—and sometimes is even assimilated into—other ideologies.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, populism can take very different shapes and seldom exists in pure form—it appears in combination with other.

The problem that arises is, why are ‘the people’ such apparently essential in populism? A simple answer is that ‘the people’ is an idea that is as flexible as populism needs it to be. Thus, we can understand that in populist thinking, based on Mudde’s ideational approach, commitment to the ‘people’ is the basic value, especially insofar as their values contrast with those of elites. It was from this

---

<sup>10</sup> Paul Taggart, *Populism*, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Cas Mudde & Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition (London: Verso, 2005), p. 117-120.

position that populism derives its anti-elitism which allows us to observe both the demand and supply side of the populist ideas. It also permits us to grasp that the phenomenon is not only and necessarily about an 'idol' who is able to mobilize the masses. Populism can emerge and take root only if there are persons who share the populist set of ideas.

In the level of discourse, populism is more complex than just what Mudd call 'thin-ideology'. According to Laclau, there are three main aspects that form populism.<sup>13</sup> *First*, populism is not a type of movement—identifiable with either a special social base or a particular ideological orientation—but a political logic. Social logics involving a rarefied system of statements—that is to say, a system of rules drawing a horizon within which some objects are representable while others are excluded. While social logics consist in rule-following, political logics are related to the institution of the social that proceeds out of social demands and is, in that sense, inherent to any process of social change. This change, takes place through the variable articulation of equivalence and difference. This in turn involves, as we have seen, the construction of internal frontiers and the identification of an institutionalized 'other'. *Second*, the political logic that works behind populist reason forms the conceptual characterization of populism which concerning 'naming' and 'affect'. 'Naming' deals with the fact that the construction of the 'people' is a *radical* one in the sense that the heterogeneity of the demands that the popular identity brings to a precarious unity has to be irreducible.

This involves two consequences: (1) The moment of unity of popular subjects is given at the nominal, not at the conceptual, level. (2) Precisely because that name is not conceptually grounded, the limits between the demands it is going to embrace and those it is going to exclude will be blurred, and subjected to permanent contestation. Therefore, populist discourse is always going to be imprecise and fluctuating: not because of any cognitive failure, but because it tries to operate performatively within a social reality which is to a large extent

---

<sup>13</sup> Cas Mudde & Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, *Populism*, p. 6.

heterogeneous and fluctuating. It also affects that the populist reason had always prelude the Symbolic before the Real.

*Third*, and most important thing, relates to the logic that works behind populism, that is equivalential logics. In its classical form, populism presupposes a larger community, so the equivalential logics will cut across new and more heterogeneous social groups. For its constitution, the equivalential logics presuppose the equivalence of a plurality of demands. In its relation to populism, that populism requires the dichotomic division of society into two camps. One presenting itself as a part which claims to be the whole and that the popular camp presupposes, as a condition of its constitution, the construction of a global identity out of the equivalence of a plurality of social demands.

Based on three main aspects that form populism, we can, at least, conclude that the discourse which works behind populism is an attempt to totalize social reality into single identity by utilizing the equivalential logic at the expense of the differential one. Only, it must be realized that the plurality of social demands requires differential logic. Therefore, equivalential logic only works at the surface level to expenses the differential social demands.

### **The Rise of Populism in Islamic Discourse and its Consequences**

In this section, Islam will be interpreted as an ideology—a set of normative ideas about the nature of man and society that is related to a view of how the world is and should be according to Al-Qur'an and *Sunnah* as the main sources. The use of the term ideology here is to describe the general process of the production of meanings and ideas that refer to authoritative religious sources whose crystalized into a single meaning. The interpretation of Islam as an ideology based on the differentiation between Islam as religion (*al-dîn*) and religious thought (*al-fikr ad-dîniy*) which is the result of human thinking throughout the history of Islamic civilization. Also, Islamic discourse will be understood in the reality of the latest culture, the age of the world picture. Both of these starting points are important to understand how Islamic populist thinking and movement manifest in the contemporary era.

## 1. The Latest Cultural Situation

As mentioned earlier that the fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture (*Bild*). The term picture (*Bild*) here does not mean the picture of the world, but the world imagined, understood, and even embraced as an image—the reality in image representation, which is then considered as reality itself. The imagined world is reduced in such a way as a reality that controlled and colonized by images.

In the reality of the world as picture, humans are faced with a situation, as termed Baudlirillard, hyper-reality (beyond reality). In semiotics, what is called hyper in various phenomena of life (commodities of information media, fashion, sexuality, music, religion, etc.) can be interpreted as a condition of ‘sign domination’ spread in various aspects of reality. As explained by Pialang, hyper-reality can be interpreted as a condition of mingling and overlapping of various forms of signs in a ‘representation’ space. Thus, between the original/false, the past/present, natural/artificial, facts/fiction cannot be distinguished anymore; blend and overlap, then create a space for the indeterminate of meaning.<sup>14</sup> The blurring of the reality boundary and the overlapping conditions of the sign have an impact on the rampant condition of pathology, the image and parody of false subjectivity that appear in portraits of ego-logical narcissism.<sup>15</sup>

Narcissism is an existential situation dominated by images. In the context of ‘ontology of image’, narcissism can be understood as a symptom of mental illness (psycho-pathology) which subject’s ego obsessed with an image. Based on this meaning, essentially, narcissistic psycho-pathology is related to the relationship between image and existential suffering of subject’s ego that obsessed with an image, even though the reality displayed in an image does not have any relationship with real reality. Thus, the pathology of narcissism manifests the

---

<sup>14</sup> Yasraf Amir Pialang, *Post-Realitas: Realitas Kebudayaan dalam Era Post-Metafisika* (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2015), p. 24.

<sup>15</sup> In Peperzak’s explanation, egology is the theoretical side of a more fundamental attitude: the egocentrism of Western civilization realizes itself in a peculiar way of life, which is philosophy is the theoretical counterpart. Objectification, material pleasure, and the privilege accorded to seeing, manipulation, planning, and exploitation form a pattern which could be characterized by the word ‘egonomy’: the world of Western culture is ruled by ego’s law. Adriaan Theodoor Peperzak, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Lèvinas*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1999), p. 8-9.

suffering of the ego—the subject trapped in his own ‘ontology of image’, trapped in a reality of representation. When the subject entangled in the reality of the image, the subject is not only cut off from the real reality, but at the same time alienated from themselves (the self) along with their existential authenticity. So, what emerges is false subjectivity.

In the age when reality appears in representation of an image, what determining and defining reality—social, political, economic, even religious realities—is only the images, not reality in itself. The representation of reality as an image illustrates the subject’s desire to rule, dominate, and control the daily life of the world by manipulating the image of the world. Everything becomes fully identified through the image, thus losing its essential touch with its own objective reality. Image of reality is the only way the subject rules and controls his reality.

When the development of information technology experiences a massive leap—accompanied by an abundance of signs that transcend the cognitive, affective, and motoric capacities of human beings to interpret it (hyper-semiotics) because of technological acceleration, thus losing its adequate reflective base—the psychic structure and the daily behaviour of human beings becomes very closely related to the parodies of false subjectivity that roam on various social mediums. The parody of false subject imagery in posters, advertisements, television, and other technological mediums, has played a major role in obscuring the objective reality, both social, political, economic, even religious realities, then reduced to imaginal realities that are not essential. This phenomenon has an impact on the increasingly blurred reality behind image parodies.

Starting from this explanation of the fundamental event of the modern age, it can be understood that narcissism illustrates the subject’s pathology: a pathology in which the subject’s will to power is truly trapped in the projected image. The daily life of human beings become very determined by the ‘image’, not the truth that lives in self-experience. In the situation of the colonized reality by the reality of images, the reality of the world has entered into the condition of the death of reality (post-reality).

## 2. The Popular Islamic Discourse

In the midst of contemporary cultural situations trapped in artificial images, religious reality is being taken over by false images. The question is, what kind of situation happens in Islamic discourse which is dominated by images in the mode of populism? To answer the problem, the first thing to do is to understand the term 'ideology' and its functions.

According to Raymond Williams, the term 'ideology' finds three main uses: (1) A system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group; (2) A system of illusory beliefs—false ideas or false consciousness—which can be contrasted with true or scientific knowledge; (3) The general process of the production of meanings and ideas.<sup>16</sup> On the other side, according to Thompson, ideology is the thought of the other, the thought of someone other than oneself. Consequently, to characterize a view as 'ideological' is already to criticize it, for 'ideology' is not a neutral term. But in recent years that this theory has been enriched and elaborated through a reflection on language. Ideology represent the ideas circulate in the social world as utterances, as expressions, as words which are spoken or inscribed.<sup>17</sup>

According to Paul explanation, ideology as a system of beliefs is closer psychologists' use of the word. Psychologists use 'ideology' to refer to the way that attitudes are organized into a coherent pattern. While as a system of illusory beliefs, ideology becomes the category of illusions and false consciousness by which the ruling class maintains its dominance. And ideology as general process of the production of meanings and ideas means that ideology is the source of the second-meanings.<sup>18</sup>

When modern (post-modern) reality is dominated by images and accelerated by technology, human culture undergoes in such radical changes. This kind of situation also influences in how ideology manifests itself in reality. In religious

---

<sup>16</sup> Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 55; John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 165.

<sup>17</sup> John B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (USA: University of California Press, 1984), p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, p. 165-166.

context, these cultural changes also influence the projection of human religiosity to be so imaginal and artificial. There has been a reduction in the meaning of religion to be limited to the image market commodity, the commodities of the cultural, economic, even political markets.

In the context of society that has a high level of religious enthusiasm and sensitivity, the banality of everyday religiosity is preserved through parodies of false subjectivity. And in the context of the religiosity that is present in the midst of technological culture which is dominated by the power of the image and parodies of false subjectivity, humans are entering the condition of hyper-religiosity; the reality that trapped in the nature of its shallowness; the reality of artificial faith that is no longer related to a commitment and existential demands; the religiosity that has been distorted from the natural character and the principle reference; religious reality that is built based on ontology of image. The phenomenon of human religiosity is increasingly plunged into the chaos of the situation of religious consciousness that becomes so ironic, political parodies, crisis, parodic, commoditized, even more sporadic and brute.

Ironically, considering that religion is so loudly discussed in various public space, but being impoverished into portraits of mere festivals and crowds in pop-culture. Political, considering the increasingly widespread politicization of the Sacred Verses that cover the craving of the will to power behind it. Parodic, considering that the preachers are no longer different from mere robed clowns. Commoditized, considering to the increasing number of religious preachers who sell holy verses for the sake of mere worldly pragmatism. Crisis, considering the occurrence of some sort of symptom of banalization of religious discourses which causes the disappearance of the depth of religious meaning in realities. Sporadic, considering the frequency of religious discourse as mere as a tool alienate, and even suppress the values of justice and humanity. Human religiosity in its cultural anchor becomes so banal (banality of religion).

Based on the explanation above, the problem is directed to notion of the subject, the false subjectivity (identity) in Islamic thought. Referring to Althusser's thesis, 1) there is no practice whatsoever except by and under an ideology. 2)

There is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects. In other words, there is no ideology except for concrete subjects, and this destination for ideology is only made possible by the subject: in other words, by the category of the subject and its functioning.<sup>19</sup> Althusser explained that ideology works through interpellation or hailing. All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, through the functioning of the category of the subject.<sup>20</sup>

In modern cultural situations trapped in artificial images, false subjectivity hails or interpellates concrete individuals which is encouraged to be subjects in a particular system (religion, economic, politic, etc.). At the point when 1) false subjectivity, pop-culture which characterized by the conquest of the world as picture 2), and religious ideology merge with each other, populism finds its shape. In other words, populism finds its articulation as false mass religiosity—the mass hysteria driven by an ‘idol’ who share the populist set of ideas and who is able to mobilize the masses. At this point, ‘post-truth’ is the inevitable next step.

The Oxford Dictionaries define ‘post-truth’ as ‘relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’. The ‘truth’ in ‘post-truth’ is nothing but the product of emotions—the idea that feelings sometimes matter more than facts. It is worth stressing, as Fuller said, that a ‘post-truther’ does not deny the existence of facts, let alone ‘objective facts’. He simply wishes to dispel the mystery in which the creation and maintenance of facts tend to be shrouded.<sup>21</sup> The consequences in the mode of populism, the ‘truth’ depends on emotional likes or dislikes of the people, according to the idol who has the ability to manipulate the truth through the rhetoric of an ideologist.

Than in the level of Islamic discourse, while also in the mode of populism, the ‘post-truth’ reality resonates loudly in public sphere at its artificial meaning. Consequently, driven by equivalential logic, Islamic discourse reduced to an

---

<sup>19</sup> Louis Althusser, “On Ideology”, in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (London: Verso, 2014), p. 187.

<sup>20</sup> Louis Althusser, “On Ideology”, p. 190.

<sup>21</sup> Steve Fuller, “What Can Philosophy Teach Us About the Post-truth Condition”, in *Post-Truth, Fake News*, Michael A. Peters, etc. (ed.) (Singapore: Springer, 2018), p. 16.

inseparable part of populism. That means, Islamic discourse no longer refers to authoritative religious sources and its relation to reality, but only part of popular discourse which is driven by religious patronages based on emotional likes or dislikes of the people. At this level, Islamic discourses that spread in *ummah* consciousnesses are nothing more than market commodities, both political, cultural, ideological, etc.

Truth is the goal of philosophical inquiry, even it is essentially contested among them—for in its absence, the bewilderment or lost or may even be facing the wrong way, on the wrong track altogether, are inevitable. As a basic concept of philosophical inquiry, truth is so tightly interconnected with so many other philosophically interesting concepts. Sometimes, truth is deeply connected to belief, to knowledge, to language, and to the central concept of logic as well, and the most important, truth is related to another mysterious concept, reality. Sometimes, perhaps more often, the failure to seek the truth leads someone to put up with simplifications, metaphors, and even myths and fictions. To avoid the labyrinth of truth, philosophers have tried to think about truth and its relation to facts or reality.

## CONCLUSION

The trajectory of *ummah* consciousnesses that attached to contemporary Islamic thought in the mode of populism is faced with various falsehood. In contemporary world which technology forms and accelerates human life, populism has become a tool of progressives, of reactionaries, of democrats, of autocrats, of the left and of the right. Its adaptability lies in the 'empty heart' of populism: populism lacks a commitment to key values. Consequently, Islamic thought in the mode of populism is vulnerable to being trapped in artificial mass hysteria, thus losing its substance. Religion is nothing more than instrument for ideologist who hide his will to power, while the people are nothing more than manipulated device for ideologist for his own shake.

## REFERENCES

- Althusser, Louis, "On Ideology", in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian, London: Verso, 2014.
- Bonikowski, Bart, "Three Lessons of Contemporary Populism in Europe and the United States", in *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Luiza Silva (ed.), US: Brown University, 2016.
- Colliot-Thélène, Cathérine, "Populism as a conceptual problem", in *Populism and The Crisis of Democracy*, Gregor Fitzi, etc. (ed.), London & New York: Routledge, 2019.
- Fiske, John, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London: Routledge, 1990.
- Fitzi, Gregor, "Populism: An Ideal-Typical Assessment", in *Populism and The Crisis of Democracy*, Gregor Fitzi, etc. (ed.), London & New York: Routledge, 2019.
- Fuller, Steve, "What Can Philosophy Teach Us About the Post-truth Condition", in *Post-Truth, Fake News*, Michael A. Peters, etc. (ed.), Singapore: Springer, 2018.
- Hadiz, Vedi R., *Islamic Populism in Indonesia and The Middle East*, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- Heidegger, Martin, "The Age of the World Picture", in Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt, New York: Garland Publishing, 1977.
- Laclau, Ernesto, *On Populist Reason*, 1st edition, London: Verso, 2005.
- Lèvin, David Michael, *The Opening of Vision*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, New York & London: Routledge, 1988.
- Mudde, Cas & Kaltwasser, Cristóbal Rovira, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*, USA: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Peperzak, Adriaan Theodoor, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Lèvinas*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1999.
- Taggart, Paul, *Populism*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000.
- Thompson, John B., *Studies in the Theory of Ideology*, USA: University of California Press, 1984.
- Williams, Raymond, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, 1977
- Yasraf, Amir Pialang, *Post-Realitas: Realitas Kebudayaan dalam Era Post-Metafisika*, Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2015.