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Sunan Kalijaga
Yogyakarta

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FROM UIN SUNAN KALIJAGA TO THE WORLD



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From Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University to the World

Waryono Abdul Ghafur

(Vice Rector for Student and Cooperation Affairs)

In 2016, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University is stepping to its 65 years old, a quite long period for an education institution in Indonesia, even though it could be a short period of time compared to universities such as in Europe or the United States, which have experienced centuries in managing education. During its half a century period, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta went through numbers of developmental stages. It was begun with piloting phase (1951-1960), the development of institutional foundation phase (1960-1972), followed by the development of academic foundation (1972-1996) and the stabilization of academic orientation (1996-2001), the phase of Institutional development (2001-2010), followed by internal management reinforcement (2010-2015), as well as the phase toward World Class University (WCU) in the field of Islamic Studies with the status of State University as Legal Entities (in Bahasa Indonesia named PTNBH) for its institutional management. The steps toward WCU has been set up in the Master Plan for the Development of State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta of 2014-2038. In this stage, State Islamic University should not merely play its role in local and national development, but also in the wider context of regional, international and global world by optimizing its potentialities.

During its developmental stages from Islamic Higher Education Institution (Institute) status until its status to become a university, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta had never isolated itself from international society. During its piloting phase, the Institute had initiated many cooperations with various universities in the Middle East, especially Al-Azhar University, Egypt, as the center of Islamic studies. Moreover, the Institute had also awarded a doctorate honoris cause for the rector of Al- Azhar University, Prof. Dr. Mahmud Syaltut.

Similarly, Al-Azhar University awarded a doctorate honoris causa for the President at that time, Soekarno. In the next phase, when Prof. Mukti Ali was appointed as the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (1971-1978), the Institute developed its cooperation with universities in North America such as McGill University, Canada.

Today, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta has initiated numbers of cooperation with top universities in the world, ranged from Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and Australia. Recently, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta has signed a MoU with Canal Suez University, renewed the cooperation with Al-Azhar University, AinShams University, Egypt, as well as Ez-zitouna University and University of Sousse, Tunisia in the Middle East. Whereas, for European regions, it develops the cooperation with the University of Göttingen, Germany and Radboud University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

Considering those wide international networks, SunanKalijagaState Islamic University opens its opportunity to contribute to the global world. Those opportunities were supported by numbers of potentialities owned by the University. To mention some, the University has professional human resources. Many of its lecturers are professors and doctors who earned their degree from prestigious universities abroad as well as from home countries. Furthermore, the University conducted an agreement with international universities for lecturer exchange programs. Many lecturers were invited by universities abroad to teach Islamic studies there. Correspondingly, lecturers from overseas universities were invited to teach or give lecture at the University.

Besides its lecturers' role in the academic field in international level, SunanKalijaga State Islamic University also has internationally recognized practitioners, researchers, and even bureaucrat, for example, those who serve as an ambassador, a commissioner of Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and researchers in international institutions. In addition, the University owned an internationally recognized academic journal, *ai-Jami'ah*, which is indexed by Scopus. This becomes the media to spread out academic thoughts and contribution of the University to the international world.

It particularly in regard to its international network and potentialities that the University becomes the leading Islamic higher education in Indonesia with high interest of students enrollment. During the last 7 years those who register to enroll in the University comprises around 60.000 until 80.000 students, even though the University only selected 3.500 students to be accepted each year. The number of international students is also increasing, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. By countries, the international students come from Malaysia, Thailand, Russia, the Philippines, Iran, and Libya.

About this Book

The publication of this book, *From UIN Sunan Kalijaga to the World*, (من جامعة سونانكاليجاكاإلىالعالم) has been underlined by the urgency to bring together the valuable thoughts from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University's academicians in one compilation (although it only compiles a very limited numbers of them) as an effort on how the University should contribute for scientific development in the global world. This book reflects various scientific discourses that should depict the rich and wide coverage of different faculties at the University, ranging from contemporary social problems to the development of science and technology for humanity.

This book contains 13 articles comprises of 7 articles written in English and the other 6 written in Arabic. The first English article was written by Prof. M. Amin Abdullah, a professor of Islamic philosophy and Islamic studies and a Cultural Commission of the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (AIPI), also a former Rector of the University. He writes about new scientific paradigm developed by the University, that is integration and interconnection among religion, science, and culture which then become the core for other articles in this book. For that, the other articles in this book should be comprehended under the framework of those three entities: religion, science, and culture.

Using that framework, the articles in this book can be categorized into 4 clusters. First, Islamic studies, such as Qur'anic Interpretation, Islamic law, Islamic theology, prophetic education, Arabic language and literature. These topics correspond to the core subject of the University, that is in Islamic studies.

Second, social-cultural studies, as seen in the article on the re-comprehension of the charismatic authority concept of Max Weber. Third, humanities, the one discusses radicalism and peace. Fourth, science and technology, for example, the article that is written by Shofwatul 'Uyun, Lina Choridah, and M. Didik R Wahyudi. Those three are lecturers from the Faculty of Science and Technology that develop algorithm formulas to be implemented in Computer-Aided Detection (CADe). The latter is a tool for early detection of breast cancer, which provides high accuracy.

Those fourth clusters were not stood apart from one another in its own scientific root (monodisciplinary). However, they are synergically cooperating and enriching each other (interdisciplinary, multidiscipline, and transdisciplinary) in their approaches. The articles under Islamic tradition discourses also use concepts and theories from social sciences, and vice versa. Furthermore, science and technology developed in the University are not value-free, rather Islam precisely becomes the value basis for science and technology development.

Using integration-interconnection paradigm, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta is not merely trying to develop "an ideal" formula in the connection between Islam and science, rather this paradigm is perfectly compatible in producing moderate, inclusive, and progressive Islamic studies based on Islamic insight in Nusantara. That is an Islamic understanding that embeds peace and wisdom; honors tolerance (*tasamuh*), puts forward harmony (*tawazun*), and has moderate characteristics (*tawasuth*). Those are the ideas from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta that would be contributed to the world, of which the effort is by publishing this book.

Yogyakarta, December 2016

CONTENTS

Religion, Science and Culture: An Integrated, Interconnected Paradigm of Science

M. Amin Abdullah 1

Prophetic Educator-Manager in the Construction of *Ma'rifat* Quotient (Cognizance)

Abdul Munir Mul Khan 35

A Peaceful Message Beyond the Permission Of Warfare (*Jihad*) in the Qur'an: An Interpretation of Qur'an 22:39-40

Sahiron Syamsuddin 57

Violent Activism, Islamist Ideology, and the Conquest of Public Space Among Youth in Indonesia

Noorhaidi Hasan 73

Priming Effects of Social Cases with *Da'wah* Contents on Attitudes towards Islamic Radicalism

Nurjannah..... 93

Rereading Weber's Concept of Charismatic Authority Through the Case of Traditional Islamic Leader in Modern Java

Achmad Zainal Arifin 113

Role of Islamic Higher Education in Hitting the 'Glass Ceiling' of Gender Equality

Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin..... 143

Improvement of Sample Selection: A Cascade-Based Approach for Lesion Automatic Detection

Shofwatul 'Uyun, Lina Choridah, M.Didik R Wahyudi 177

Biography of the Authors..... 373

محتويات البحث

أمة وسط في تفسير المنار وتفسير الفخر الرازي

• محمد أمين ١٩٥

الالتفات كإعجاز أسلوب القرآن الكريم

• مرجوكو ادريس ٢١٥

آليات اكتشاف الأحكام الشرعية وتغيرها: دراسة أصولية مع إشارة خاصة إلى

إشكالية التوقيت الإسلامي

• شمس الأنوار ٢٣٩

اللاهوت المسيحي: نظرة نقدية إسلامية دراسة تاريخية في مؤلف أبي حامد الغزالي

‘الرد الجميل لإلهية عيسى بصريح الإنجيل

• واريونو عبد الغفور ٢٧٧

باسانترين وتعليم اللغة العربية (تاريخيا وحديثيا)

• مهاجر ٣٠٧

اللغة العربية في أندونيسيا من النشأة إلى المؤسسات

• تولوس مصطفى ٣٣٣



VIOLENT ACTIVISM, ISLAMIST IDEOLOGY, AND THE CONQUEST OF PUBLIC SPACE AMONG YOUTH IN INDONESIA¹

Noorhaidi Hasan

School of Graduate Studies

Introduction

The Asian economic crisis of 1997 brought about the dramatic meltdown of the Indonesian currency, inflation, and mass dismissals, which contributed to the collapse of Suharto's New Order authoritarian regime in May 1998 after holding power for over thirty-two years. As the crisis deepened, more and more people were thrown into the harsh reality of joblessness, and youth were the most severely affected group. In 1997 young people constituted 72.5 percent of the total unemployed, the highest proportion in the world. Despite the new government's relentless efforts at economic recovery, ten years later youth still represented 70 percent of the total unemployment, in Indonesia (Hendri 2008). The mounting discontent among Indonesian young people who channel their frustration by engaging

¹ The article is originally a chapter in Kathryn Robinson (ed.) *Youth Identities and Social Transformations in Modern Indonesia*, Brill, 2016, pp. 200-213.

in street politics and collective actions and violent activism cannot be dissociated from the economic facts.

The emergence post New Order of Muslim paramilitary groups with names like the Front Pembela Islam (FPI, the Front for the Defenders of Islam), the Laskar Jihad (LJ, the Holy War Force), the Laskar Mujahidin Indonesia (LMI, the Indonesian Holy Warriors Force), and other militant Islamic groups, including the HizbutTahrir Indonesia (HTI, Indonesian Islamic Liberation Party) and the Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (KAMMI, Indonesian Muslim Students United Action Front) is emblematic of this phenomenon of youth mobilization. These groups achieved notoriety by organizing a variety of radical actions. Not only did they demand the comprehensive implementation of the *shari'a* (Islamic law), but also raided cafes, discotheques, casinos, brothels and other reputed dens of iniquity. Most importantly, they called for *jihad* in the Indonesian provincial towns of Ambon in the Moluccas and Poso in Central Sulawesi in the turbulent years beginning in 1999.

Young people aged between 15 and 29 years serve as the backbone of these organizations and constituted the key to the success of the organizations' leadership in promoting collective violence. The best of the youth were recruited to organizational roles, spending much of their time planning events, making predictions about consequences, and organizing actions. Youth provided relentless support to translate the movement's programmes into collective actions by participating in *tablighakbar* (mass religious gatherings) and other mass events organized in numerous cities in Indonesia. They were also at the forefront in risking their lives, to venturing to the frontlines in conflict areas of post-Suharto Indonesia. The most radical among them were the masterminds and perpetrators of bombings that claimed hundreds of lives in strategic places in Bali and Jakarta.

The involvement of youth in organizing street politics and in violent activism in Indonesia is not new. Youth have played important roles in major social, political and cultural changes, including the demonstrations that led to the collapse of the Sukarno

regime in 1966. Having succeeded in bringing Suharto to power as a replacement for Sukarno, they then apparently took a critical position toward the Suharto regime, especially in anti-Japanese demonstrations that turned to riots in 1974 (the Malari incident).² After the government's grip on political activities tightened during the 1970s, in part by restrictions on campus activism, they turned toward socio-economic and religious activism by pioneering the establishment of NGOs and civil society organizations, and this included da'wah (religious proselytizing) activities from the 1980s. Within the framework of da'wah they called for the implementation of Islam in all walks of Muslim life, and this has facilitated the wave of Islamic resurgence since the 1980s. The campus movement and the wave of Islamic resurgence since this period has contributed to the growing influence of transnational Islamist ideas and movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the Hizbut-Tahrir (the Party of Liberation), and the Salafi da'wah movement, in Indonesia.

The definition of youth is fluid and arbitrary, in regard to physical and social attributes, and varies across cultures and eras. In general, youth as a category is defined as the life stage of adolescence, a period in which young people experience changes in their roles and shifts in social expectations. But they have yet to establish the full legal status and roles of adulthood, and consequently, unlike adults, they do not have access to familial, professional, and political rights (Fussell and Greene 2002:21-60). This paper examines street politics and violence activism as attempts by youth to respond to the discouraging situation of prolonged economic crisis and socio-demographic changes by developing an identity influenced by religious movements and the unique social setting of globalizing Indonesia. I move beyond the narrow perspective of Islamic youth militancy as an expression of ideology, and provide a broader analysis of the nexus between the structure, ideology and cultural identity of youth.

² In 1974, occasioned by a state visit to Indonesia by Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, students protested on the streets of Jakarta about corruption, high prices, and inequality in foreign investments. Eleven protestors were killed and hundreds of cars and buildings destroyed.

Growing up in a Risk Society

Recent literature on youth have conceptualized the main problem facing young people who have experienced critical points in their transition to adulthood is the consequences of sweeping social changes associated with modernization and globalization (White and Wyn 2005; Barry ed. 2005; Weil et al., ed. 2005; Blossfeld et al., ed. 2005). The process of globalization, encompassing internationalization and importance of markets, intensified competition, and accelerated spread of networks and knowledge via new technologies, has not only obscured geographical borders and nation-state territories but has produced new challenges for youth to cope with increasing uncertainty about the future. It has negatively impacted on young people's ability to establish themselves as independent adults, to form partnerships, and become parents. Globalization has also brought the world we live in under the domination of global capitalism and neo-liberalism in public policy, characterized by the increasing concentration of wealth and power into fewer and fewer hands. Recent years have also seen the fragmentation of communities and the emergence of deep social divisions within society(White and Wyn 2005).

Living in a class-divided society in the critical and turbulent phase of early life means that not all young people have the same resources, experiences and opportunities. There are gradations in material resources available to young people of different classes, and class differences are linked to both family and community contexts, essential parts of how young people negotiate their lives in different social situations. For marginalized working class youth, "leisure" is shaped by lack of money, a strong sense of neighbourhood boundaries, and the stigma attached to geographical and class location. This problem no doubt creates a profound and enduring tension among the youth (White and Wyn 2005:16). The impact of globalization is experienced differently by youth in different countries due to institutional differences such as employment relations, the education

system, welfare regimes and family systems (Mills and Blossfeld 2005) These institutions can filter rising uncertainty brought about by the forces of globalization.

Indonesia has strived relentlessly to adjust to global developments and accelerate the process of development, which led the country to be labelled as one of Asia's new tigers in the early 1990s. However, the country still has to solve basic problems of transparency and accountability linked to widespread corruption and bureaucratic incompetence. As a result, the government has failed to balance the supply of and demand for workers, engendering rising competition in job markets. Many citizens were alienated as they were denied entrance to the corridors of power, or were disenchanted by the New Order arbitrary rule and rampant corruption (Johnston 2005:178-9; Robison and Hadiz 2005:120-30). Although the majority of Indonesians achieved a higher standard of living under Suharto's New Order, problems of equity and distribution remain: a greater concentration of "development" in urban areas and the rising expectation of the many young people who benefited from expanded educational opportunities in the Suharto period.

However, the government faces an uphill struggle finding young people jobs. In 1998-9 about 600,000 university graduates could not find employment in 1988-99; and over 60 percent of the labour force between the ages of 15 and 19 with a high school education were looking for work (Vatikiotis 1998:57-8). The end of this process was the protracted economic crisis in 1997 that led to the collapse of Suharto's New Order in May 1998.

After the prolonged economic crisis, economic recovery moved slowly. Under the democratic government of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2014), Indonesia's economic performance has improved. GDP growth rose to 6.3 percent in 2008 But two to three million people enter the workforce every year, so unemployment is rising; and this problem will get worse over the next ten years because the bulk of the 11 million unemployed will be aged between 15 and 24 years old. Indonesia's unemployment rate could even increase to 20 percent of its roughly 150 million workforce by 2015, while the

number of poor families, currently estimated at 19.2 million could double (Abdullah 2004; Sijabat 2006).

Since the cost for participation in education has become higher and higher as an impact of the commercialization of education, the rate of participation in education through to the final year of secondary education and beyond remains low, especially when compared to neighbouring countries. Many young people are only able to complete six years of schooling and after withdrawal from school many of them end up living in the streets doing odd jobs or are likely to join the informal labour force as street and market vendors.

Unlike welfare states that can provide active employment-sustaining labour market policies, welfare-sustaining employment exit policies, the scope and generosity of family allowances and services and the share of the public sector in the labour force, developing countries such as Indonesia still have to struggle to set up the fundamental economy to guarantee the sustainability of the system. The increased economic uncertainty combined with the lack of public support will impact on youth's ability to plan for the future (Mills and Blossfeld 2005). The consequence of this is that young people's upward mobility opportunities will become blocked. For young people, who have to be mobile and ready to reap opportunities, living in uncertain conditions is often frustrating (Leccardi and Ruspini, 2006). In Southeast Asia young people are viewed as the hope for the family's future survival and as the symbol of passion and vitality in society. This perception has multiplied the burden of youth in dealing with globalization as they do not have the full legal status and roles of adulthood (Maria 2002).

Youth appear to be the sector most vulnerable to the rapid progress in society. Not infrequently they have become the "losers of globalization" (Mills, Blossfeld and Klijzing 2005), who experience a sort of identity crisis. As a source of meaning for social actors, identity organizes meaning by determining how the purpose of certain actions is symbolically identified. Melucci (1989) refers to the "homelessness of personal identity" when describing the sort of alienation people experience when identities are relativized, and he

proposes that this condition requires individuals to re-establish their identity, and thus their “home” continually.

Islamist Ideology

Amid mounting uncertainty and growing frustration afflicting Indonesian young people in the face of the profound failures of the democratic political system, conservative Islamist discourse has spread widely among them, articulated by Islamist political forces working within a variety of communication channels. These include, direct contact and communal activity around the mosque and neighbourhood as well as print media and the internet. The Islamist ideology shapes the narrative of confrontation with the Other (Ismail 2003): the West is perceived to be the main enemy of Islam, seeking to undermine it and subjugate the ummah in diverse ways, not only through the war but also through the war of ideas (*ghazw al-fikr*) and cultural, economic, social and political invasion. Muslim backwardness, their marginal global political position, economic crisis and military dependency are deemed to be the results of the Western imperialism on the Muslim world.

An earlier Islamic modernist trend responded to the backwardness of the Muslim world in the face of Western imperialism and colonialism by calling for reform of ideas and adopting Western progress believed to inherently represent Qur’anic messages. The contemporary conservative Islamist discourse tends to portray the West as the foe responsible for all problems afflicting the Muslim world. Instead of encouraging Muslims to develop science and technology, for instance, the Islamist discourse blames Western progress for the results of its imperialist expansion on the Muslim world. The call for a return to the Qur’an and the Sunna as well as the exemplary model of the early generation of Muslims (*Salaf al-Salih*) is regarded as the only solution to confront the Western powers and their main collaborator, the Zionists. The ability to resist Islam’s enemies is determined by the level of the belief of Muslims in the oneness of God and His absolute authority (*tawhid*). The essence of *tawhid* as total submission to God

requires sincere determination to implement all His commands and scrupulously avoid all His prohibitions.

The conservative Islamist discourse that developed among the Egyptian Muslim Brothers in the aftermath of Sayyid Qutb's execution in 1966 and spread to various parts of the Muslim world as by-products of Saudi Arabia's ambitious campaign for the Wahhabization of the *ummah* came to influence followers of the NII movement.

NII (Negara Islam Indonesia) is a home-ground Islamist movement, a permutation of the DI/TIIrebell movement that erupted in 1949 in West Java, South Sulawesi and Aceh, to demand the establishment of Indonesia as an Islamic state. This opposition to the nationalist model of the Republic of Indonesia was initially set in motion by a feeling of disappointment due to rationalization in the military body and a central-peripheral gap in development, evolved toward that on the need to take control over society on the basis of politics. Some former NII activists, who had taken part in the Afghan War, consolidated into the Jama'ah Islamiyah, a clandestine organization set up by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir aimed at establishing a pan-Nusantara Islamic state using terror tactics and other violent means.

Seizing control over society has been an underlying doctrine behind the ideology of Hizbut-Tahrir. The failure of the Arab nations to counter Israeli aggression raised questions for Islamic activists. For Taqiy al-Din Muhammad al-Nabhani, the founder of Hizbut-Tahrir, the collapse of the *khilafat* system (Government by Islamic law, the Ottoman empire) in 1924 paved the way for the Western colonial powers to set up a Zionist project on Palestinian soil (Taji-Farouki 1996). Therefore, Hizbut-Tahrir relentlessly called for a revival of the *khilafat* system, whereby Muslims globally came to stand shoulder-to-shoulder against the Western-Zionist conspiracy to destroy the Muslim world. Compared to the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizbut-Tahrir's ideology is in fact more radical. It has been active in campaigning for the establishment of the *khilafa* system, through violent means if necessary.

The Salafi movement began to gain ground in Indonesia in the mid-1980s. Salfis emphasize the purity of *tawhid* (The oneness of God) and other issues centred on the call for a revival of strict religious practice that would develop and guard the moral integrity of individuals. Its efflorescence across the world was part of Saudi Arabia's success in spreading its Wahhabi (modernist Islamic reform) influence under the banner of the Salafi movement, thus reinforcing Saudi Arabia's prestigious position and legitimacy both at the centre of the Muslim world and as the *khadim al-haramayn* (guardians of the two holy sanctuaries). From the Salafi point-of-view, Islam has lost its vitality because Muslims fell into *bid'a* sins (sins of innovation). Returning to the Qur'an and Sunna based on the exemplary model and practice of the first generation of Muslims (*Salaf al-Salih*) is the only choice if Muslims want to revive their glory which was lost during the *khilafatera*. Based on the doctrine of *al-walawa'l-bara* (drawing near what is pleasing to Allah and moving away from what is not) the Salafi movement sought to cultivate solidarity (*ukhuwwah*) among Muslims and draw a demarcation between various elements of *bid'a* and infidelity (Hasan 2006; 2007). This doctrine also requires Muslims to stand distinctly apart from the "anything goes" open society around them and organize themselves into small, tight-knit, exclusive communities (the *jama'ah*), though not necessarily under the oath of loyalty (*bay'ah*).

Despite different emphases and tones in these groups, overall the conservative Islamist discourse serves them as a banner for rebellion against the ruling class who they feel often manipulated Islam as a legitimating ideology and as part of the state mechanism. The opposition against the ruling class often takes symbolic form of blaming the West for the failure of ruling regimes in the Muslim world to address unemployment and poverty. The readiness to venture to the front lines in order to repel the Western aggression, thus regaining the glory of Islam, is proclaimed as evidence of one's commitment to the purity of *tawhid*. In the face of uncertainties engendered by the process of globalization, the engagement of deprived young people in street politics and violent actions is not simply an expression of

religious fanaticism. It is, but also an attempt to develop a unique identity and gain circumscribed but effective power and autonomy within their exclusive boundary.

In 2008 I conducted Focus Group Discussions with 17 young activists, members of the Hizbut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) from neighbourhoods close to university campuses in Jakarta and Yogyakarta respectively³. Most of them were members of the Campus Islamic Proselytizing Board (*Lembaga Dakwah Kampus*) which played a crucial role in the dissemination of HTI's ideas across Indonesia after 1998. HTI has been one of the most active Islamist organizations to recruit young cadres and take them to the streets, both to voice their sympathy for the Palestinians and to blame the US and Zionists for their foreign policy in the Middle East.

HTI activists representing the discontent felt by many Indonesian young people: they relate problems in Indonesia to the adoption of the political, social, economic and cultural system of the West, in particular the political form of the nation-state, and capitalism. These young Islamist activists' rhetoric reflects their growing frustration. There is a romanticism, imagining the past glory of Islam under the Ottoman Empire. They believe that its collapse was caused by external factors, including Crusades, Christian missionaries and Western capitalist imperialism, which ultimately divided the Muslim world into a dozen competing weak nation-states.⁴ They want to revive the *khilafat* system which is derived from the structure of the Medinan state and the Islamic state during the era of the four great Prophet Companions (*khulafa al-rashidin*).⁵ This is a world political system based on Islamic law.

³ Because of sensitivities of the discussed issues, they refused to reveal their names

⁴ An-Nabhani has explained in some details about the causes of the collapse of the Ottoman caliphate system and his call for Muslims to revive it. See Taqiy al-Din An-Nabhani, *Daulah Islamiyah*, which is an Indonesian translation of its Arabic version, *Al-Daulat al-Islamiyya*. Trans. Umar Faruq. (Jakarta: HTI Press, 2007).

⁵ A detailed account on the structure of the caliphate, see Hizbut-Tahrir, *Ajhzatu al-Daulat al-Khilafa fi al-Hukmwa-l Idara*, which has been translated into Indonesian, *Struktur Negara Khilafah (PemerintahandanAdministrasi)*. Trans. Yahya A.R. (Jakarta: HTI Press, 2008).

They regret the lost spirit among Muslims to revive the *khilafat* system that they deem to be the key factor in the glorious centuries of Islam when the *shari'aw*s implemented entirely as a system governing all aspects of human life. From their point-of-view, the majority of Muslims stand idle in the face of the need to revive the *khilafat* and instead idolize the nation-state system and nationalism. They are critical of the idea of democracy and human rights imposed by the West to undermine the ummah. In the name of freedom of expression, women are almost naked in the public arena. All this, from their perspective, contributes a great deal to the spread of vices, such as gambling, free sex, and drug use. To them, the only solution to the problem is the *shari'ah* and *khilafat*, the application of which would bring prosperity and justice.

The *khilafatis* perceived to be different from any political system we have ever known. It is not a monarch, nor an empire. It is also not a federal or republican state, let alone the democratic system developed intentionally by the West to undermine Islam. The young Islamists in HTI saw that the root cause of all problems afflicting the ummah lies in the behaviour of Muslim people of their age who they deem to be indifferent to the need to revive the *khilafat*. Those of their generation who refuse to share their ideology and concerns are regarded as stupid people who are simply giving up to the unfavourable situation. From their point of view, these people let themselves fall under the hegemonic control of the West, since they have no regrets about showing off luxury consumer goods, which are in fact the result of the Western agenda to compromise the younger generation of Muslims. This perception comes from their jealousy of a segment of more fortunate people, who they consider to live in the shadow of Western imperialism. They talked about the need to develop national independence and *shari'a*-based economic empowerment as a solution to the problems afflicting underprivileged groups in Indonesian society. As is typical of youth culture, the Islamist young activists imagine an instant solution to complex problems faced by Indonesia's Muslims. They propose the *shari'a* as a panacea to resolve any problems, including the prolonged

economic crisis that undermined the state's ability to survive and current issues, such as deforestation and global warming.

The articulation of injustice provides Islamist ideology with a mobilizing framework that encourages disobedience and participation in conflict; a framework that replaces the former dominant interpretive order that legitimized the status quo and encouraged submission to the authorities. Imbued with the language of rebellion against ruling elites and privileged classes, Islamist ideology has proved to be appealing to young people--both educated and uneducated--in many parts of the Muslim world, including Egypt, Iran, Algeria and Turkey. In Egypt, for instance, the key to the Muslim Brotherhood's success in recruiting young cadres has been its campaign for the formalization of *shari'ah*, which is considered an undeniable part of Muslim' belief. They claim that the roots of the *shari'ah* provide a secure basis for the establishment of a civilized, independent, dynamic and just social system. The struggle for the formalization of *shari'ah* gives its proponents an opportunity to clamour against existing conditions and to load public discourse with notions that change the terms of political struggle (Flores 1997; Wickham 1997).

Another attraction of Islamist ideology for young people lies in its ability to offer a dream of future glory for Muslims, provided they stand shoulder-to-shoulder to fight for the implementation of the *shari'ah* and the *khilafat* system. It is utopian in nature and believes in the superiority of Islam over any other systems, and all other ideologies are believed to be weak and self-destructive. To them, the rise of Islam as the world superpower is simply a matter of time. Islamist ideology has also a millenarian character, which often meets the dreams of young people for upward mobility and empowerment, especially for underprivileged groups marginalized in the fast current of economic and social changes. It has something to offer the youth in their dreams of justice, prosperity, and future glory, when they are imagining themselves working and earning good salaries and, enjoying a good lifestyle and security.

Conquest of Public Space

A basic problem for young people in their transition to adulthood has to do with their efforts to territorialize, to claim a space within complex social relations. From a sociological perspective, claiming space is the natural tendency of both individuals and social groups in their attempts to “lame the unutterable complexity of the spatial” by constructing an ordered geographical imagining through which to frame their world. It is a way of cutting across the social relations which construct space, thus gaining some control. Deeply bound up with the social production of identities, claiming space seems to be part of wider strategies to protect and defend particular groups and interests, or even to dominate and define others (Massey 1998:126-7).

Young people frequently come to reject the spatial ordering of the population in terms of age, a limited space dictated by dominant authorities. But they are not yet eligible to claim a larger space as full members of a social community, bearing social responsibility for the community. In their attempt to break the social fence constructed to protect them from the complexity of social relations, young people from all social classes, males and females, need to demonstrate that they are no longer “under the thumb” of their parents; that they want to get on with enjoying themselves; that they are street-wise. To be recognized as “somebody” and have access to adult opportunities, young people thus need to express themselves and their identities. Youth cultures today are all about making distinctions, signifying differences vis-vis other crowds of young people (Roberts 2005:121-2).

The source of such distinctions comes from many sources, including from a dominant world culture whose influence has spread widely and dictated global trends and lifestyles. Because of globalization young people from all social backgrounds can now, for instance, wear T-shirts with slogans in English, drink Coca-Cola, listen to classical or rock music, and play baseball (Massey 1998). Yet accessibility to the advantages offered by global capitalist markets differs from one individual to another. Young people on upper middle

class trajectories may prefer clubbing in prestigious pubs, where they can enjoy rap, hip-hop, soul, bass and drums, rhythm and blues, a techno, a retro or metallic sound, in an atmosphere of excitement produced by alcoholic beverages and other substances. The ordinary youth may express their individuality by the mixture of fashion they wear and the kinds of music in their personal collections..Certainly there are individuals who, either because of their limited access to leisure activities and adult opportunities or for ideological reasons, prefer to express their identity by engaging in street politics and violent activism.

For young people, street politics and violent activism often constitute an important part of their efforts to negotiate identity and claim space. Street actions offer youth a privileged arena for the diffusion of their heroic messages and identity when they take to the streets—complete with knight symbols and loudspeakers—to shout *Allah Akbar* (God is great) and blame the US for whatever happens in the Muslim world. They seek to show that they are not slaves of hegemonic global superpower, or even the dominant authorities close to home. They desire to be seen as powerful, and capable of doing something for the whole society. Their attire and the symbols they deploy insist that they belong to a certain group which is devoted and concerned with the *ummah*. Nevertheless, symbols alone are not sufficient in their struggle to negotiate identity and conquer the public sphere. They are required to demonstrate their determination and capacity through carrying out extraordinary actions, something risky and dangerous, in the defense of their fellow Muslims.

The struggle of youth to claim space and negotiate identities frequently forces them to relate themselves to a broader value system that “requires construction of a world enlivened with personal relevance in such a way that authentic ideals and defensive distortions become complexly interwoven” (Gregg 2007:23). When many urban young people strive to buy into an international cultural reference system: a T-shirt with a Western logo, rock music, or gadgets, young Islamists in HTI prefer to develop a counter-discourse by calling for the *shari’ah* and the *khilafa* system. The *shari’ah* and the *khalifat*

serve as a transcendental value system, that can be used to reconstruct a world which is perceived to be in despair. For young Islamists, the *shari'a* and *khilafat* are related to concerns for authenticity, and symbols of authenticity are visible in the attires they wear—*bajukoko* (long sleeved shirt) and long-flowing Arab-style dress— as well as the banners fluttering in their hands and pamphlets blaming imperialism, capitalism, and other symbols of US domination. These items draw a contrast between Islam as an authentic valuesystem and what they perceive as a corrupting American hegemonic culture.

Events that have happened over the past years help young Islamists to provide evidence about the American political, economic and cultural ambition to undermine Islam. The post 9/11 US retaliation in Afghanistan, with the rationale that it was responsible for providing a safe haven for Osama bin Laden; and the US military operation in Iraq that succeeded in toppling Saddam Hussein, are for the Islamists only two of so many examples of American anti-Muslim imperialist policy. It is only with the *shari'a* and the *khilafat*, then, that the Muslim world can be saved. The US is also blamed as the main collaborator with Zionist Israel in perpetrating brutal attacks on Palestinians. Here the US emerges as a master frame that helps young Islamists to construct action that resonates loudly among young militants. It functions “in a manner analogous to linguistic codes in that they provide a grammar that punctuates, and syntactically connects, patterns or happenings in the world” (Snow and Benford 1992:138).

As a response to Israeli military attacks on Gaza in 2008 and 2009, thousands of young militants took to the streets in Jakarta and other big cities in Indonesia. The involvement of young militants in the demonstrations against Israel not only facilitated their attempt to claim space, but also to build a “heroic identity” (Gregg 2007:178). By demonstrating that their actions are motivated by empathy with the oppressed rather, they appear to be heroes struggling for defend Muslims against infidel powers. Though rhetorical in nature, hundreds of them even enlisted to venture to the front lines in Gaza when the militant Islamist organizations opened registration desks

for *jihad*. The idea of *jihad* provides a symbol and discourse with an aura of sacredness and righteousness (Hasan 2006). It serves as a vehicle for young militant Islamists to resist feelings of impotence and frustration, and thereby establish identity and claim dignity.

In their attempt to claim space young Islamists sometimes show no hesitation involved in confrontations with other Muslim groups they perceive to have created obstacles for their struggle. One important example is the brutal attacks of FPI-linked young militants who, in June 2008, mobilized under the banner of the Command of Islam Force (Komando Laskar Islam) against the masses from the pro-democracy Freedom Alliance for Religious Freedom (Aliansi Kebebasan untuk Kerukunan Beragamaan Berkeyakinan). The latter group staged a demonstration to defend Ahmadiyah, a minority sect in Islam in the area around the National Monument in Jakarta. A dozen members of the AKKBB were injured. This attack was the peak of their brutal campaign against the Islamic sect, Ahmadiyah, which involved burning down a number of Ahmadiyah's mosques and calls for the killing of Ahmadiyah members.

Conclusion

Amid mounting uncertainty and growing frustration afflicting Indonesian young people in the face of the profound failures of the democratic political system, conservative Islamist discourse has spread widely among Indonesian youth. Articulated by Islamist political forces using a range of communication channels, including direct contact and communal activity around the mosque and neighbourhood as well as print Islam and the internet, the Islamist ideology is working to shape a narrative of heroic confrontation with the Other. This ideology contributes to youth mobilization in street politics and violent activism which constitute important aspects of their efforts to negotiate identity and thus claim space. Street actions offer youth a privileged arena for the diffusion of their heroic messages and identity, whereby they demonstrate their position as agents involved in the adoption and adaptation and dissemination of a sacred global value system and culture.

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