

# YOUTH RADICAL ISLAMISM IN SOLO AS MANIFESTED BY FRONT PEMUDA ISLAM

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## Abstrak:

Artikel ini membahas fenomena radikalisme Islam pada generasi muda Solo berdasarkan fakta-fakta sosial di kota tersebut. Pembahasan ini penting dalam rangka menelusuri asal-usul dan perkembangan radikalisme generasi muda Islam di Solo belakangan ini. Dengan menganalisis dokument-dokumen tentang gerakan Islam dan kajian lapangan di wilayah tersebut, kajian ini mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis bentuk-bentuk radikalisme Islam pada generasi muda Solo dan dampaknya dalam situasi politik di Indonesia. Pemahaman tentang kemunculan radikalisme ini, menurut penulis, dapat memecahkan masalah dan mencegah munculnya radikalisme Islam di masa datang, terutama bagi generasi muda.

## Key words:

*Solo, Islamic radicalism, youth movement, religious movement*

## I. Introduction

The emergence of vigilante force of the *Front Pemuda Islam Surakarta* (the Islamic Youth Front of Surakarta, FPIS)<sup>1</sup> in Solo is a not single phenomenon in Indonesia. Along with its emergence due to inter-religious conflict in Ambon in the early 1999, there are some other Islamic organizations either in Solo or in Indonesia in general. As a local Islamic vigilante force, however, the FPIS is not only concern with local issues in Solo but also involved much in some national issues. Although the organization was not much involved in Ambon conflict as the *Laskar Jihād of Forum Komunikasi Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* (FKAWJ), its existence in Solo and Indonesia in general is quite significant. Flock of people on the streets protesting some government's policies as well as 'sweeping' of cafes and Westerners in Solo are among the activities of this group. The existence of the FPIS in Solo, in fact, adds the peculiarities of the city in which some radical Islamic movements arise. Some Islamic vigilante forces also

emerged in many other cities in Indonesia but they are not as much as happened in Solo. Eventually, based on its activities, the FPIS could be classified as radical in many respects.

The FPIS was initially an inclusive organization which was intended as an umbrella for some Islamic organizations in Solo. Currently, the organization has become an exclusive organization for a certain Muslim group. The 'acquisition' of the FPIS by Gumuk mosque community or well known as *jama'ah* Gumuk are among the interesting points of the FPIS. The strong allegiance of the *jama'ah* to Islamic ideology and the networks of the *jama'ah* that is widely spread not only in Solo but across ex-residency of Surakarta has made the FPIS as a powerful Islamic activism. Currently, the FPIS is a mean of actions for an anonymous of Gumuk mosque community, which from some of its features could be categorized as *salafy*. Interestingly enough, the *jama'ah* Gumuk which was initially concern with Islamic teachings has shifted to concern with

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<sup>1</sup> Not to be misunderstood with the *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defender Front, FPI) of Habieb Rizieq. The FPIS has nothing to do with the FPI, although the

FPI has also its branch in Solo. Many times, some journalists and even academicians wrongly wrote the FPIS as *Front Pembela Islam Surakarta*.

political issues through the FPIS. Different from other Islamic activism in Yogyakarta for instance which is dominated by student organizations, in the Solo context the FPIS is among the number Islamic vigilante forces for common people which eagerly protest and oppose to government regulations. Finally, since the existence of the FPIS and the *jama'ah* Gumuk could not be separated, the discussion the organization could not also be separated from a broad exploration of the *jama'ah*. By exploring the FPIS hopefully would reveal many questions not only about the organization, but my basic question why such Islamic radical movements are flourishing in Solo. Finally, this exploration would lead to some recommendation for the authorities that to some extent would reduce the phenomena of Islamic radical activism in Solo.

## II. Research Method

The method used in this research is descriptive method. Research with descriptive methods aims to describe precisely the characteristics of an individual, condition, symptom, or certain group or to determine the frequency or spread of a symptom or frequency of a certain relationship between other symptoms in society (De Vaus, 2013).

The source of data in this study consists of two sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data is data obtained directly from the source; observed and recorded for the first time. The data becomes secondary data if it is used by people who are not directly related to the research concerned. Secondary data is data that is not attempted to collect itself by researchers, for example from the Bureau of statistics, magazines, information or other public (Palinkas, L. A. et.al., 2015). According to Corbin, J. et.al. (2014) primary data is data that can be obtained directly from

the field or place of research. The primary source of this research was taken from interviews and observations with related parties.

## III. Research Findings and Discussion

Socio-political conduciveness was among other things that made the establishment of the FPIS is possible. Although the trigger of its establishment was the Muslims-Christians conflict in Ambon in 1999, the foundation of the FPIS was due mostly to the opening of the political access after the downfall of Suharto regime. In fact, many other inter-religious conflicts were also happened in some Muslims' world during the New Order which given rise to the angers of Muslims in Indonesia. Other religious issues in Indonesia were also happened during this period such as the Tanjung Priok massacre and Aceh conflict, but did not lead to the emergence of such Islamic vigilante forces. Other local social problems due to the harsh politics of the government could not also bring about the rise of such religious vigilante forces. Indeed, such Islamic activism was absolutely not possible during that era. The dramatic political changes of Indonesia in 1998 have shifted many things on social as well as political level.

The FPIS was officially declared on 5 February 1999<sup>2</sup> in Solo during a huge Muslims' demonstration on the issue of the killing of some Muslims in Ambon in January 1999. The founders of the FPIS are M. Kalono, M. Sadali, Umar Baradja, M. Taufiq, Ahmad Abu Yazid, and Dwi Wuryanto who have made a series of meetings prior to the declaration of the organization. In fact, the seed of the organization had been initiated earlier in November 1998, i.e., the establishment of *Kesatuan Komando Pemuda Islam* (the Command Union of Muslim Youth, KKPI) by Kalono and Yazid. In the same way, the organization was established during the *Apel Siaga Umat Islam* (Muslims' call for

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<sup>2</sup> On the *Hijriyah* (lunar) calendar it was on 18 *Syawwal* 1419.

readiness) of about 7,000 Muslims gathered at the Lapangan Kota Barat Solo which was organized by *Forum Komunikasi Umat Islam Surakarta* (Communication Forum for Muslims in Surakarta, FORKUIS). M. Kalono, the co-founder and the first leader of FPIS, asserts that the participants of the *Apel Siaga* sang a song of *jihād* to arouse their own spirit of Islam which he called as *nuqhtah al-inthilāq* (the turning point) for Indonesian Muslims. The KKPI was intended to be such kind of a task force of the FORKUIS, an umbrella for many Islamic organizations in Solo, and ex-residency of Surakarta in general. The KKPI, however, did not receive massive response from Muslims in Solo until the inter-religious conflict in Ambon which led to the establishment of the FPIS, to substitute the existence of the KKPI. Besides, as Kalono argues that the substitution of the FPIS to KKPI was also due to the frontal attitude of the organization toward the government. The renaming of the earlier Islamic organization was finally taken to broaden the scope area for the FPIS and also intended to attract more enthusiastic of Muslim youths in Surakarta. At the same time on 5 February 1999, the FORKUIS was also renamed as FKUIS and still as an umbrella for most Islamic organizations in Surakarta.<sup>3</sup>

On the establishment of the FPIS, the most active leader of FPIS Warsito Adnan states that this organization emerged based on at least three reasons: (1) the massacre of Muslims and their confrontation with Christians in Ambon, (2) international hidden scenario on Muslims, and (3) unfair Christianization mission in Indonesia (Fananie et al. 2002). Further he elaborates the second reason that the United States of America has a hidden agenda on Indonesian Muslims as their aggressive opposition to US in many of its agendas in Indonesia. Warsito also acknowledges that indeed in Solo

emerge many anti-US-policy protests especially its interference in some Muslim countries such as in Afghanistan, Iraq etc. In addition to its confrontation with US, the FPIS rejects not only the presence of Westerners in Solo but also Western goods and values. Therefore, besides sweeping Western tourists in Solo, the FPIS also rejects any goods such as Sprite and Coca-Cola, and also refuses some Western values such as pluralism and democracy.<sup>4</sup> Kalono acknowledges that it was him who initially led the FPIS to use swords in their actions especially in raiding some cafes and hotels during Ramadhan in Solo. For him such attitude is necessary to show the power of Islam and to 'force' them to respect Muslims during the fasting month.<sup>5</sup>

Although the Ambon inter-religious conflict had induced the emergence to the FPIS, the organization was not much involved the conflict. Its concern with Ambonese Muslims was exposed by giving logistics and medical assistance, beside the involvement of some activists of the FPIS in the *Laskar Jihād*. Instead, it was active in promoting to the public the necessity of Muslims' unity to address some Muslims' problems such as the case of Ambon and also some other international issues. Therefore, the FPIS was engaged in collecting Muslims' financial assistance to help Muslims who need it and consistently contesting injustice and despotism toward Muslims. Almost all the FPIS activities are in line with the general purpose of this organization i.e. to be in the front in assisting Muslims having such troubles as in Ambon. In addition, the unfair arrestment of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Ja'far Umar Thalib of *Laskar Jihād* were also the concern of the FPIS.<sup>6</sup> It is obvious that although the FPIS is different from many any other Islamic organizations in many perspectives, sometimes the FPIS shared many common things with other Islamic

<sup>3</sup> Interview with M. Kalono in Solo on 12, 13 September 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Endang Turmudi & Riza Sihbudi (eds), *Islam dan Radikalisme di Indonesia*. Jakarta: LIPI Press, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with M. Kalono in Solo on 12, 13 September 2006.

<sup>6</sup> *Gatra*, 17 May 2002.

organizations and 'hand-in-hand' in conducting some activities. Cholid Hasan, the leader of the board members of the FPIS, even asserts that the organization was not merely concern with religious issues, but in many cases it also concern with social issues such as the tsunami in Aceh in 1994 and also the earthquake in Yogyakarta and Klaten, Central Java in 1996.<sup>7</sup>

Relatively similar to its counterpart *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defender Front, FPI) in Jakarta, the FPIS also concerns much with maintaining a conducive atmosphere for Muslims society. Undeniably, therefore, many times the FPIS forbid some entertainment places such as cafés and discotheques to open during fasting month. For the FPIS, these places not only would endanger Muslim community but reduce the concentration of Muslims in doing their fasting during Ramadhan. For them, the problem is because there are many immoral things which violate God's law (*ma'siyah*) in these places. Some activists of the FPIS assert that the government law is quite clear, and that they have given their tolerance about other eleven months to run their businesses. The FPIS, however, would not act anything to such places unless the local authorities do something to enforce the law. As part of the Solonese, the FPIS activists fully understand that night life is part of Solo culture. Therefore, as far as the places do not facilitate people to do sin things, the FPIS would not interfere them.<sup>8</sup> Among the most FPIS' concern on the local level was the case of the priest Ahmad Welson. The mocking of the priest Welson on the prophet Muhammad on *PTPN Rasitania* radio broadcaster programme in 2000 was fiercely reacted by the FPIS which ended to the confiscation of some broadcaster instruments and the detention of the priest.<sup>9</sup> Both Surakarta and

Semarang courts finally sentenced the priest five years in jail, although nowadays he is waiting for his appeal his case to the Supreme Court.<sup>10</sup> From the activities of the FPIS, it is quite similar with the FPI of Habib Rizieq Syihab in Jakarta. The similarities, however, do not sign their organizational link except that they have common responsibilities towards Muslims in Indonesia.

In general, the FPIS concerns much with Muslims problems, especially those happened in Solo. The inability of local authorities to handle social problems in Solo has induced the participation of the FPIS to address them. At the same time, the social problems are among the reasons of the FPIS the necessity of the government to employ *sharī'ah*. Among the problems in which the FPIS took part is the regulation issued by the local department of education to ban students to put their veiled photos in their senior high school certificates. The FPIS was also fiercely opposed the erotic dances and women tattoo contest held by Pall Mall in a hotel in Solo in 2000. The organization even charged the organizer to the lawsuit. In many cases, along with some other *Laskar Islam* (vigilante forces) the FPIS pressed on the police officers to officially ban and raid several centres of gambling in Solo. The most courageous attitude of the FPIS was the flock and violence attitude of thousand devout followers of the PDI in the main streets in Solo after the lost of Megawati at the general election in 1999. The police forces and any other Islamic forces could do nothing in this occurrence until the about 300 people of the FPIS who valiantly dismiss the flocks by reciting *Allahu Akbar* (Allah the great) while holding swords in their hands.<sup>11</sup> The powerful actions of the FPIS especially during the leadership of Warsito Adnan along with some other *laskars* in Solo gained much

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the Cholid Hassan, the board legislative leader of the FPIS, in Solo on 22 June 2006.

<sup>8</sup> *Suara Merdeka*, 1 November 2002.

<sup>9</sup> The priest is a new convert from Islam to Christianity. During his live talk show in the broadcasting, he said that before becoming a Muslim, Muhammad was a Christian.

<sup>10</sup> The most controversial Muslim figure in Solo, Mudrick M. Sangidoe together with the FPIS support them in almost every trial in the court. *Solopos*, 4 Maret 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Cholid Hasan in Solo on 11 August 2006; Interview with Ali Usman, a Muslim figure in Solo, in Solo, on 13 September 2006.

support and empathy from Muslims in Solo. For some other communities, on the other hand, these forces to some degree have caused their fear. In many cases, the authorities or any other groups used such these paramilitary forces to have their own interests or any *laskar* themselves who had the benefits.

FPIS is not only concern much with local issues in Solo, but also national as well as international issues. On these issues, as a regional-base organization, it did not only perform its actions in Solo, but also in Jakarta along with some other national Islamic organizations. On national issues, the FPIS took its major role in opposing the government regulations in the form of demonstrations in Solo as well as in Jakarta such as on the issue of Jakarta Charter, the *Korupsi, Kolusi, & Nepotisme* (corruption, collusion and nepotism, KKN), the endless case of Tanjung Priok massacre, the IMF financial aid, the escalation of BBM prices in 2002, the arrestment of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir by force in 2002, and also the presence of George Bush in Jakarta in 2006. Meanwhile, on some international issues, the FPIS was enthusiastically opposed the invasion of Israel to Palestine, the US invasion to Afghanistan (2001), the invasion of the US to Iraq (2003), the Israel invasion to Lebanon (2006), etc. In general, the FPIS is the leading Islamic organizations in Solo in opposing the government's regulations as well as in 'helping' local authorities to implement the existing laws. On the issues at the national level, the FPIS was hand-in-hand with some other Islamic organizations such as the FPI and *Laskar Jihād* of Jakarta before the latter was banned. Undeniably, therefore, in several cases the involvement of the FPIS in some actions in Jakarta ended with the arrestment of some of its activists.

FPIS' main concerns are to assist any Muslims in need of its support and oppose injustice and despotism of the government. From the above activities of the FPIS, it is obvious that it still use the bureaucratic mechanism to voice out their political

aspirations. The former leader of the FPIS, Warsito Adnan, and the spiritual leader of the FPIS, Mudzakir, acknowledge that the FPIS would never employ violence in their actions except in term of self-defence. Even more, although in many of its actions along with some other Islamic organizations in the streets of Solo seems ferocious, in fact these activities would never led them to such violence. As Warsito argues, the FPIS is trying to help the authorities to enforce the law and make this enforcement is possible. On some endless social problems in Solo and on the national level, the FPIS is trying to convince the government on the necessity of Islamic *sharī'ah* to address all the social problems. Therefore, it would continuously demand the implementation of Islamic *sharī'ah* on both local and national levels by necessarily means as long as do not contradict with the positive laws.

On the establishment of the FPIS, Muslims in Solo in general and some Islamic organizations in particular responded positively. The great support of the Solonese Muslims to the organization was not only such a euphoria of the new atmosphere of politics, but it also the necessity of the society to the existence of such Islamic activism. The long-standing opposition of Indonesian Muslims during the New Order and the widely spread of problems within the society had brought about the longing of the Solonese Muslims to such powerful Islamic organization. Since there were many interests within the FPIS, the Gumuk mosque community 'took over' the organization. The 'acquisition' of the FPIS by the group was necessary not only to keep the organization on its track but to maintain the sustainability of the organization. Eventually, the turning of the *Jama'ah* Gumuk to political aspects by the 'acquisition' of the FPIS is interesting phenomenon.

The great response of Muslims in Solo was followed by fundamental changes within the FPIS. Several months afterwards, the FPIS, which was initially intended to be such an umbrella institution for some Islamic

organizations in Surakarta was finally taken over by the *jama'ah* Gumuk. Kalono who acted as the coordinator of the FPIS was finally replaced by Thoharudin who acts as the leader of the FPIS as requested by Mudzakir, the spiritual leader of the Gumuk mosque community. The assignment of Thoharudin as the leader was intentionally taken by some of its founders to have the organization under the control of Gumuk mosque community which was led by Mudzakir.

Mudzakir himself argues that the 'acquisition' was finally completed due to the fact that many times the FPIS had been used by certain Muslim groups to have their own interests which was out of the track of the organization.<sup>12</sup> Thoharudin who only served for several months as the leader of the FPIS due to his duty to go to Ambon was replaced by Warsito Adnan afterwards. Since the leadership of Thoharudin, almost all the organizational meetings of the FPIS were held in Gumuk mosque which was of course attended mostly by the mosque community. The ten people serve as the legislative board members are Cholid Hasan of the Gumuk who acts as the leader and followed by M. Taufiq, Agus Setiawan, Mudzakir, Wahyuddin, M. Sholeh, Umar Baradja, M. Sadali, and Abu Yazid. Although the board members are from many different groups of Muslims in Solo, Cholid Hasan and Mudzakir are the most powerful people to the organization. The 'acquisition' of the FPIS by Gumuk mosque community brought about some disappointment of people which finally invoked the rise of some other similar vigilante forces in the region.

Under the leadership of Warsito Adnan (2000-2005), the FPIS had become a leading Islamic organization in Solo which is also well known at the national level.

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with Mudzakir, the spiritual leader of *jama'ah* Gumuk, in Solo on 17 November 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with M. Kalono in Solo on 13 September 2006.

<sup>14</sup> In Islamic history, the term *Hawariyyun* is used to refer to the disciple of the prophet Isa, the devout follower of Isa, the helper of Allah. From this account,

Although, initially the 'acquisition' was merely intended to save the organization from any personal or group's interests, finally the *Jama'ah* Gumuk fully employ this organization as its mean to permeate Islamic *sharī'ah* and also some other Muslims' issues. Eventually, while the organization is consistently caring on Muslims' issues, the leaders of the *Jama'ah* Gumuk, Mudzakir and Cholid Hasan play a significant role as the ideologues of the organization. Finally, although none of the *Jama'ah* Gumuk members co-founded of the organization, nowadays the FPIS and the Gumuk community are hardly possible to distinguish. Kalano, however, asserts that the Gumuks have been using the FPIS for their own interests since it was already well known at that time of the 'acquisition'.<sup>13</sup> The FPIS leader after Warsito, i.e., Umar Kasim (2005-2010) is not quite significant phenomena as it used to be. It could be noted, that although the FPIS is still involved in some actions in Solo, its appearance is not as leading as it used to. The significant changes of the political attitudes of the FPIS on both local and national level reflected the changes of the mainstream within the Gumuks. Soon after the 'acquisition' of the FPIS, the Gumuks established a similar vigilante force namely *Hawariyyun* (the disciples)<sup>14</sup> as the inner circle of the FPIS having special duty to guard the security the Gumuk mosque and its surrounding.<sup>15</sup> The FPIS' power and successful actions has influenced the bargain position of Muslims in Solo in particular, and in Indonesia in general.

The successful of the FPIS under the leadership of Warsito could not be separated from the Gumuk community. Initially, as an umbrella organization the FPIS was using some many network to gather its participants. After the taking over by Gumuk community,

the word *Hawariyyun* could also mean as the defender of Allah.

<sup>15</sup> Currently, however, the *Hawariyyun* is involved in most activities of the FPIS, including the demonstrations. It seems that the decline of the FPIS is deliberately on purpose of the Gumuks in its efforts to develop the *Hawariyyun*.

the members of the organization are exclusively for Gumuk members. The broad network of the Gumuk not only across Solo but Surakarta has escalated the members of the organization. Therefore, Warsito claims that the FPIS members could reach as many as 12,000 people. The peak of the FPIS was in 2002 when it acted in more than 78 actions locally or nationally.<sup>16</sup> In conjunction with the activities of the FPIS, the vigilante force organizes some training on war strategies to train its members. Once this organization held such paramilitary training during the daylight in Klaten, it was banned by the authorities on the accusation that the activity would incite such social unrest.

Although in many respects the FPIS' activities have declined, it is still a powerful Islamic organization in Solo. With the resources of the Gumuk community, the FPIS is such an alert huge power in Solo. The Gumuk community especially under the spiritual leader of Mudzakir had played an important role in saving the organization from both unnecessarily usage and also the vanishing of the organization. As indicated by the co-founder Kalono that an Islamic organization is necessary for a certain situation. For him the FPIS' initial task has completed i.e., to raise the dignity of Muslims; the flourish of some similar Islamic organizations (vigilante forces) in Solo is one of the successful task of the FPIS. On the other hand, the Gumuk community has seen the FPIS as their mean to voice out their political aspirations. Since its establishment in early 1970s, it is the first time for the Gumuk community to utterly speak out their demand to balance their main activities, i.e., studying pure Islam. Therefore, to know further about the inside and future of the FPIS, it is necessary to look closer to the existence of the Gumuk mosque community.

### **The *Jama'ah* of Gumuk**

Since the FPIS is closely associated with the *jama'ah* of Gumuk mosque, it is interesting to see further about this community. Located in a village of Gumuk, the mosque and its activities are controlled by an anonymous huge *jama'ah* conducting daily intensive religious teachings. It was in the mid 1970s that Ustadz Mudzakir initiated his activities in the mosque by conducting informal religious teachings. His activities have attracted more and more people from many different parts of Solo to study Islam with him. Nowadays, the membership and networks of the *jama'ah* could reach not only across Solo, but some other regions in the ex-residency of Surakarta. Different from other mosques' *jama'ah* in general, the members of the group have a great commitment and loyalty toward the *jama'ah*, let alone its leader. Therefore, one of its figures, Cholid Hasan tends to refer his *jama'ah* as a solid mass. Although the Islamic teachings of this group basically are not different much from those of modern Islamic organizations the organization tends to be quite exclusive organization. Therefore, the exclusiveness of this *jama'ah* is becoming one of its great characteristics.

The *jama'ah* Gumuk tends to be closed and an exclusive group. First, this group does not have any formal names as any other Islamic groups or organizations. Similar to *salafy*, Cholid Hasan argues that to name as a formal organization would only add another split within Islam (*hizbiyah*). Second, the community is also characterized by the Gumuk mosque which is different from any common mosques in general. The mosque building is more like four-storey house rather than a mosque. In this case, however, Warsito Adnan argues that initially the mosque was just the same as other mosque. Due to the need of some more rooms for Islamic activities and the unavailability of spaces, the *jama'ah* built a four-storey building and use two of its storey as a mosque, namely *Al-Abrār*. After being rebuilt, however, the name was not common

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<sup>16</sup> *Solopos*, 4 October 2002.

anymore among the nearby community. Third, most of the activists of the mosque are not coming from the nearby mosque but from many different districts in Solo. As far as the members of the *jama'ah* are concerned, most of them are from the periphery and rural areas of Solo. This phenomenon leads me to assume that they are from a certain community level in Solo. Fourth, although the mosque holds an Islamic teaching every morning which is opened for any participants or common members, this community has other intensive Islamic teachings for the inner circle of this community. It is from the core of this community that many activities done by the FPIS and *Hawariyyun* come to the decision. Finally, the distinctiveness of the *jama'ah* could be seen from the appearance of its members which is more like *salafy* followers rather than moderate one. In general, from their outlook people could identify them not as moderate one. Some of the characteristics of their *salafy* are that they grow their beards and believe that *isbāl*, wearing garments that hang below the ankles, is prohibited (*haram*), although the women of this group do not wear head-to-toe coverage, but only regular *hijāb*.

Although the mosque of Gumuk is in the centre of the city, most of its members are not from its surrounding. Most members of the Gumuk are lower class *abangan* society from the periphery of Solo. In term of educational level of its members, only a few of them have attended higher education. The simple Islamic teachings of the community which focus more on daily life and morality have attracted more people to join to this group. Moreover, the intensive interactions within their own communities composed such kind of solid membership. In my view, the role of its charismatic leader KH. Mudzakir also played a significant role in fastening the solidarity and ties between its members. As I stated somewhere above that the mosque lecturing activities which began since mid 70s has create a solid community. This community, after all, is easily mobilized into a certain direction according to the principles they learned so far. They way how

the elites of the group frame some issues with Islamic terms is central to the loyalty and solidarity among its members. However, since the members of the community vary from many different ages and backgrounds, the community is quite 'rich' in term of its resources.

### The Dissemination of Radical Spirits

Unlike the Pondok Ngruki, the dissemination of radical spirit within the *jama'ah* Gumuk tends to be more open for its members. This is due also to the fact that the Islamic activism within the Pondok Ngruki tends to be clandestine, rather than the Gumuks which has no such clandestine *haraki* (Islamic activism). Although the *jama'ah* has such an inner circle, the radical spirit is openly embedded during the daily Islamic teachings (*pengajian*). The teachings which mostly deal with Alquran and Hadith are full of interpretations concerning to current social and political situation in Indonesia as well as in other Muslim countries. The way how some senior leaders of this *jama'ah* frame social and political issues with Islamic terms has formed such radical Islamists. Different from other *salafy*-oriented communities, some Islamic concepts on politics are also widely discussed by this community. In addition, anti-Western countries especially the US are also among interesting topics for their Islamic teaching sessions.

Almost similar to any other social movements, the *jama'ah* Gumuk has several methods in disseminating its ideas to its members. Such general lecture on Islamic studies (*majlis taklim*) is the most common method in the Gumuk mosque for general members. The inner circle of the Gumuks members are those having high loyalty to the leaders and it is distinguished by vow an oath of loyalty (*bai'at*). According to their term, those vowed an oath to the leader would be considered as the member of the real '*jama'ah*'. Similar to *tarbiyah* method employed by Islamic youth movement (it



used to be named as *usrah* and *halaqah* respectively), the Gumuk also employ such kind of cell system to broaden its network. Based on the *majlis taklim* held everyday. I will describe below some important themes in which some leaders of the community frame its ideas.

Politics is among the most significant feature of the themes. In fact, the *jama'ah* studies Alquran and Hadith exegesis as its main entrance. Some leaders, especially Mudazkir, always refer to current politics to broaden their description. Similar to some other radical Islamist generally, they reject the *Pancasila* as the ideology of the state, even more as the sole ideological foundation (*asas tunggal*). Since they refuse to join to any political parties, even the Islamic ones, they consider politics as strictly prohibited (*harām*). Undeniably, although it is not required by the leaders, it is understood that all the members of the Gumuk are abstain (*golput*)<sup>17</sup> on the general election. Further, on a certain occasion they assert that Indonesian government is not only illegitimate government, but it is a wrong system of the state. For them, to acknowledge the existence of Indonesian government as a legitimate system of the state is *haram*, even to be involved in the system to endeavour for Islam. Interestingly enough, however, the Gumuks consider that Islamic State is not necessary yet to reinforce Islamic law (*sharī'ah*). Therefore, Islamic State and *Khilāfah Islamiyah* are quite rare themes of their discussion.

Conversely, the Gumuks believe that *sharī'ah* is much more important to achieve *ummah* (Islamic society). For them, it was *sharī'ah* that would lead Indonesia to be blessed by God which, finally, would lead to the prosperity of the society. Along with establishment of the MMI in 2000, the *jama'ah* Gumuk also enthusiastically pronounce the necessity of *sharī'ah*. Is also argues that the fear of many people that *sharī'ah* would lead to the disintegration of

the country is one of the Western propaganda to destroy Islam.<sup>18</sup> As the discourse of *sharī'ah* in the community is not as much as that of in the Pondok Ngruki or in the *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI), the Gumuk do not elaborate much on this issue. Eventually, the discourse on the issue remains on the discourse level and never reached a clear concept of *sharī'ah* or the way how to achieve it. Mudazkir, however, acknowledges that the effort of the MMI to socialize the concept is successful enough, although the way how the MMI achieved it is too vulgar. At least, currently the society is quite familiar with the issue and does not consider it as taboo. In the same way, due to the efforts of some Islamic organizations including the MMI, the government is also familiar with the issue especially at the local level. Undeniably, therefore, that many Islamic organizations in many different regions demanded *Peraturan Daerah* on *sharī'ah* (regional regulation on *sharī'ah* or *Perda sharī'ah*). In this respect, however, the Gumuk does not put the agenda of implementing *sharī'ah* as its major activities. As far as I am concerned, the Gumuk community has its own agenda dealing with this central issue.

For the *jama'ah* Gumuk, however, the regional regulation of *sharī'ah* which have been passed in some regions is not good for Islam ideologically, although politically it has some significance. For this reason, the *jama'ah* does not enthusiastically propose *Peraturan Daerah* (regional regulation, *Perda*) *sharī'ah* for the local government of Solo. In this regards, Chalid Hasan stresses the readiness of the society to accept *sharī'ah* is very urgent. Further he elaborates that Muslims should learn much from the case of Acehnese, which was not ready yet to implement *sharī'ah*. Therefore, it is the task of some Islamic organizations to re-Islamize the grassroots in order to accept *sharī'ah* as part of the wholeness of Islam. Later on when the society is ready, it would not be difficult for Muslims not only to propose the regional

<sup>18</sup> *Suara Front*, No. 43, I, 30 March-5 April 2001.

regulation of *sharī'ah*, but also to impose it into the society.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the escalating demand of Muslims in many parts of Indonesia to the regional regulation of *sharī'ah* is not responded positively by the Gumuks. Indeed, Mudzakir asserts that those regional regulation on *sharī'ah* is good politically, but not ideologically since Muslims still under the non-Muslims system of the state.<sup>20</sup> Rather, Mudzakir asserts that *sharī'ah* should be implemented from the smallest system of society, a family or school.<sup>21</sup> For this reason, the Gumuk established an elementary school based on *sharī'ah*, i.e., *Sekolah Dasar Islam Al-Fattah, Sekolah Berbasis Sharī'ah* in 2003 which is not exclusively for the Gumuks but also openly for general people.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike in the Pondok Ngruki, *jihād* is not broadly discussed in the Gumuk community. While the Ngrukis tend to say that *jihād* should be interpreted more in term of fights, the Gumuks, as asserted by Chalid, believe that this term has much broader interpretation rather than just fights and wars, although the latter one should not be neglected. In the same way, some radical Islamism's interpretation on *jihād* more in term of violence is not well accepted by this community. On this issue, Chalid asserts that Islamic endeavour through violence would not give much benefits for Islam, but the other way around. He believes that the Prophet Muhammad himself did not require the existence of an Islamic State for the implementation of *sharī'ah*. For him, therefore, violence would be the last choice if the implementation

On the case of Bali bombings, however, Chalid regretted this attitude although he could understand why some people were involved in such radical violence. He concludes that violence could be necessary in a certain condition in which Muslims should do so. On the other hand, the Gumuks believe such violence as in Ambon and Poso is completely different from that one in Bali. On an occasion Mudzakir asserts that the Ambon and Poso wars are happened due mostly to the inability of the government to handle social problems in those regions properly. Similarly, the Gumuks believe that economic problems faced by Indonesians since the downfall of Suharto regime is due to the ignorance of the government to Islam as a social as well as political systems. However, the Gumuk does not agree at all to the label of terrorism which is embedded to some radical Islamists in Indonesia.

Relatively similar to many other radical Islamists', the Gumuks consider the West as part of current problems of Muslims. The hegemony of the West as represented by the globalization and modernization in many aspects of life has been regarded as a threat. The West, especially, the United States is considered as the great enemy since the Jews, as the latent enemy of Islam, is behind all the US' interests. Democracy and pluralism as part of Western culture and civilization are considered by the community as *harām* since they violate the God's law. To employ democracy as a state system could be considered as mixing the truth (truth) and the falsehood (democracy).<sup>23</sup> The Gumuks simply argue that democracy would not reduce any immoral things (*maksiyat*) in

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Chalid Hasan in Solo on 9 November 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Conversation with Mudzakir in Yogyakarta on 21 February 2007.

<sup>21</sup> In this case, Mudzakir quotes one of the principles of the maxims of Islamic jurisprudence *mālā yudraku kulluhu lā yudraku kulluhu* (what cannot be accomplished in its whole, cannot be left in its whole). Interview with Mudzakir in Solo on 17 Nov 2006. See also *Suara Front*, No. 01/II/29 June 2001, p.3.

<sup>22</sup> Although the Islamic elementary school just been established several years ago (2003), it has many students since its beginning. The establishment of this school was supported by the *jama'ah* Gumuk, i.e., by moving all the *jama'ah*'s children at other elementary schools to this newly founded school.

<sup>23</sup> Their conviction is based on Alquran verse 42 of Al-Baqarah saying "*wa lā talbisu al-haq bi al-bātil wa taktumu al-haq wa antum ta'lamūn*" (And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know). Interview with Mudzakir in Solo on 17 Nov 2006.

society as they are even widely spread in the Western countries.<sup>24</sup> Simply, rather than democracy, Islam has much more perfect political system, i.e., *syūrā*.<sup>25</sup> For them Islam is more than just a religion but a way of life which not only would organize the relationship between human being and God, but also between human being with others. Their conviction that *sharī'ah* could solve any worldly problems is unquestionable.

All the above issues are often discussed among with especially during the session of Islamic teachings. Their belief that Jews are behind all agendas of the US add their hatred to almost all Western countries, especially those opposed to Muslims. Therefore, the *jama'ah* Gumuk through the FPIS harshly protested the idea of the president of Abdurrahman Wahid when he wanted to establish a trade between Indonesia and the Israel. Similarly, the Gumuk also demanded the government to quit from program held by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since it had many hidden agendas to weaken Muslims countries.<sup>26</sup> Their hatred to the US is represented not only by burning of the US national flag but also by boycotting all goods having to do with the West. In addition, the issue of terrorism firstly coined by the US is countered by accusing the US as the real terrorist, especially the US and its ally's annexation to Afghanistan and Iraq. Eventually, the issue of anti-West is among the most fruitful frames beside *sharī'ah* for common Muslims in Solo in particular and Indonesia in general. On this respect, however, Mudzakir asserts that the Gumuk will not oppose to the US and its allies as long as they do not violate Islam or Muslims.

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<sup>24</sup> *Suara Front*, No. 31, I, 15-21 December 2000.

<sup>25</sup> The notion of *shūrā* (consultation) is different from democracy. However, many people consider that *shūrā* is the concept of democracy within Islam. Unlike democracy in which supreme authority is at the hand of people or through their representatives, *shūrā* is a concept in which supreme authority is at the hand of Allah (God) through a rational mechanism of human being. In other word, the notion of *shūrā* is

Conclusively, the unity of *ummah* is the main and ultimate agenda of the Gumuk. All the above discourse construction is meant to get the support from the society as a way to unite all Muslims. The notion of unity of *ummah* appears as the slogan of the FPIS, the socio-political mean of the Gumuk. Written down in many forms and in many occasion, the slogan of '*Islam bersatu tak bisa dikalahkan*' (United Muslims could not be defeated) is the main slogan to attract and agitate people in the streets. As also asserted many times by the Gumuk leaders such as Mudzakir and Chalid that the unity of Muslim is very urgent to achieve the victory of Islam. Muslims could be easily made of fool by their enemies because nowadays Muslims are weak. One of the weaknesses of Muslims is that it is split in many different Islamic organizations which, in turn, has its own different purposes. To reach the unity of Muslims, therefore, Mudzakir argues that the Gumuk community does not consider themselves as an Islamic organization. He believes that Islamic organizations and parties would not unite Muslims, but split them.<sup>27</sup>

Based on the same reason, the Gumuks believe that Islam does not recognize the existence of some *madzhabs* (Islamic schools). Mudzakir argues that the existence of such *madzhabs* such as *Shafi'ite* or *Hanafite* would only split the unity of Muslims. He believes that the only *madzhab* in Islam is the *salafy*, i.e., the generation of the Prophet, its companions and two generations after them. Other new Islamic school of thoughts such as *Hambalite* is not an authentic interpretation of Islam. Therefore, Muslims not only should study Islam as studied by the first generations of

such kind of guided-democracy in which the authority of people does not against the sovereignty of Allah.

<sup>26</sup> *Kompas*, 22 Januari 2002.

<sup>27</sup> Mudzakir's conviction of the necessity of the unity of *ummah* is based on Muhammad's famous tradition saying that "Muslims would split into 72 or 73 factions and all of them would go to the hell except one, i.e., "*ahlu al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah*".

Muslims, but they also should imitate their outlook and behaviour. Although the Gumuks' *salafy* is different from other *salafy* in general in Indonesia, however, their appearance is much similar to *salafy* generally.

#### IV. Conclusion

In many respects, the *jama'ah* Gumuk could be considered as radical Islamism. Internally, they studied Islam seriously especially on Quranic exegesis and the prophet's traditions, so that they seemingly *salafy*-like. Externally, however, they are involved in some action-oriented politics in many various forms. The vigilante forces of the FPIS and *Hawariyyun* are their means for their actions. In one way, as the people are studying Islam, they could be considered as pious *salafy*. However, since they are also involve in many politically oriented actions, they are also could be considered as political Islamism. Although sometimes they conducted their activities in violent ways, they could hardly be considered as radical violence as the *JI* for example. Eventually, the Gumuk could be regarded as radical Islamism.

Along with the Gumuk's activities on learning Islam, it emerged on the politically-oriented actions in the form of the FPIS and *Hawariyyun*. In fact, among some other vigilante forces in Solo, their existence and activities in Solo and Indonesia in general are very significant. In the Solo context, these vigilante forces especially in the earlier are the most leading organizations in many events. The take over of the FPIS by the Gumuk community, to some extent, has reformed ideological foundation of the organization.

Similar to some other vigilante forces in Indonesia, the FPIS is also concern mostly with anti-*ma'siyah* (anti-immorality) actions. Fully aware that it is not an Islamic state, this organization does not demand for the implementation of *shari'ah*. Rather, it only

demands to reinforce the existing regulations concerning to moral issues. For this reason, therefore, the FPIS demands some immoral places such as prostitutions, gambling centres, cafes, and hotels which it regards as violating of God's law (*ma'siyah*), especially during the *Ramadhan* (fasting month). In order to respect Muslims in performing their fast, the FPIS also demands restaurants to be closed during the daylight or at least not to expose their activities. Along with the above activities, the FPIS also attends the authorities in Solo region to impose the existing regulations. In this respects, the FPIS also offers its vigilante forces to cooperate with the authorities to do so. The most interesting thing in addition to the above actions is that the FPIS, along with some other vigilante forces, also conduct "sweeping" foreigners especially Americans living in hotels in Solo. This action was conducted as its concern and sympathy to the US' attitude toward some Middle Easter Muslim counties, especially the invasion of US to Iraq. Although the FPIS did not force the foreigners to leave the hotels, this activity somehow has frightened the foreigners to stay in the city. On this issue, Warsito argue that the activities is not to frightened foreigners in the city, but to let them know that some Indonesian Muslims are objected to what the US have done to their counterparts in the Middle East.

The most courageous attitude of the FPIS was to dismiss the flock and violence attitudes of thousand devout followers of the PDI in the main streets in Solo after the lost of Megawati at the general election in 2004. The police forces and any other Islamic vigilante forces could do nothing in this occurrence until the about 300 people of the FPIS and *Hawariyyun* valiantly dismissed the flocks by reciting *Allahu Akbar* (Allah the

great) while holding swords in their hands.<sup>28</sup> The powerful actions of the FPIS in Solo gained much support and empathy from Muslims in Solo.

Under the leadership of Warsito Adnan (2000-2005), the FPIS has become a leading Islamic activism in Solo and also well known at the national level. Under the successor of Warsito, Umar Kasim (2005-2010), the FPIS is not quite significant phenomena especially in dealing with politics. It could be noted, that although the FPIS is still involved in some actions in Solo, its appearance is not as leading as it used to. The significant changes of the political attitudes of the FPIS on both local and national level reflected the changes of the mainstream within the Gumuks. The successful of the FPIS under the leadership of Warsito could not be separated from the broad network of Gumuk which is across the ex-residency of Surakarta.

Slightly different from other vigilante forces, the FPIS as well as the *Hawariyyūn* could be considered as non-violent radical. Although in many cases the both were involved in several slightly radical violence, in general they do not tend to do violence. On the several semi 'paramilitary' trainings held by the FPIS, Warsito argues that it were only regular exercise for the FPIS members and not as paramilitary trainings as accused by the authorities. On the symbol of swords in the flag of the FPIS, Warsito argues that the FPIS does not bring swords in several of their activities, except for the several activities they have to do so. Similarly, he also denied that the FPIS was violent when it conducted 'sweeping' Westerners in hotels in Solo. Further, he adds that there are possibilities that other people conducted that 'sweeping' in violent ways in the name of the FPIS. That is among the reason that *Hawariyyūn* members should wear the uniform of *Hawariyyūn* especially during certain

activities. On several occasions, the FPIS and *Hawariyyūn* proved that they tend to protect of the crowd from doing any harmful things. Records showed that the *Hawariyyūn* protected some national heritage buildings when riots were happened in Solo. This attitude is in line with their belief that such radical violence will not give any advantages for Islam. Rather, it will deteriorate the image of Islam.

Eventually, the FPIS and *Hawariyyūn* or the Gumuks in general believe that non-violent actions would be much more fruitful for Islam. Therefore, these organizations were engaged in some other different activities such as peace demonstrations, attending the police headquarters, or mass media offices to demand or protest certain things related to their necessities. Another form of non-violent action of the FPIS is issuing press release of the concern of the organization toward a certain event regarding to Muslims. In their view, non-violent actions will attract more sympathy from people to Islam, even from non-Muslims. On the escalating radical violence in Indonesia, Warsito argues that it is mostly as the resistance of Indonesian Muslims to the deprivations and pressures of the government which was also influence by US.<sup>29</sup> The more the government suppresses Muslims, the more militant they would be. Correspondingly, Mudzakir also argues that they act defensively along with the great agenda of the West to decrease the revivalism of Islam in Muslim world by the issuance of the discourse of terrorism. On the attitude of the JI in Bali, Mudzakir asserts that it could not be considered as the general phenomenon of Indonesian Muslims. The tough relationship between the state and Muslims during the New Order also played a significant role in the current escalating of Islamism.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with Cholid Hasan in Solo on 11 August 2006; Interview with Ali Usman, a Muslim figure, in Solo, on 13 September 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Warsito Adnan in Solo on 20 September 2006.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mudzakir in Solo on 17 November 2006.

Based on the above information, the FPIS or the Gumuk in general could hardly be considered as radical violence or even *jihādi* Islamism. Indeed they are involved in many political-oriented actions, but the way how they conduct it is far much more different from those done by their counterparts, the FPI of Habieb Rizieq. Rather, they more concern to study Islam from the basic in order to re-Islamize common people in Solo who they considered as not having enough knowledge on Islam. They do want to implement *sharī'ah* into Muslims' daily life, but they do not employ any violent actions to do so. Therefore, they just could be considered as radical Islamism.

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