IJHS, e-ISSN 2597-4718, p-ISSN 2597-470X, Vol. 4, No. 2, March 2021, pp. 208-220

International Journal of Humanity Studies
http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJHS
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

FOR FEAR OF ISLAMIC LOOKS: A REFLECTION OF DISPLACED "SELVES" WITHIN ISLAM

Idha Nurhamidah and Sugeng Purwanto
Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang and Universitas Stikubank (UNISBANK) Semarang
idhanurhamidah@unissula.ac.id and sugeng_purwanto@edu.unisbank
DOI: 10.24071/ijhs.v4i2.3116
received 13 February 2021; accepted 29 March 2021

Abstract
The study discusses a triggering issue of those Indonesian Muslims who frequently feel uneasy to socialize with other Muslims with Arabic looks to neutralize Islamic brotherhood in the Indonesian context of unity in diversity. A survey was made available online for over three months to get public responses concerning the issue. Sixty-two responses were collected for further analysis. Findings of the study revealed that most of the respondents expressed fear of Arabic looks because of terrorism-related activities resulting in deep personal hates. Fears were also felt due to the image that such a group of Muslims have deteriorated the local cultures of Indonesian origins. Still, others expressed fears of those distinctive individual Muslims because of a frequent political demonstration staged by those types of Muslims against engineered issues caused by discrepancies in political views to terminate the President. The authors offer recommendations for those with such Islam phobia to learn more about the truth of Islam from distinguished clerics from recognized Muslim organizations or to read Islamic literature to create peace of mind amid the wrong mindset about Islam, and finally to put aside egocentrism in the spirit of unity in diversity, only to fight against radicalism.

Keywords: Islamic looks, egocentrism, radicalism

Introduction
Historically, Islam started to grow in Indonesia (Nusantara) near the end of the Majapahit Kindom of King Brawijaya V whose son, Raden Patah founded the first Islamic Kingdom of Demak (Mussadun, 2019). Governance of Islamic Kingdom was strictly practised under of the *Wali Sanga*—nine charismatic clerks whose main duty was to be responsible for the spread of Islam across the Indonesian archipelago while to serve as the members of the advisory board to Raden Patah, King of Demak Islamic Kingdom (1500-1518). Not only did the King perform in state-related duties but also act as a religious leader (Zamharir et al., 2020)

Except for Sunan Kalijaga, the other eight clerks were dressed like Arabians—robes, turbans, beards, beads, and any other thing related to Arabic attributes. Sunan Kalijaga maintained to wear black traditional clothes he created by himself similar to Chinese traditional clothes. In Indonesian movies about the struggle of Islam, the *Walisanga* were characterized as being powerful and charismatic individuals with Islam-based magical strengths. They were good at self-defence and traditional medical practices. Each Wali had special expertise, for example, Sunan Giri was an expert of making Gamelan music instrument aimed to promote Islam (Rahayu et al., 2020) While laymen were characterized as marginalized—wearing only shorts and headgears without having Islam-based magical power.

The *Walisanga* were highly respected due to their wisdom and superpower—being viewed as those close to Allah, the Almighty. This group of religious clerks and their communities were referred to as the first group of Islamic historioFig.y in Indonesia called traditional historioFig.y, characterized by religious and magical aspects (Fatiyah and Hariyanto, 2018). This group of clerks employed local wisdom in the spread of Islam—evolutionary than revolutionary (Kasdi, 2017), assimilating the local cultures with Islamic teaching. Therefore, laypeople behaviorally practice traditional rituals but with the Arabic (Islamic) prayers (Fatiyah and Hariyanto, 2018) and sometimes a mixed language between a local language and Arabic to produce new yet powerful prayers (mantra). Concerning the legal practice, such as *Shalat*, a five-time-a-day standard of Islamic ritual, Javanese Muslims, for example, maintain the original rituals. In other words, they maintain the 5 pillars of Islam.

In this respect, a new term "Islam Kejawen" (Javanese Islam) was coined to accommodate their religious practices. It is sometimes called "Islam Abangan" (Reddish Islam) which is, somehow, related to Clerks, Sunan Kalijaga or Syekh Siti Jenar (Susilo and Syato, 2016).

To accommodate the practices of 'naturalized' or traditional Islam, an Islamic group or mass organization called "Nahdatul Ulama" (NU for short) was established by K.H. Abdul Wahab Hasbullah and K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, on January 31, 1926, in Surabaya, East Java to preserve traditional Islam, institutionalized in Pesantren (Islamic Boarding Schools). It had something to do with preparing Indonesia for its independence, for example by "banning the Muslim youths from entering the Dutch military service, prohibiting the Muslims from supporting the Dutch army, and rejecting the Dutch aid which was offered to the Nahdlatul Ulama's madrasas" (Ismail, 2011). The NU Santri*s* (students/ disciples) have been so far those of the grassroots even though at the moment one of them managed to get the second-highest position in the government of the Republic of Indonesia, the Vice President, KH. Ma'ruf Amin. Some others have got several good positions in both the private and governmental sectors.

However, in Indonesia there was also a group of Muslims who initiated a positive movement or renaissance (if it may be called so) or modernism, to return to the original teaching of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him). In 1912, it was KH. Ahmad Dahlan who established a mass organization of Muslim accredited by the Sultanate and Dutch colonial government—14 years before the establishment of NU. His mission was to modernize Islam. Thus, Muhammadiyah

was often referred to as a modernist Islamic and educational organization to synergize with its struggles (Kim, 2010).

Viewed from its legal standing, NU stood against Dutch colonial government while Muhammadiyah was accredited by the Sultanate and Dutch colonial government. It was good for the Dutch to be able to divide Muslims into these two big mass organization. However, it remains a history leading to the independence of Indonesia. The authors are pretty sure they contributed a lot to the achievement of Indonesia's independence in their ways (Ismail, 2011). There used to be discrepancies between these two big mass organizations in political views, religious practices. Extremely speaking, in one neighbourhood, there was one mosque for Muhammadiyah followers and another mosque for NU practitioners. But now, they could cooperate in some ways under the spirit of unity in diversity as seen in their cooperation against radicalism in Jember (Amal, 2016). In other words, these two mass Muslim organizations have similar grounds for 'hand in hand' developing the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

NU and Muhammadiyah along with their sympathizers, including non-Muslim groups of people have now been fighting against radicalism, to be exact Islamic radicalism (Fealy, 2004). The role of women was important in anti-radicalism movement as revealed in Cirebon assuming that women were most often used as perpetrators with a feminine approach It was argued that women should be positioned distinctively high by developing religious literacy, changing the paradigm of communication, reviewing and updating learning curriculum, and socializing with other religious groups and setting institutional net-working (Gumiandari and Nafi'a, 2020).

However, due to the complexity of Muslims, the program found it hard to implement. Some individuals, assumed to be the "radical" people themselves, started questioning the definition of 'radicalism'. The government, religion ministry, found it complicated to answer such a 'misleading' question. The progress of anti-radicalism movement seems to be stagnant; moreover within which the global COVID-19 pandemic broke out (Sohrabi et al., 2020) to shake the whole world without exception.

It was argued that to identify radicalism acts was not difficult at all (Sirry, 2020). Upon the fall of Soeharto in 1998, particular groups of radical Muslims described as 'white-robed and turbaned Muslim militiamen' have found a rather smooth path for their struggle for immediate implementation of Syari'ah law. They simply staged a political demonstration in front of the Parliament, shouting "Allahu Akbar!!" explicitly implying "God, the Greatest", but implicitly meaning "Kill, Go to hell, *Kafir.,* and any other form of hate speech. Another example as set out by Mietzner was that Arab-Indonesian Islamic "clerics" were threatening to "sweep" foreigners from Indonesia (Mietzner, 2018). Other cases, such as sweeping places of interests, restaurants open on Ramadhan day-time, have been around up to now to be exact during the era of reformation (Adi et al., 2019).

In Jokowi's administration, both in his first and second half of presidency, radicalism has been everywhere—off-line through political demonstrations performed by 212 Alumni, financed by anonymous opposing elites, hate speeches by particular clerks and online through producing hoaxes and hate speeches in social media. The government's tolerance to these "democratic" activities had been wrongly translated as if they could have done anything freely without rules.

We would not like to mention any names of groups or individuals to protect their privacy.

The problem to which we would like to respond is the silent majority consisting of people under pressure, in fear of Islamic looks who are now *marginalized* as foreigners in their motherland.

Method

A survey (Google Form) in *Bahasa Indonesia* was made available online for over four hours to get public responses regarding the issue of radicalism in the Indonesian context. Fifty-five to fifty-eight responses—depending on the items—.returned for further analysis. We would mention the number of responses in each item. Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, we would offer recommendations for the betterment of life in Indonesia under the spirit of unity in diversity.

Findings and Discussion

Narrated below is a discussion on the findings of the survey conducted through Google Form. There were 58 responses for further analysis. The results of the survey are presented in Figures of Pies for ease of description.

Radicalism in Indonesia

Below is Figure 1 representing the existence of radicalism in Indonesia.

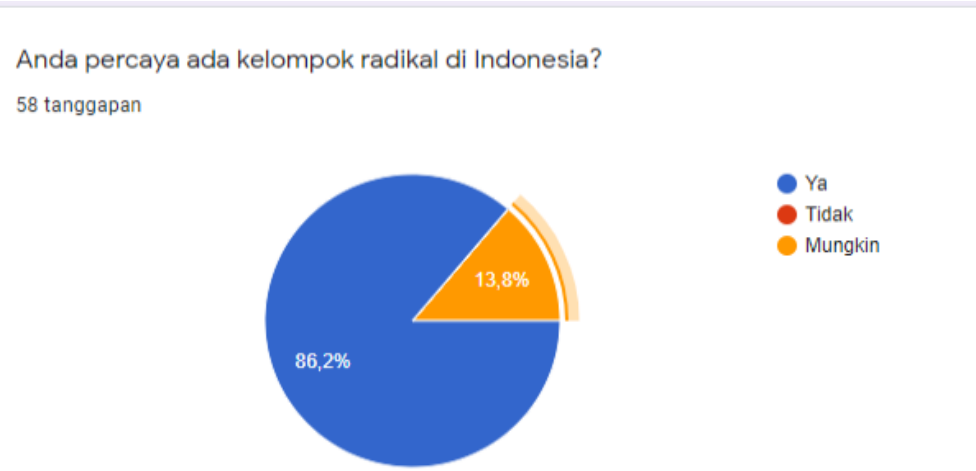


Figure 1. Radicalism in Indonesia

Fig. 1 shows that most of the 58 respondents (86.2%) believe that there is radicalism in Indonesia and only 12.8% doubted that there was radicalism in Indonesia. This low percentage indicates that the respondents may not be interested in this kind of issue. However, none of them gave negative responses. Thus, it is very clear that radicalism does exist in Indonesia. Precaution is therefore of high necessity. Radical people will attempt anything possible to create chaotic situations against the legal government.

Have they done so? They have. We think it is still fresh how they protested against the parliament on the legislation of Pancasila Ideology Guide (HIP) staged

by a group of radical people organized under PA 212 Islamists. Even though the government had expressed "disagreement" against the legislation, their demonstration went on. Their primary interest is not in the legislation of HIP or whatever but to terminate the legal government. It was overheard in their oration that they wanted to topple down President Jokowi and to ban PDIP (Democratic Party of Struggle), the President's primary political supporter. Such a situation has been politically predicted (Lane, 2019).

The Main Characteristics of Radicalism

Regarding what characterizes 'radicalism' is shown in Fig. 2 below



Figure 2. The Main Characteristic of Radicalism

Radicalism is characterized as opposing the current government for a particular purpose. Therefore, the majority of the 58 respondents (91.4%) justified that radicalism refers to an idealism that opposes the current government as also further justified in Oxford dictionary defines 'radicalism' as (in politics) a belief favouring fundamental reforms (Horby, 1987). In other words, radical people are those who oppose the government regarding whatever policies or achievements it has made. They tend to ignore laws and regulation. Whenever the government makes blunders or policy malpractices, they will launch severe even illogical protests. This situation is not at all favourable in any country. It is, therefore, logical to assume/believe that radicalism has to be eradicated. In this context, Jokowi's administration has been in the right track to have an anti-radical policy even though it is stagnant as possibly caused by the outbreak of Coronavirus-19 which has shaken the world.

Perceived Radicalism

Perceived radicalism can be seen in Fig. 3 below:



Figure 3. Perceived Radicalism

Radical Islamists in Indonesia—though not applicable to all Islamists—are identified by how they are dressed, namely as white-robed and turbaned Muslim militiamen. For women, they are robed and fully-veiled (left only two eyes). In this survey, on being next to people dressed as such, the 58 respondents are relatively distributed. Most of them (48.3%) feel uneasy; 36.2% of them ignore; while the last 14.5%f them feel just fine. Surprisingly, there is a majority of the feeling of fear among people when socializing with people of Arabic looks—wearing Arabic attributes. We term this 'Islam-phobia' in which we fell strange or foreign in our own country when confronted with such looks. In this respect, a variety of reactions may occur, such as leaving them alone, feeling discomforts, but unable to do anything. The 'displaced selves' can be the right term, without physical and spiritual comforts.

Personal Judgment on Radical Demos

Regarding personal judgment, displayed below is Fig. 4, representing how respondents judged radical demos organized by the 212 radical groups.



Figure 4. Personal Judgment on Radical Demos

Seen from Fig.4, most of the 58 respondents (91.4%) expressed discomforts regarding radical demos regularly staged. Only very recently did they stage another demo in front of on Parliament Building, in demand for cancellation of 'Pancasila Ideology Guide' legislation as they claimed 'related to communism, a set-back issue to frighten people. Historically, they should have remembered that in Soeharto's regime, there was the legislation of P4 (Guide to Internalization and Implementation of Pancasila) which turned out to be a tool to maintain Soeharto's status quo.

The other 8.6% of the respondents expressed 'ignorance' regarding the multiple radical demos. At the moment, it can be assumed that they have been fed up by such silly and useless activities.

Personal Worries on Radicalism

Personal worries on radical demos are also of concern. Demos consume energy from both parts—the government and the radical people. We would like to know the respondents' views on such multiple demos. The results are revealed in Figure 5. below:

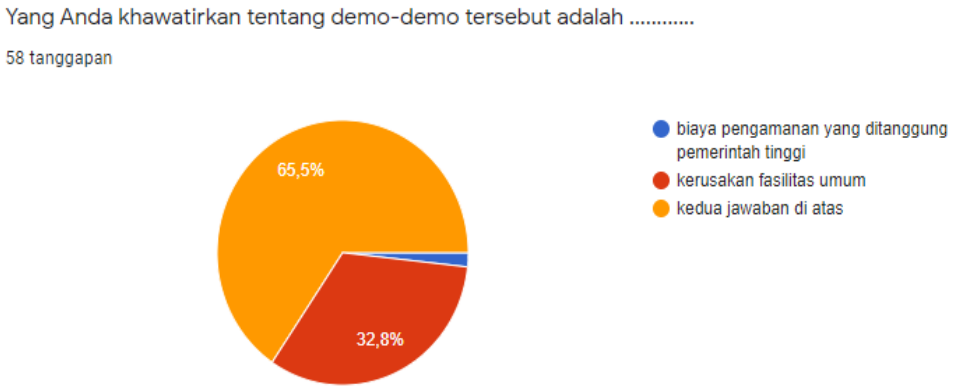


Figure 5. Personal Worries on Radical Demo

Surprisingly, most of the 58 respondents (65.5%) expressed worries about (1) the cost of security and public facilities destructions. The later can be minimized since the 212 radical group claim to be such a professional demonstrator leaving no public facilities destroyed. What about how much money the government must lose in, for example, one day demo? It was argued that the Government spent IDR 100 million. Such a big amount of money, which can be used to build a hospital in Papua, President Jokowi quoted as saying. However, the second high proportion (32.8%) is still to safeguard public facilities next to the government's budgeting on demo.

Personal Emotive Attitude in Arabic Looks (in Men)

Presented below is Figure 6. regarding the personal emotive attitudes on Arabic looks experienced by the respondents:



Figure 6. Personal Emotive Attitudes on Arabic Looks (in Men)

There were 57 respondents. Surprisingly, though with a little difference (3.5%), more respondents (45.6%) expressed ignorance of Arabic attributive clothes and the other (42.1%) expressed 'fears'. The rest (8.8%) expressed 'respect with fears'. Some of them have learned to socialize the 'radical' by expressing ignorance. It is quite similar to COVID-19 pandemic. After a certain period of 'large scale social restriction', we have to implement 'new normal' with a strict protocol of social distancing.

We never know how they feel to have to make social interaction with people of different cultural attributes. We hope that they are doing just fine. Fearful individuals (42.6%) are exactly the displaced 'selves.' They have lost their freedom to live in their country. They are probably frightened by possible blasts at one time or another. They are not to blame at all. What about another proportion (54.6%)? The choice 'ignorance' needs clarification but for the time being, we assume that they are doing social distancing with Muslims of Arabic attributes.

Personal Emotive Attitude in Arabic Looks (in Women)

On personal emotive attitude regarding Arabic looks (in women), Figure 7. below represents the respondents' responses.



Figure 7. Personal Emotive Attitudes on Arabic Looks (in women)

To our surprise, a significant proportion (50.9%) of the 55 respondents expressed “respect with fear” regarding women dressed in robes and full veils over their faces with only two eyes left open. Meanwhile, 41.8% of the respondents expressed ‘hates’. The rest (7.3%) expressed ‘fear’. The current study should have been accompanied by in-depth interviews with respondents. The problem that it was not, was that the study took place in the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Personal Assumptions on Radicalism

We also would like to find out the respondents’ personal assumptions on radicalism. Fig. 8 below represents their responses.

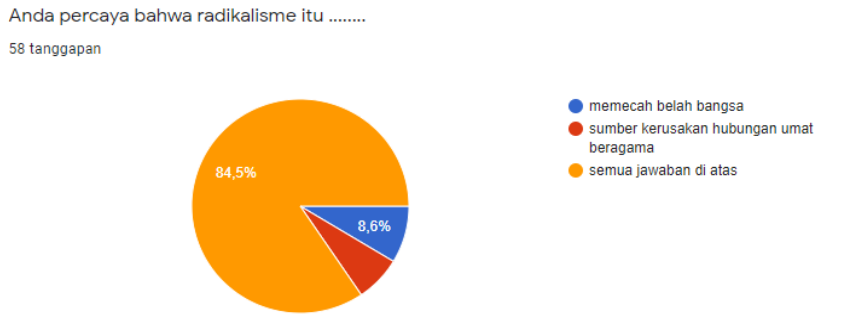


Figure 8. Personal Assumptions on Radicalism

Possibility of Radicalism Solution

We are in particular questioning whether or not radicalism can be eradicated from Indonesian dreamland. Fig. 9 below illustrates the respondents’ responses.

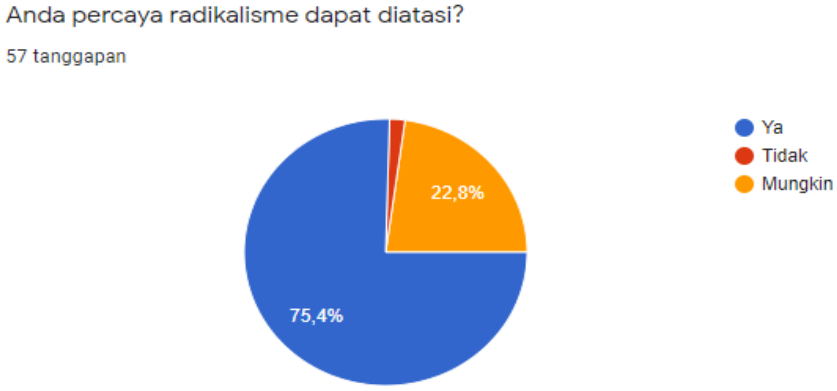


Figure 9. Possibility of Radicalism Solution

Most of the 57 respondents (75.4%) are very optimistic about the possibility of radicalism solution. Meanwhile, 22.8% of the respondents remain 'in-between' namely adding up another possibility. Only very few respondents are pessimistic about the possibility of radicalism solution. We are committed to excellence to their optimism under unity in diversity, driving away racial, religious differences.

Cross-regional cooperation among people of different religions is required to realize the optimism to eradicate radicalism from Indonesian motherland. It

should be remembered that radicalism is not always related to any particular religion. It can belong to any group of people with a view to making a chaotic condition without logical thinking. In other words, it is about ego-centrism of one identical fanatics. Once a group of people were radically indoctrinated, it takes a very long time to neutralize them to be ordinary people. We have to solve the problems comprehensively, never partially. With our full efforts, we hope to finalize everything to help the government realize its national program without any obstacles.

Parties to Solve Radicalism Problems

We would like to know the respondents' views regarding who would be responsible for solving radicalism problems. What are the real/factual problems of radicalism? Included in the problems are (1) to convert the radical people to normal people, meaning that they would be just like ordinary Muslims without any political practices, (2) to help the marginalized Muslims who are identified as being in fear of other Muslims with full Arabic attributes though they may not perform radical activities.

This is of great importance since full Arabic attributes have become an enigmatic social judgment as "belonging to terrorists'. Although, it should be kept in mind that wearing full Arabic attributes does not necessarily mean 'radical', only by gradual process would those marginalized individuals be naturalized. Any phobia cannot be cured in a single day. It needs processes. Fig. 10 below illustrates who would be responsible for solving radicalism problems.

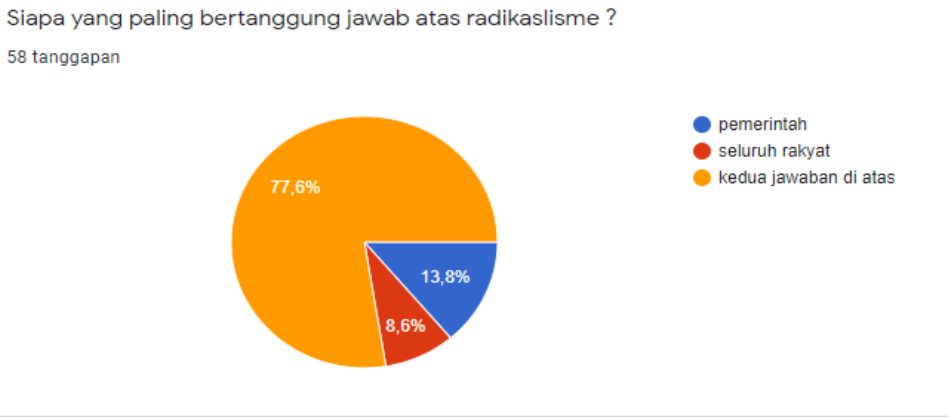


Figure 10. Party to Solve Radicalism Problems

The last item to discuss is "Who will be responsible for solving radicalism problems?" We offer three choices of responses. Our assumption is correct as the majority of the 58 respondents (77.6%) expressed a choice that it is the responsibility of the government and the people to solve radicalism problems. Meanwhile, 13.8% of them expressed that it was the government's sole responsibility to solve the radicalism problems, and ironically the rest (8.6%) expressed a personal concern that it was the people's responsibility to solve the problems.

It is still a good idea that the majority of people still realize the importance of cooperation between the government and the whole population of our beloved NKRI (the republic of Indonesia).

Conclusion

Despite increasing confidence in the success of gigantic foreign company acquisitions, overall development of infrastructure (Negara, 2016), including the betterment of transportation system, digital business management, improved banking and economic sectors (Primadini, 2018) an upgrade of income per capita, Indonesia is now encountering two different problems, concerning its political stability—Jokowi's presidential position and silent majority's fear of Islamic radicalism, parasites destroying Islam from within.

Despite frequent failures, including religious blasphemy in the case of Ahok (Peterson, 2020), radical groups of the opposition have been struggling to terminate Joko Widodo's presidency. However, he is still under Allah's protection. Every bit of their actions against Jokowi's presidential position hit nothing. At this point, we have to increase our precautions against all possibilities of occurrence regarding the safety of our nation, in particular, to secure Jokowi's presidency. We are happy that the president himself is not over-reactive about political bullying, be they in the form of hate speech, privacy, regular demos and the like. He remains calm but cautious.

The silent majority of people are in fear of Islamic looks demonstrated daily by the radical groups of people, resulting in disgrace of local values and cultures. Anywhere in every corner are a number of Muslims dressed in full Arabic customs. This has resulted in a gradual loss of atmospheric looks of Indonesian Muslims in general. As well, the 2019 Presidential Election demonstrated high friction of national disintegration with religious-political contestation (Winarni et al., 2020). Some of us have been silenced to witness the disgrace of our cultural heritage.

It is therefore important that religious preachers be restructured against producing hate speech that will bring about provocation ending in governmental chaos (Burhani, 2020). Some people are not patient enough to see the slow responses of the government against radical oppositions who have signalled cruel attitudes and behaviours. They always compare the steps that would be taken in Suharto's Order Baru against such a group of intolerance and radicalism. We may forget that we are now living in a different era with a different security model.

Silent majority of people in fear of radical looks have realized that they cannot do anything without the support of the authority. It is recommended that they learn more about Islam from charismatic and dignified Islamic scholars preferably from any of the two big mass Muslim organizations—NU or Muhammadiyah. Each of them has demonstrated a commitment of excellence to safeguard Indonesia before and after Indonesia's independence. They can simply ignore the existence of those who would jeopardize Indonesia. They have to believe that everything is going to be all right under the current government of Indonesia supported by the majority of people, the police and the army with all necessary deterrence.

References

Adi, A., Sari, M., & Setyowati, R. (2019, November). Radicalism and Political Indentity in Indonesia President Election 2019. In *International Conference on Social Science 2019 (ICSS 2019)* (pp. 411-416). Atlantis Press.

Amal, M.K. (2016). Counter-radicalism and moderate muslim in Jember. *Al-Ulum 16*(2), 311–329. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.30603/au.v16i2.152.

Burhani, A. N. (2020). Muslim televangelists in the making: Conversion narratives and the construction of religious authority. *The Muslim World, 110*(2), 154-175.

Fatiyah, F. & Hariyanto, B. (2018) Tracking independently Indonesia Islamic HisterioFig.y. *Journal of Islam and Science, 3*(1), 61–84.

Fealy, G. (2004). Islamic radicalism in Indonesia: The faltering revival?. *Southeast Asian Affairs, 2004*(1), 104-121.

Gumiandari, S. & Nafi'a, I. (2020). The role of Cirebon women ulama in countering religious radicalism. *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies), 8*(1), 33–64. DOI: 10.21043/qijis.v8i1.6430.

Horby, A. S. (1974). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English*. Oxford. Oxford University press.

Ismail, F. (2011). The Nahdlatul Ulama: Its early history and contribution to the establishment of the Indonesian state. *Journal of Indonesian Islam, 5*(2), 247–282.

Kasdi, A. (2017). The role of Walisongo in developing the Islam nusantara civilization. *Addin, 11*(1), 1. DOI: 10.21043/addin.v11i1.1973.

Kim, H-J. (2010). Praxis and religious authority in Islam: The case of Ahmad Dahlan, founder of Muhammadiyah. *Studia Islamika, 17*(1). DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v17i1.468.

Lane, M. (2019). President Joko Widodo's new cabinet: Some implications for Indonesian politics. *ISEAS Perspective* (2019/99), 2019. DOI: ISSN 2335-6677.

Mietzner, M. (2018). Fighting illiberalism with illiberalism: Islamist populism and democratic deconsolidation in Indonesia. *Pacific Affairs, 91*(2), 261-282.

Mussadun, M. (2019). The Influence of Raden Fatah towards spiritual value on Tombs and Great Mosque of Demak. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research, 8*(12). Retrieved from http://eprints.undip.ac.id/80469/1/C3A-2019-The_Influence_of_Raden_Fatah_Towards_Spiritual_Value_on_Tombs_and_Great_Mosque_of_Demak_turnitin.pdf.

Negara, S. D. (2016). Indonesia's infrastructure development under the Jokowi administration. *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 145-166.

Peterson, D. (2020). *Islam, blasphemy, and human rights in Indonesia: The Trial of Ahok*. England: Routledge.

Primadini, E. (2018). *Managing Indonesia's International Strategies to Support the Achievement of Blue Economy in Jokowi's Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) Vision: a Case Study on Maritime Economy and Infrastructure Development (2014-2017)*. (Doctoral dissertation, President University).

Rahayu, N., Warto, W., Sudardi, B., & Wijaya, M. (2020). Dynamics of social values and teaching in the global era: Beyond Sekaten tradition in Surakarta

Kingdom. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research, 11*(1), 213-229.

Sirry, M. I. (2020). Muslim Student Radicalism and Self-Deradicalization in Indonesia. *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations, 31*(2), 241-260.

Sohrabi, C, Alsafi Z, O'Neill N, et al. (2020). World Health Organization declares global emergency: A review of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). *International Journal of Surgery, 76*, 71-76. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijsu.2020.02.034.

Susilo, S., & Syato, I. (2016). Common identity framework of cultural knowledge and practices of Javanese Islam. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies, 6*(2), 161-184.

Winarni, L., Agussalim, D., & Bagir, Z. A. (2020). Religio-politics of Islamic Group in the Contestation of 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election. *Politik Indonesia: Indonesian Political Science Review, 5*(1), 22-46.

Zamharir, H., Noer, M., & Lubis, S. (2020). Khalifatullah Panatagama: Continuity & Change in the Practice of Political Islam in Modern Indonesia. *Journal of Social Political Sciences, 1*(1), 29-40.