

Abstract

The thesis endeavours to use the concept of *relative deprivation* to explain and account for the reasons behind the various manifestations of political and religious tension in Indonesia. From the most recent series of bombings in Surabaya in 2018, to the conflicts in the Maluku Islands back in 1999, it is undeniable that Indonesia is not immune to extremist activities or religious-political conflicts. The involvement of Political Entrepreneurs (PEs), such as giving a frame to people's perceived grievances, drive sentiments of being deprived in relative to other groups. Such feelings are especially made salient with the influence of social media. At the same time, the Indonesian government's advocacy of the *wasatiyyah* concept, which means middle-path Islam, appears to be its most effective tool in countering the trend of extremism in the society. However, such an interpretation of Islam is potentially at odds with the "right" form of Islam as practiced by the Muslims in Saudi Arabia. Faced with increasing pressure from Islamic hardliners in the society, the Indonesian state ideology – Pancasila – is under much threat as people are gradually becoming disillusioned with it.