



The Future of Secularism

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democratic spirits. Furthermore, there is also strong evidence that the radical Islamic groups transform religio-political thoughts from the Middle East, especially ideology of radical *salafism*. This evidence can be observed from the ideology of radical salafi movements (RCI) such as *Majelis Mujahiddin Indonesia*, *Hizbut Tahrir*, *Lasykar Hizbullah*, *Lasykar Jundullah*, *Darul Islam*, *Lasykar Jihad*, *Ikhwanul Muslimin Hammas*, and the like.⁴

The problem lies in the fact that the shariahization agenda often manipulates religious sentiments or politicizes issues appealing for ordinary and public Muslims support. Most importantly, such a tendency tends to neglect the existing condition of Indonesia as a pluralist society. Although Muslims are the majority of the Indonesian populace, Indonesia is *de facto* a pluralist society, which contains religious, ethnic, custom and cultural diversities. Therefore, any laws and regulations should be based on the recognition of pluralism, human rights, democracy, and respect of 'the others' (non-Muslim groups). Furthermore, problem lies in the fact that such an agenda is imposed along with the Indonesia's ongoing economic turbulence, weak state, uncertain political condition, and lack of law enforcement. Indeed, most radical Islam groups believe that shari'a is the only

challenge the agenda of RCI. To a certain degree, they are able to stem the efforts of RCI in imposing shari'a. However, recent political

all Muslims to establish an Islamic state.⁵ Obviously, the fundamental tenet of this paradigm lies in the interpretation of *shari'a* (Islamic law), which, as its proponents argue, should be the legal underpinning of the three integrated institutions mentioned above. Those who believe in this paradigm argue that the state and its functioning is part of Islamic teachings. *Shari'a* is interpreted as Divine Law, and has to form the basis of the state and its constitution, as the constitution formalizes all the processes of governing, including the political behaviour of the ruler.

This paradigm implies that political sovereignty is not vested in the people, but in the hands of God. There is no people's sovereignty, only God's sovereignty. Consequently, this exclusive paradigm results in the strict obligation for every Muslim to uphold the *shari'a* by whatever means available. Muslims who plead for the separation of religion and politics or for the suspension of the *shari'a* are judged to be against the spirit of Islam. Moreover, modern political concepts derived from Western sources are considered to be paradoxical to Islamic teachings. This paradigm appeals to Muslims to refer to the 'ideal state' established by the Prophet Muhammad and his four successor caliphates (*khulafa ar rasyidun*), and urges Muslims not to implement Western political systems. Therefore, Muslims are strongly recommended to join the political struggle to implement Islam as the basis of the state and *shari'a* as the basis of the constitution.⁶ In the political realm, such a paradigm often encourages Muslims to strengthen their ideological and political identities as a form of protection against temporal id

it was similar to that of other prophets in that preaching Islamic values and its virtues was the main task of his mission. Thus, the mission of the Prophet Muhammad should not be understood in terms of establishing or ruling any worldly state. The Prophet

concepts and systems, regardless of where these are derived from, are basically welcomed as long as they are in accordance with the ethical spirit of Islam.

Noticeably, proponents of the two paradigms above have been exist in all Muslims world, including in Indonesia. To defend their ideas, the two groups have involved political debates, sometimes followed by tension and conflict. History shows that the proponents of those two paradigms involved in such debates prior to independence under Soeharto's New Order authoritarian regime (1966–98).

TRANSMISSION OF IDEOLOGY AND RELIGIO-POLITICAL THOUGHTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

The emergence of RCI in post Soeharto Era has a correlation with the transmission of ideology and religio-political thoughts from the Middle East. In general, the victory of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 under the leadership of Ayatullah Khomeini contributed significant influence to the spread of Islamic radicalism and the New Order's political alertness. Many Indonesian Muslims, especially the young generation, were very proud of the success of the Iranian Revolution. To them, the Iranian Revolution had shown that Islamic people's power could win against a regime as hegemonic and despotic as the regime of Shah Reza Pahlevi. Following media coverage on the Iranian Revolution, many young Muslims were proud and respectful to Ayatullah Khomeini, and surprisingly even regarded Khomeini as a role model. Along with the victory of the Iranian Revolution, there was a general sense of a global Islamic resurgence. Most Muslims in the world, except certain Islamic countries in the Middle East, were welcoming the Iranian Revolution. In other words, the victory of the Iranian Revolution had, in certain circumstances, given a new spirit to the Muslims in the world. It also encouraged the rise of an Islamic resurgence in a way of building Muslim unity and self-confidence against Western hegemony in the world.¹⁰

It is clear that the Iranian Revolution became a driving factor to the rise of the global Islamic resurgence. It definitely encouraged Muslims to promote unity and self-confidence to challenge the hegemony of Western civilization. Although the form and substance of the Islamic resurgence varied from country to country, the main theme was always the same, namely the disenchantment from the

interaction with activists of Ikhwanul Muslimin who were spreading in some Middle East countries. Thus, they were not only studying religio-political thoughts of Ikhwanul Muslimin leaders such as Al Banna and Qutb, but also developing network and relationship with activists of Ikhwanul Muslimin.¹³

Having studied Ikhwanul Muslimin ideas and developed relationship with the activists of this organization, the Indonesian students who had finished their study then involved in disseminating

The position of these authors are very influential in explaining the state of Islamic faith and the need of change towards more Islamic system (*nizham al-Islam*), furthermore; they are also considered as the continuity and pioneer of Islamic contemporary radical movement since 20th century until now. Radical mindset in Indonesia meets its point through prominent figures of Contemporary Islamic movements in the middle east; *Ikhwanul Muslimin*, *Hizbut Tahrir*, *Salafi*, *Tarbiyah*, and other Islamic movement like Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Quthb, Taqiuddin al-Nabhani, Abul A'la al-Mawdudi, Hasan Turabi, and so forth. However, *Ikhwanul Muslimin* is firmly believed as an Islamic organization which has a big influence in propagating religious understanding through the spread of *Ikhwanul Muslimin's* organization in Muslim countries, including Indonesia.¹⁶

One of the books from prominent figures of Ikhwanul Muslimin, which are translated by the alumni of the Middle East, is *Ma'alim fi al-Thariq* (published in 1964) by Sayyid Quthb. It has become the guide of this movement. This book is 'the scripture' for activists of propagation's movement, even it is considered as the main obligatory book for alumni of *Latihan Mujahid Dakwah* (LMD) in the Salman Mosque, Bandung Institute of Technology. After that, a number of books from other prominent figures of Ikhwanul Muslimin are also translated, like *Fi Afaq al-Ta'lim* by Said Hawwa, which is then translated as *Membina Angkatan Mujahid* (Constructing *Mujahid's* Generation). The trilogy of Said Hawwa *Allah*, *Al-Rasul* and *Al-Islam* is also translated into Indonesian. These books are, then, considered as the character of *tarbawi's* propagation movement in Indonesia.¹⁷ Besides, some books written by Hassan Al-Banna, Muhammad Quthb, Musthafa Masyhur, Muhammad Al-Ghazali, Yusuf Al-Qardlawi and so forth are also translated into Indonesian.

Some books of *Hizbut Tahrir* which spread in Indonesia are: *Nidzamul Islam* (Life's System in Islam), *Nidzamul Hukmi fil Islam* (The System of Government in Islam), *Nidzamul Iqtishadi fil Islam* (The System of Economy in Islam), *Nidzamul Ijtima'iy fil Islam* (The System of Social in Islam), *At-Takatul al-Hizbi* (The Formation of Political Party), *Mafahim Hizbut Tahrir* (Fundamental Thought of *Hizbut Tahrir*), *Daulatul Islamiyah* (Islamic State), *Al-Khilafah* (The System of *Khilafah*), *Syakhsyiyah Islamiyah* (The Establishment of Islamic Identity Volume I, II and III), *Mafahim Siyasa li Hizbut Tahrir* (The Political Fundamental Thought of *Hizbut Tahrir*), and

communities.¹⁹ By so doing, the Indonesian students in the Middle East and Indonesia were able to develop a solid network. This kind of network, however, contributed significant impact to the transmission of ideology and religio-political thoughts of Ikhwanul Muslimin and other revivalist movements in the Middle East.

Besides Ikhwanul Muslimin, another revivalist movement, which also related to the global political momentum in the 1980s, was Hizbut Tahrir. Like Ikhwanul Muslimin, the transmission of ideology and religio-political thought of Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia was mostly through education, publication, and network as well. Studies on the transmission of Hizbut Tahrir ideas and the establishment of this revivalist movement in Indonesia show that it began to spread in 1982-1983. It is said that two prominent figures were active in disseminating Hizbut Tahrir ideas in Indonesia : M. Mustafa and Abdurrahman Al-Baghdadi. Mustafa is an Indonesian student in Jordan who was interested in Taqiyuddin's ideas and then became an activist of Hizbut Tahrir in Jordan. Mustafa spread Hizbut Tahrir's ideas through some lectures and religious gatherings in Bogor,

POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE RISE OF

the late years of his regime. Consequently, the state was neither in favor with the spirit of legal-exclusive model nor substantive-inclusive model. Rather, it fully accommodated political Islam based on the logic of Soeharto's power interest and state hegemony.²³

Nevertheless, the conversion to state-sponsored political Islam occurred due to the support and pragmatic alliance between the state and 'regimist' Muslim leaders, especially from the 'militant-scripturalist' of certain modernist Muslim leaders associated with KISDI (*Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam*, The Indonesian Committee for Muslims Word Solidarity), DDII (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*, The Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation), Muhammadiyah, ICMI, and others. Along with the worsening of economic crisis, bureaucratic corruption, state violence, and the withdrawal of critical Muslims support to the New Order authoritarian regime, Soeharto's administration was finally collapse on 21 May 1998.²⁴

Under Habibie's presidency and the euphoria of *reformasi* (reform) movement, political Islam seemed to take momentum. Along with the wave of *reformasi* movement, Habibie's administration gave a greater freedom and political openness to the people. Many people utilize this opportunity to establish new political parties, associations, media companies, and the like. As a result, more than 100 political parties were established, more than 40 parties were grouped as Islamic parties. Given this political circumstance, certain groups took momentum by restoring the power of political Islam. Thus, they built newly associations, including hardliner or radical Islamic groups. Under the New Order authoritarian regime, it was impossible to do so. In addition, under Habibie's presidency press freedom and civil

which people prefer using rule of the jungle to solving problems using rule of the law.

Given the above socio-political crisis, some Islamic political parties used this momentum by campaigning 'Islamic solution' for solving what they called as 'Indonesia's multi-dimensional crisis'. What is meant by Islamic solution is to demand the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter into the state constitution and the implementation of shari'a

as a noted Muslim intellectual, charismatic leader, and had ever been called as the 'guardian of the Indonesian civil society'. Before being a president, Wahid was an NGO activist who had tirelessly struggle for empowering civil society. Most importantly, many scholars have regarded Wahid as one of the most prominent Muslim intellectuals representing 'liberal Islamic thought', although his social base is traditionalist NU.²⁷

Ironically, under Wahid's presidency the radical conservative Islam movements increased their action and pressures addressed not only to the government, but also to the Indonesian public. Such a situation was worsened by religious and communal bloody conflicts in several Indonesian provinces, especially between Muslims and Christian, in the eastern area such as Ambon, Palu, Ternate, and others. Facing this reality, Wahid seemed to use moderate approach in solving the problem, meaning that he tried to focus on the efforts of ceasing conflicts by promoting peaceful dialogue between the two groups. In so doing, Wahid called to the two groups in order not to send paramilitary to the conflict area. Yet, in his statement, Wahid specifically condemned Lasykar Jihad as a troublesome for its policy to send thousands of paramilitary group to Ambon. Wahid judged that Lasykar Jihad had increased conflict escalation between the two groups. He seemed to neglect the action taken by Lasykar Kristus (The Jesus Troops), which was also operating their action in Ambon and killing against Muslims on the battlefield.²⁸

who became the victims. Moreover, these two leaders of RCI groups also declared that Wahid's policies were ineffective in solving multi-dimensional crisis of the Indonesian society. To these two leaders, the main cause of deepening the Indonesian crisis was due to the degradation of moral conduct. Facing this reality, the FPI did actions, which they claimed as 'cleaning the Indonesian society from the influences of *haram* environment'. The FPI declared that Indonesian society was poisoned by '*kehidupan yang haram dan penuh dengan kemaksiatan* (the forbidden life fully created by violating the God's law). Using such reasons, the FPI raided shops selling alcohol, attacking prostitution places and gambling houses, sweeping foreigners suspected as spreading of wickedness in hotels. By doing so, they portrayed themselves as a 'the army of God and moral police for the society'. The FPI also maintained street demonstration involving thousands of its followers to demand the implementation of shari'a and urged government and people to fight against immoral deeds.²⁹

When Wahid was ending his presidency due to the impeachment of the parliament, Megawati became the strongest candidate to be elected as president. In response to this situation, the RCI groups were again united to oppose the candidacy of Megawati for being president. Their reason to oppose Megawati's candidacy for president was based on their legal-textual interpretation of Qur'an and shari'a that woman is not allowed to be a leader of the nation. They publicly campaigned this idea to the society, despite having a very limited support from the people. The fact was that their campaign totally failed because the general assembly of MPR elected her as president, replacing Wahid.

Nonetheless, the agenda to impose shari'ah law continued under the Megawati's presidency and yet it is stw 2.81(o)-7ds6 TP.0422-042tnt a'ah lam

legal, and formal approaches. The problem lies in the facts that such approaches tend to neglect the nature and flexibility of fiqh itself. More importantly, such approaches tend to promote the notion that fiqh is a state law. As a result, they often invite manipulation of fiqh for the sake of political interest, hegemony of meaning, and monopoly of the religious truth.³⁰

Interestingly enough, the spirit and demand of RCI groups in post-Soeharto era to return to Islamic *salafism* and upholding the sharia seemed to have genealogies with previous Islamic militant movements Indonesia. Moreover, they are also inspired by similar activities of militant Islamic groups in the Middle East.³¹ There is a tendency that the radical-conservative Islam groups in Indonesia are associated themselves with the radical movements in the Middle East. More importantly, certain groups of radical Islam working with the underground and unidentified movements have also carried out violence similar with the Middle East phenomena. It includes actions

and a center of terrorist operation in Southeast Asia. It is also believed that the radical Islam movements in Indonesia have a strong network with international terrorist organizations such as Al Qaidah (AQ) and Jamaah Islamiyah (JI).³² Nonetheless, most RCI groups in Indonesia denied such suspicion, claiming that their organizations did not have any linkages with neither AQ nor JI. Certain figures of RCI groups also publicly declared that they fully reject the way of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda movement. However, they also state that such suspicion is only a part of US propaganda for destroying Islam, hiding under the banner of President Bush's global campaign on 'war against terrorism'.³³

Indeed, the emergence of RCI groups in post Soeharto Indonesia and its political implications has raised questions relating to their social origin, intellectual roots, and religio-political agenda. The problem lies in the fact that certain RCI group also justifies the use of hostility in a way of forcing 'truth claim' based on their subjective interpretation, as also implement violence using physical action. It is also obvious that the member of RCI group is very limited. However, media sometimes tends to give a special coverage or even blow up their action. Accordingly, this kind of coverage led to create public image that the RCI groups are very big, vocal and well organized.

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTIC OF RADICAL-CONSERVATIVE ISLAM

Given the above discussion on socio-political context relating to the rise of RCI in post-Soeharto era, it is important to observe its political theology as well. By so doing, we would be able to observe their mindset and political agendas. In general, there are four main characteristics of RCI as described below:

Firstly, *the RCI is committed to 'shari'a mindset'*. A salient appeal voiced by Islamic radical movements is the so-called formalization of shari'a at the state level in all aspects of Muslim life. In an Indonesian context, such appeal finds justification in the democratization era that has given freedom of expression to the people after 32 years under Soeharto's authoritarian regime when Islamic movements were oppressed. It also gains momentum with the multi-dimensional crises that ruin all aspects of national life. Therefore, the search for an alternative solution using religious

symbols as well as the messianic image they bring, finds justification. Indeed, the appeal of Islamic radical movements for the formalization of shari'a is in fact a response to the multi-dimensional crises facing this nation. For them, the exclusion of religious ethics and the adoption of a secular system have led to chaos. As a solution, they appeal for a return to shari'a. To relieve their disappointment about national ruin due to the crises, they offer a solution by returning to

the Prophet. It must be applied. While the sentence to make the thief intimidated is still considered to be applied in matters which are not regulated by Allah and His Prophet.³⁵ It is further confirmed by the fact that the Prophet Muhammad is sent as the last prophet indicating that shari'a is already perfect, relevant for all times. Shari'a is regarded as sacral and immutable. They disagree with the contextual shari'a interpretation.

in creating a gap with the other groups. People outside their group are considered as a different entity. Being considered different, they also treat other groups differently. Consequently, the view of RCI of other groups is not only related to their perceptions, but is also expressed as an attitude. This behavior defines how big the possibility is to make dialogue and cooperation with other groups.

Furthermore, they revitalize the binary concepts of '*muslim*' and '*kafir*', '*Dar al-Islam*' (house of Islam) and '*Dar al-Harb*' (house of enemy). This is due to their absolute truth claim that negates not only non-muslims but also Muslims who have different religious perceptions to theirs. In the extreme spectrum, their exclusion of others is usually parallel with their call for jihad to correct the latter. Adian Husaini, Secretary General of KISDI (The Indonesian Committee for Solidarity of Islamic World) argued that,

It becomes a true belief in the Muslim community that the path of truth and salvation is only through Islam. It means that any path outside path of Islam is a digression. Christians who believe in the Trinity concept claiming Isa as God of Son or Son of God are infidels (Al- Maidah : 72-75). It also includes the Jews, who reject the prophetic existence of Muhammad. They are also infidels. They are judged as infidels of the People of the Book (ahl al kitab). Other religions are also included as infidels.³⁸

Having adopted with the above mindset, the proponents of RCI will not respect Jews and Christians, considering that God has declared that they are infidels and 'others'.

Thirdly, *the RCI has a different perception of the terminology of Jihad*. It is important to notice here that the above characteristics of RCI do not inevitably encourage violent actions in dealing with terrorism. Thus, it would be a serious mistake if one argued that the proponents of RCI are automatically in favour of violent actions that led to terrorism. Our research shows that despite their radical mindset, certain figures of RCI do not agree with violence or terrorist actions. To them, the violence and terrorist actions that led to killing innocent people are against the spirit of Islam. The issue of terrorism in Indonesia is related to a radical clandestine movement. In fact, the police and the authorities still face difficulties in demolishing the network of terrorists in Indonesia. However, it is clear that terrorist action is definitely related to misleading perceptions of jihad. In this context, the concept of jihad has been understood by terrorists

mainly as *qital* (killing) or war against non-Muslims (*kafir*) to maintain the religion of Allah (*li i'lai kalimatillah*). This means jihad is colored by violence.

The above mentioned definition of jihad as *qital*, war against enemies of Islam, gives a strong stimulus to perform violence on behalf of religion. In other words, if there is a reality, which they assume is an attack against Islam, or Islam has been the victim of cruelty and oppressive power. Combined with a strong belief in conspiracy theory based on imagined enemies, the clandestine movements have seen that on-Muslim ideology and power always competes against Islam. This perception that has great potential to cast non-Muslims as the enemy (who can threaten the existence of Muslims), so that Muslims must prepare themselves by performing jihad against them. The misleading perception of jihad like this will considerably influence the growth of terrorist actions in the name of Islam.³⁹

In this regard, it is those who are influenced by this interpretation, such as radical. For them, the suicide bombing is seen as a sort of resistance of unjust treatment. Amrozi and his friends, for instance, claim that they have jihad against 'the enemies of Islam' performed. However, they realize that *jihad* in the sense of *qital* cannot be sporadically performed because the force of Islam is still much weaker than that of the enemies of Islam. Therefore, they practice the more effective way, namely by performing suicide bombings. Thus, the actions done by Iqbal (Bali Bombing), Asmar Latin Sani (Marriot Bombing), and Hery Golun (Kuningan Bombing) are related to the misleading perception of jihad.

In addition, Imam Samudra, the allerre3y,rael(sefiA.p)ieeii19(n]TJ e al)15(y)(c

literally and a-historically and therefore reach highly exclusive conclusions'.⁴⁵ They interpret the Qur'an without considering the sociological and historical context. Using this method, the interpreter often forgets what the Quran means beyond the text. This method also often means the interpreter cannot catch the real message of the text which is to give guidance to the moral or ethical values of human beings.⁴⁶

Fourthly, *the RCI has a strong belief in conspiracy theory and Muslims are the victims*. It is obvious that most RCI strongly believe in conspiracy theory. In this context, the RCI deems that Christians and Jews have an agenda to crush Islam based on two perspectives. The first is based on their literal and subjective interpretation of Qur'anic verses. The second is based on their perception towards the West, which tends to develop power hegemony over the world, including the Muslim world. In this context, the RCI perceives the West as being inherited by the Judeo-Christian civilization. Such perception is worsened with the tendency of hegemonic power which led to Western imperialism in the Muslim world.

The spirit of anti-pluralism is also addressed to Muslim leaders who promote pluralism. According to the RCI, Muslim leaders who promote pluralism are agents of Christian missionaries and Zionism. Husaini, for instance, pointed out that Islamic leaders, intellectuals, ulamas, and activists of Islamic organizations who promote pluralism ideology can be categorized as dangerous figures and surely have an agenda to crush Islamic faith. 'They have crushed the fundamental tenets of Islamic faith by giving misleading perception of Qur'an,' he insisted.⁴⁷ To Husaini, such action is a part of an hidden agenda for destroying Islam and has been widely campaigned by Free Masonry Jews and Christian missionaries in Indonesia.

Husaini is not alone. There are some leading figures of RCI and even moderate figures who believe in conspiracy theory against Islam. Based on ICIP's field research all key informants agree that there is an international conspiracy to hamper and paralyze Muslim power in the world. None of the 30 key informants at the five research regions (Jakarta, Serang, Solo, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya) has a dissident opinion on it. Regardless of their radical or moderate background, those key informants have a common opinion: Islam is under threat. The evidence given by these key informants about such international conspiracy is the US foreign political behavior in

the past few years. The US and its allies invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, the Muslim sovereign countries. As an invasion, merciless

there was Limited Group in Yogyakarta that carried out discussion on Islamic theology using liberal approaches. As for the 1970s period, Indonesian Muslims were shocked with the ideas of GPPI (*Gerakan Pembaruan Pemikiran Islam*, The Renewal of Islamic Thought

The second group of modernist Muslims—the *kaum muda*—responded to the issue of modernization in a rather rationalist and accommodative manner. They called for creativity and objectivity from Muslims, imploring them to face the imperatives and realities of real problems in a rapidly changing world. Rejecting the *kaum tua*'s apologia, this group considered modernization to be a modern imperative, a global phenomenon that could not be rejected by Muslims. Instead of seeing modernization as a threat, this group encouraged Muslims to respond creatively to what the modern world had to offer. They argued that modernization was not inherently contradictory to Islam, as Islam is religiously modern and allows for adaptability and change in light of new phenomena. Nurcholish Nurcholish and his colleagues such as Utomo Dananjaja, Usep Fathuddin, M. Dawam Rahardjo, Eky Syahrudin, as well as proponents of the GPPI (*Gerakan Pembaruan Pemikiran Islam*, The Renewal of Islamic Thought Movement) can be categorized in this group.

functions very much like a new religion. In this context, what is meant (by secularisation) is every form of liberating development. This process of liberation is needed because Muslims, as a consequence of their historical journey, are unable to differentiate between the Islamic injunctions and the worldly values, between transcendental and temporal values.⁵¹

Nurcholish argued that liberalization and secularization would enable Indonesian Muslims to focus on the substance of Islamic teachings through the use of scientific, rational and realistic approaches to changing circumstances in modern Indonesian society. He chided Muslims for sidelining themselves, arguing that Indonesian Muslims seemed to have lost their creativity, displaying defensive and apologetic tendencies in response to great and worldly ideas such as democracy, social justice, socialism, and others. Consequently, the initiative always belonged to other groups, who were then in a strategic position to develop and maintain ideas and thinking, while Muslims were excluded. Nurcholish apparently levelled indirect criticism at modernist Muslim leaders and politicians for focusing on rebuilding Islamic political power, and in doing so, neglected the real challenges that confronted the welfare of the *ummat*. To this end, he promoted his controversial 'Islam yes, Islamic Party No' slogan.

On the issue of an Islamic state, Nurcholish re-confirmed his religio-political thoughts about the deconstruction of the idea of an Islamic state. To Nurcholish, the idea of an Islamic state was an apologetic tendency based on the appreciation of Islam as a totalistic ideology. This apologetic tendency was rising due to the inferiority complex of Muslims facing Western cultural invasion and resulting modern ideologies such as capitalism, socialism, communism, democracy, and others. io*[(d)61msice,

Muslims not to demand the establishment of either an Islamic state or an Islamic government. To Nurcholish, the most important thing was not the form but the substance of the state. The formal outlook of the state is useless if the content does not change. 'There is no problem with the form of the state and its claim (Islam or national state) ... the most important thing is how to implement Islamic injunctions based on God's will', Nurcholish insisted.⁵⁴

Syafii Maarif shares with Nurcholish concerning the idea of Islamic state. He criticized Muslim leaders for their rigid approach in forcing through the idea of an Islamic state as a challenge to Pancasila in the Constituent Assembly in 1959. He argued that the notion of upholding an Islamic state for Indonesia was unrealistic and not to be based on a strong religio-intellectual foundation. 'If the idea of an Islamic state became a reality, Indonesia as a nation-state would be facing national disintegration,' he said.⁵⁵

Maarif emphasized his support for Pancasila as a state ideology of Indonesia rather than Islam. He thanked God because Islamic leaders were failing in forcing an Islamic state into being. 'Especially if what they mean is that the concept of an Islamic state is related to the implementation of *shari'a* formulated by Muslim jurists in the medieval period. If such an idea is implemented in the twentieth century, it will face great difficulties to be achieved,' he opined.⁵⁶ According to Maarif, such a concept was actually derived from the *ijtihad* (personal examination) of those Muslim jurists prior to the fall of the Baghdad Empire in the medieval period of Islamic history. Therefore, it is not eligible to be achieved in this modern and complicated world. 'Pakistan is an example. Although it declared itself an Islamic Republic from the beginning of its independence, in fact it is still facing many difficulties in implementing *shari'a* in its national activities,' he said.⁵⁷ In short, Syafii rejected any ideas related to achieving either an Islamic state or *shari'a* law. .

Another noted modernist Muslim intellectual, M. Dawam Rahardjo also rejected the idea of an Islamic state which has often been formulated by using legal-exclusive approaches based on *fiqh* (Islamic law). Therefore, he strongly criticized Al Maududi's theory on the Islamic state as an ideal-type concept that is equally totalitarian and elitist. Rahardjo pointed out that Maududi's ideal concept on the Islamic state is likely to be driven by his dream to counter modern Western concepts on the state. 'In fact, he is precisely following the

modern Western concept of the state, but he uses a legitimacy based on Quranic verses and hadith. Qur'an definitely contains the idea of social emancipation, but not the idea of the elitist state,' he insisted.⁵⁸

Like Nurcholish, Rahardjo also criticized the apologetic tendency of Indonesian Muslim leaders in adopting Maududi's concept of the Islamic state. He pointed out that the danger of an ideal-type construct of the Islamic state has the tendency that the rulers will be acting as the elites who have the authority to describe God's will. 'Consequently, those who are in power will be acting on behalf of God. Moreover, they will pretend to take over God's authority and they will use the power of the state to implement the role of *khilafah*,' he said.⁵⁹

political thoughts. There are some groups that have promoted Islamic liberalism such as Paramadina, LkiS (*Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial*, Institute For Islamic and Social Studies), P3M (*Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat*, Indonesian Society for Pesantren and Community Development), Lakpesdam, *Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumberdaya Manusia*, Human Resource Development and Study Institute), JIMM (*Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah*, The Young Muhammadiyah Intellectuals Network), ICIP (International Center for Islam and Pluralism), and the like. Indeed, those are generally non-government organization (NGO) groups committed to the idea of strengthening civil society by promoting the compatibility of Islam with democracy, human rights, pluralism, and gender equality values. In this regard, they develop a collaboration with several funding agencies from the US and other Western countries.⁶⁴ Despite their different activities, they can be grouped as the proponents of progressive-liberal Islam (PLI). More importantly, most activists of PLI in post-Soeharto era are young generation and they are ideologically and personally associated with two leading Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah.

Interestingly enough, liberal Muslim scholars and activists in the Middle East have influenced the proponents of PLI, although they often use Western social sciences approaches in disseminating their ideas. Since its establishment in 1993, the LKiS has been very active in promoting Islamic liberalism, interfaith dialogue, and peaceful resolution to conflict. Interestingly, these new generation of young Muslim intellectuals, especially those who have background from the NU community, are mostly educated in pesantren and master in Arabic. As a result, they are familiar with references or sources of Arabic as well. Several of them are also graduated from universities in the Middle East countries such as Al-Azhar (Cairo), Jordan University, and others. This can be seen from book references, articles, and intellectual resources quoted by activists of liberal Islam. Accordingly, there is a process of intellectual transmission from the Middle East to Indonesia relating to the emergence and development of PLI in Indonesia.

On this last issue and others that have political significance, however, JIL stands as the most outspoken group. This aggressive stance of JIL activists has to be understood in the context of their

reasonable dissatisfaction, if not outrage, about the perceived domination of discourse about Islam by the RCI groups. In its manifesto, the JIL declares the necessity for implementing *ijtihad* (the rational thinking of Islamic texts) in the entire aspects of human life. JIL believes that *ijtihad* is the main tenet that enables Islam to hold out through any seasons. JIL is an endeavor of Islam's interpretation based on the ethical-religious spirit of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Consequently, JIL reject interpretation of Islam based on the literal and textual of the text. By using the ethical-religious spirit based interpretation, JIL believes that Islam would live and grow creatively associated to the universal 'humanistic civilization'. JIL is based on the notion vis-à-vis 'truth' (in religious interpretation) as a *relative* thing, since an interpretation is 'human activity' which is shackled in a certain context; *open*, since each form of interpretation contain an erroneous possibility, instead of a correct one; *plural*, since each religious interpretation, in one and other way, is a reflection of any interpreter's need in an incessantly changes of time and places.⁶⁵

From the above theological underpinning, the proponent of PLI group would like to promote the liberal perspective concerning current religio-political issues. One of most important issues raised by the RCI is to end the dualism of Muslims in response to religion and politics. In this regard, Luthfi Assyaukani pointed out that,

Since Muslims take in their independence from colonialism in the end of first half of 20 century, the problem of the relationship between religion and the state becomes unresolved puzzle. The liberal Islam, such as other renewal movement in Egypt and Turkey, try to solve the dualism attitude by socializing a theology for the basis

is in contrast with majority of classical Islamic scholars who perceive that the wording of the text is a given message from the God, so, according to them, the wording of the text is immutable. The wording of the texts for Islamic fundamentalists is the sharia that has to be

yang Terpikirkan tentang Isu-Isu Keperempuanan Dalam Islam (The Unthought of Things about Women in Islam) Hasyim strongly criticizes the gender bias and patriarchal tendency of conventional fiqh. He offers a new analysis and methodology of fiqh related to women in Islamic perspective. Furthermore, Hasyim insists the necessity to deconstruct patriarchal fiqh related to polygamy, divorce, inheritance, and others. To Hasyim, the patriarchal fiqh formulated by traditional Muslim scholars is full with gender bias and unfair treatment to women, which are definitely against the spirit of Islam that promotes equality and justice. Thus, he promotes the necessity to deconstruct patriarchal fiqh and changes with alternative fiqh. Hasyim insists, that the aim of Islam is to uphold justice in the world. Equality and balancing as the principle of justice must be set up for developing a new fiqh using gender fairness perspective. What is meant gender fairness is to place an equal and steadiness the position of men and women, not to be based on the differences of natural law.⁷⁵

From the above discussion, there is no doubt in arguing that the young proponents of PLI are much concerned with the agenda of deconstructing shari'a, arguing that the conventional interpretation of the shari'a is no longer applicable in response to the modern live and global phenomenon. In this regard, it is fair to argue that their liberal approaches on the shari'a and Islamic theological underpinning is controversial and sometimes shocking the majority of Muslims society. It is definitely against the mainstream opinion of ulama, Muslim scholars and leaders who are mostly concerned with conventional or moderate perspective.⁷⁶ In addition, those young activists of PLI are in certain level more brave and sharper in

in developing their progressive and liberal thinking related to Islamic thoughts. In this regard, the main focus of PLI is to develop new methodology of *fiqh* (Islamic law) and new methodology in Qur'anic interpretation, if referred to tactfully, can serve as opportunities for the proponents of the PLI to promote a more moderate form of Islam.⁷⁷

and temporal and does not related to universal principles (*ushul al-kulliyat*). Thirdly, the re-actualization of Islamic laws is based on the principle 'to use the old that is still relevant but formulate and offer the new which is better'. Fourthly, the re-actualization of Islamic laws must be followed with critical attitudes towards classical *ulamas'* horizon without losing respects to them. Fifthly, the rationalization and re-actualization of Islamic laws means to rethink and reexamine all Islamic traditions including the interpretation toward al-Qur'an

contemporary problems. At this level, it can be stated that *syari'at* does not become a problem anymore, but it will convincingly become '*mashlahah*' in many times and places (*shalih-un li kulli zaman-in wa makan-in*).

The classical methodology of *ushul al-fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) is often regarded as perfect by many Muslim scholars. Nonetheless, according to A. Muqsih Ghazali, there should be a new methodology in Qur'anic text reading, because classical methodology proves to be incapable in dealing with contemporary human problems. The classical methodology has little appreciation towards human powers in conceptualizing *masalahah* (public interests) even though it is for the sake of humanity, meaning that human beings are often treated as mere *mukallah* (object of law). Worse still, the sacralization of the text has forced the operation of *ijtihad* on text only, thus often neglecting the reality. the highest to the lowest, namely, *al-Qur'an*, *hadits*, *ijma'* (consensus) and *qiyas* (analogy), while other sources such as *masalahah mursalah*, *istihsan*, *syar'u man qablana*, '*urf*, and the like are only secondary sources. However, A. Muqsih Ghazali argued that *maqashid al-Syari'ah*

namely

States. Moreover, the international situation did not contribute to the democratic consolidation in Indonesia. The September 11 terrorist attack in the United States done by Muslim extremists of al-Qaeda appeared to have contributed to the escalating of religious tensions in Indonesia. While societal groups that advocate democracy and liberalism, such as JIL, have been steadily growing, groups that advocate hatred and intolerance, such as FPI and Laskar Jihad, have been fast burgeoning.⁸⁵

It is because of this concern that the PLI groups, such as JIL and ICIP are committed to promoting the notion of democracy. JIL, for instance, has conducted radio talk show concerning religio-political issues that promote democratization. This program is to be broadcasted by hundred radios. Meanwhile, in collaboration with The Asia Foundation (TAF), ICIP has also conducted international seminars and researchs for promoting the compatibility between Islam and democracy as well as searching religious values that strengthen democratization process in Southeast Asian countries. Furthermore, in collaboration with the AusAID, ICIP has also conducted research in exploring the perception of members of *pesantren*

in using politics for the benefits of the *pesantren*. In regard with whether *pesantren* should provide 'political guidance' for voters, it was revealed that while *pesantren* should not openly direct their *santris* to choose certain political parties, it was also found that *pesantren* and *kyais* are expected to give general hints about the characters of political parties or candidates that Muslims should ideally aspire. In this case it would be almost certain that Islamic-oriented political parties and leaders with Islamic characters would be their choice.

One may be astounded with the paradoxes and contradictions prevailing in this research. On one hand, there is a growing fundamentalism; on the other hand, the respondents are keen to make use of democratic mechanism to pursue their agenda. In this case, pragmatism is perhaps the appropriate term to describe this trend.⁸⁶ In my view, this pragmatism paves the way for the PLI groups to do more to promote democracy.

PUBLISHING

Thus, they suggest that, 'due to its position as a law based on *ijtihad*, it is possible to create a new opinion that Muslim women are allowed to marry with the non-Muslim men, or inter marriage is widely allowed whatever their religion and belief. This is derived from the spirit of Qur'an itself.'⁸⁸

According to the authors, the spirit of marriage is related to (1) the mission of Qur'an that recognizes religious plurality as *sunatullah* that can not be avoided, (2) the aim of marriage is to develop love (*al mawaddah*) and mercy (*al rahmah*), and (3) the spirit of Islam is liberation, not an oppression. The authors also suggest that the stages of what has been done by Qur'an began with its prohibition to marry with apostate people. Then it opens the path of marrying with *ahl al kitab* (people of the book) is opening a stage of evolutionary liberation. 'It is time for us to consider that other religious adherents are not to be regarded as second class as well as pressuring them as *ahl al dzimmah*. They have to be treated as citizens.'⁸⁹

ISLAMIC COUNTER LEGAL DRAFTING

In 2004, *Tim Pengarusutamaan Gender* (The Gender Mainstreaming Team) of the Department of Religious Affairs, worked two years to draft a concept namely Counter Draft of Compilation of Islamic Law. Led by leading Muslim woman intellectual Dr. Musdah Mulia, the draft contains a new approach on Islamic law based on the spirit of gender equality, pluralism, human rights and democracy. Among the controversial issues raised in this draft is to forbid polygamy, and to allow interfaith marriage.⁹⁰ Musdah pointed out that there are some reasons of why reform is urgently needed. First, the compilation fundamentally contradicts the core message of the Qur'an that men and women are equal, while the compilation sends a strong message that men have more rights than women. Second, the compilation runs against the national policy of women empowerment which campaigns for zero tolerant policy of any form of discrimination and violence against women. As an example, in the current compilation, marriage is defined as *ibadah*—it is an obligation. Here Musdah said she would like to promote a new definition of marriage, that is a powerful bound, or *mitsaqan ghazila*, between men and women who enter into wise understanding for the purpose of creating a family based on the essence and the

agreement of the two parties. In terms on polygamy, for instance, this counter legal draft argued that is strictly prohibited. On the issue of interfaith marriage, including marriage between Muslim men and non-Muslim women, this draft pointed out that it is legitimate as long as to achieve the goal of marriage.⁹¹

PROGRAMS ON MULTICULTURALISM, DEMOCRACY, CIVIC EDUCATION, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY⁹²

Following the research on the perception of *pesantren* communities towards liberalism, pluralism and secularism, ICIP has been doing training on strengthening multiculturalism among members of *pesantren* in West Java. Just recently ICIP has conducted the training in Pesantren Darul Mutaqqin in Parung, Bogor, West Java, participated by many delegates from *pesantren* in West Java. With earnest support of The Asia Foundation, other PLI groups have also conducted similar programs, such as Lakpesdam on crisis management program, P3M on *halqah pesantren*, Ma'arif on teaching civil society in schools, LKiS on human rights in Islam, Fatayat NU on gender equality within Islam and anti-violence campaign.⁹³ At regional and international level, networking has also been pursued by ICIP with the support of The Asia Foundation, such as through roundtable meetings on Islam and Democracy in Southeast Asia drawing participants from Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore as well as Western countries. The objective of this program is to disseminate the ideas of Indonesia's moderate and progressive Muslims to audience in both Indonesia and around the world and also to disseminate the ideas of international moderate and progressive Muslim thinkers to the Indonesian people. The program is also a vehicle for disseminating progressive Indonesian Muslim thinking outside of its usual realm and can be a way to deepen and amplify progressive Muslim thought within Indonesia by bringing together high-profile, like-minded thinkers from other parts of the Muslim, as well as Western world. The formation of a regional and international network of progressive Muslim thinkers is particularly important not only to provide support and solidarity for solitary fighters in the battle against militancy, but also to counter the strong linkages that already exist regionally and internationally among hard-liner Islamic organizations.

TENSION AND CONFLICT

Since the last four years until present days, the contest between RCI and PLI has taken place. Such contest used to emerge as a religio-political discourse covered by print or electronic media either affiliated with the RCI and PLI or other public media. In this regard, the voice of RCI groups is usually published in *Sabili*, one of the most radical Islamic magazines and become such a mouthpiece of RCI groups. According to surveys conducted by AC Nielsen, *Sabili* has the second largest circulation in Indonesia, after the women's magazine, *Femina*. It reveals that *Sabili* publishes more than 100.000 copies of each edition. Another hardliner Islamic magazines but less radical than *Sabili* is *Hidayatullah* (50.000 copies), and Islamic women magazine *Ummi* (75.000 copies). However, ICIP's researchers who are conducting field research found that 3-4 readers read each exemplar of those magazines, especially *Sabili*, at least. *Sabili* is also often used as reference by *da'i* or *mubaligh* (preachers) for disseminating their sermons in mosques and religious gatherings. Beside those hardliners Islamic magazines, the RCI groups have been publishing and selling books with cheap price as well as distributing pamphlets or brochures to public. Of course such publications are addressed to widen their ideological underpinning and to counter the PLI. By so doing, the RCI groups want to get public support widely.⁹⁴

Obviously, such discourse between the two conflicting groups is positive, provided that each group will be able to set up a healthy discourse that enable to enrich public knowledge on religio-political issues. The problem lies in the fact that the RCI groups often use provocative language, rudeness, blasphemy, and tend to have truth claim concerning their ideas and actions opposing the PLI groups. Consequently, people are often misunderstand or even get misleading perception towards the ideas of PLI. Worse still, the RCI often use

raised by FUUI. Although some of them might not be in favor with Ulil's ideas, they consider that such a death edict was unlikely and against freedom of expression. The moderate Muslim leader such as Syafi'i Maarif, Chairman of Muhammadiyah also strongly criticized that of the death edict. 'Muhammadiyah will never be stupid like those who declare the death edict'. Another Muslim intellectual, M. Dawam Rahardjo, shares with Maarif concerning the death edict addressed to Ulil. Dawam reminds that it was dangerous and could encourage someone to kill Ulil based on that misleading edict.⁹⁵

The other case was the charge of MMI to JIL concerning advertisement of '*Islam Warna-Warni*' (The Multicolor Islam) broadcasted by two Indonesian leading televisions, RCTI (*Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia*) and SCTV (*Surya Citra Televisi*) This advertisement was related to a short message (one minute) informing that there are various sects and groups within Islam. These groups have been growing rapidly since Indonesian politics was more open. The advertisement is completed with some pictures showing pluralism of the Indonesian Muslims and yet there is no single Islam. The message is clear: calling towards the necessity to respect religious plurality on the basis of mutual admiration. Thus, tolerance attitude towards the other interpretation on Islam is likely to be honored. However, the MMI judged that that such an advertisement was totally wrong and dangerous to the ummah (Muslims community). The MMI claimed that Islam is the only single interpretation and yet plurality is only relating with the ummah, not linking with Islam itself as a religion. More importantly, the MMI also gave a strong pressure to RCTI and SCTV in order to withdraw the advertisement, threatening that if those two televisions did not stop it, they would be facing demonstration and to be charged. Facing this reality, the RCTI and SCTV decided to withdraw the 'multicolor Islam' advertisement.⁹⁶

Furthermore, in terms of Counter Legal Drafting on Islamic Law, the RCI did not only protest it. Rather, they strongly pressured the Dept. of Religious Affairs to withdraw the draft. The RCI group judged the draft is misleading and harassing the shari'a. Opposing the draft, the RCI group published books, articles, and pamphlets condemning the initiators as well as carried out public campaign demanding the withdrawal of the draft.⁹⁷ Considering the worse implication, the Department of Religious Affairs finally declared to

withdraw the draft, saying that the draft is counter productive and not in accordance with the spirit of Indonesian Muslims. However, Musdah lamented that the support for this project was never

of Islamic law or shari'a. In addition, the central government has also given a greater autonomy since 2000 and it has officially administered Islamic jurisprudence.¹⁰⁰

Notwithstanding the inclusion of shari'a within the local administrations are mainly related to the regulation concerning Muslims obligation to maintain their daily life such as wearing of Islamic dress, regulating collection and distribution of zakat, performing prayers and reciting Qur'an, allocating more time for religious education to be taught in schools. However, there are also certain strict regulations that limit women activities such as the obligation to use veil for Muslim women and prohibition for them to go outside after 9 pm without being accompanied by their *muhrim*. In fact, such regulation had caused several victims in Aceh and Padang after the local RCI groups raided several women considered as offenders of regulation. Although such regulations are not officially included by the local administrations, local conservative ulama and Muslim puritan activists tend to endorse or at least let those RCI to do their actions.

With regard to the above condition, it is clear that the RCI groups seemed to change their strategy. Previously they attempt to struggle for the imposing shari'a to the state constitution. Currently, they have maintained the agenda of 'creeping shari'aization' in Indonesia. It means that the agenda for the formalization of the shariah is to be done gradually, but it is maintained in more sophisticated ways. The problem lies in the fact that the shariahization agenda often manipulates religious sentiments or politicization of the issues for appealing ordinary and public Muslims support. Most importantly, such tendency tends to neglect the existing condition of Indonesia as a pluralist society. Although Muslims are the majority of the Indonesian populace, Indonesia is *de facto* a pluralist society, which contains religious, ethnic, custom and cultural diversities. Therefore, any laws and regulations should be based on the recognition on pluralism, human rights, democracy, and respect to 'the others' (non-Muslims).

Interestingly, in the arena of national politics the issue of shari'a seemed to decline. This can be seen from the issue in the legislative general election and the first stage of presidential race recently. It seems that the issue of shari'a, at least in national level, is not popular anymore. There was no response or support from the public to

Islamic parties campaigning sharia such as PPP and PBB. They did not get support and their vote declined significantly. In the 2004 general election, PPP gained only 8.2 per cent, PBB 2.6 per cent. The only Islamic party in which was able to increase its vote was PKS (Justice and Prosperous Party), gaining 7.2 per cent. Many observers were not only surprised with the performance of PKS, but

Therefore anyone or group declaring that there is another prophet after Muhammad's mission will be decided as heretical and its followers judged as heretical (apostate). Based on certain interpretations of Islamic law, a *murtad* can be killed. As a matter of fact, the MUI already declared such an edict on Ahmadiyah in 1980. However, the Ahmadis have still continued their activities until present.¹⁰²

The second controversial MUI's edict is to condemn pluralism, secularism, and liberalism. The MUI edict defined liberalism as acknowledging that reason is higher than the Qur'an and sunna. In terms of secularism, the MUI defined that it is a view of recognizing the separation between religion and worldly life. The most controversial edict is related to pluralism. The MUI defined that pluralism is a view that all religions are equal and the truth of each religion is relative. 'Muslims are strongly prohibited to follow those three *haram* concepts, because they can make trivialization Islamic faith,' said KH Ma'ruf Amin, chair of MUI's Edict Commission.¹⁰³

It is important to note here that prior the MUI Congress, Islamic hardliners, using MUI's Edict in 1980, attacked the Ahmadiyah compound in Parung, Bogor on 15 July. Thousands of people, in the name of GUUI (*Gerakan Ummat Islam Indonesia*-The Indonesian Islamic Community Movement) staged a demonstration at the Al Mubarak campus. Led by Habib Abdurrahman Assegaf, the people of GUUI brought sticks and stones to attack the Al Mubarak, demanding the closure of that campus and the expulsion of the Ahmadis in order to leave immediately. During the attack, people of GUUI were yelling Allahu Akbar, raiding the campus and threatening the Ahmadis. What was shocking was that police and the authorities neither protected the Ahmadis nor stopped such criminal acts. Rather, they just let the attackers commit their actions and even indirectly 'guarded' them to expel the Ahmadis from their campus.

What was the reason for the police not to protect the Ahmadis? Having observed this incident, there was clear evidence that the authorities indirectly 'inspired' the attack. This was because since January 2005, there were a number of meetings attended by representatives from the police, intelligence, Department of Religious Affairs, and LPPI (*Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pengembangan*

In fact, the agenda of imposing violence on the basis of MUI's Edict is still continuing and even getting worse right now. The attack on Ahmadiyah in Parung, Bogor, was followed by further assaults on other Ahmadiyah branches in Jakarta, Cirebon, Kuningan, Garut, Tasikmalaya, and Lombok. In Jakarta, the attackers occupied the Ahmadiyah compound at Jl. Balikpapan, central Jakarta, and prohibited the Ahmadis to conduct Friday prayer. In Garut, the attackers took the Ahmadis as hostages. They put the sword on the neck of the Ahmadis and forced them to sign a statement that those Ahmady repent and ask God for forgiveness, declaring formally to convert to Islam. Several days prior to the attack, the FPI conducted a *tablig akhbar* (religious rally) in Garut, and its chief, Habib Rizieq, presented a provocative speech demanding the closure of Ahmadiyah. In Tasikmalaya, thousands of people also raided the Ahmadiyah compound at dawn, destroying mosques and houses belonging to the Ahmadis. At least 6 mosques and 70 houses of Ahmadis were destroyed. The attackers also totally burned several houses and vehicles, inflicting a great loss upon the Ahmadis.

From the above cases, it is obvious that the attack on Ahmadiyah is just an entry point for radical Islam to attack other groups. The fact is that radical Islam always capitalized the MUI's Edict for the sake of their own political interests. For that purpose, they also committed violent actions against Ahmadiyah and other groups suspected of promoting pluralism, liberalism, and secularism in some places. In Padang, West Sumatra, a number of conservative and radical groups threatened a pluralist NGO, which led to the closure of its activities. It also occurred when radical Islamic groups conducted a second attack to JIL by provoking ordinary people based on that edict. This second attack was more dangerous because it involved ordinary people who

supporters to both verbally and physically attack the opponents of the edict. The edict gave the RCI groups an impetus to make they deemed necessary acts against the proponent of PLI.

The question of why an edict could instigate violence is important to answer. According to Islamic jurisprudence, the edict or *edict* is a legal opinion issued by 'ulama regarding one particular issue. This edict is not binding—there is no obligation for Muslim to follow or implement it. However, many Muslims believe that this edict should be followed and implemented since it is issued by an authoritative institution. Another factor was perhaps during the multi-faceted crisis that have crippled this country—including leadership crisis—many Muslims believe that MUI is the only leadership institution with credible moral credentials to follow. MUI itself systematically disseminates the edict through Muslim preachers who become its supporters. Following this edict, Friday congregations are often filled up with high-spirited sermon to campaign for the implementation of the edict and condemnation of the perceived deviant thoughts.¹⁰⁷

MUI, however, has not provided enough explanation about the function of the edict in Islamic legal system. Instead, it manipulates the feeling of rage of Muslims to act violence against Ahmadiyah and the proponents of PLI. Despite criticism from many sections of society, MUI did not call off the edict. Instead, MUI made use of its subordinate institutions to campaign for the implementation of the edict to the grass root level of Muslim communities. It is evident that the edict has split Muslim into two opposing groups, the

principle of permissiveness (*ibahiyah*). Azra believes that MUI has no enough deep information and knowledge on these important issues. He further added that MUI should have hold discussion involving a number of experts before issuing such an important edict. It is, therefore, the edict is contra productive for the life of Muslim community as well as for the development of democracy in Indonesia.¹⁰⁹

Ahmad Sahal, one of the important figures in JIL criticizes MUI edict as an anti-democratic edict. He asserted that if MUI rejects secularism, pluralism, and liberalism, it should also reject democracy. Democracy is a system of life where everyone regardless of their religious and ethnic background is equal before the law. Democracy thus necessitates pluralism, a set of principles which recognizes and accepts others. Meanwhile liberalism, Sahal believed, is a value which guarantees that everyone has freedom to express his or her opinion. It is civil liberties which are now enjoyed by Indonesian Muslims. Furthermore, Sahal explained that secularism is separation between private and public spheres. Religion is concerned with private and personal affairs of individuals, while public spheres are managed by consensus of all members of the community. If MUI is clever enough that the total sum of secularism, pluralism, and liberalism is democracy, this commission also has to issue the edict against democracy. But it does not, which indicates that MUI is not clever.¹¹⁰

Responding to the prevailing criticism, KH. Kholil Ridwan, one of the executive members of MUI, said that there is no discussion necessary for the edict. He further asserted that the necessary thing is how this edict can be disseminated to all members of Muslim communities. For those Muslims who oppose the edict, Ridwan accused them of being hypocrites, and hypocrites are more dangerous than infidel. In his press conference, he publicly declared that JIL is a deviant group that is against Islamic teaching. Deviant thoughts as shown by JIL, Ridwan believed, have no place in Islam and that the followers should return to the path of Islam. He also refers secularism, pluralism, and liberalism by the acronym 'sipilis' which is also the Indonesian word for the sexually transmitted disease 'syphilis'.¹¹¹

To support his argument, Ridwan explained that pluralism and secularism are issues which have also been rejected by a number of Christian communities in the Western world, especially in the United States. In the last two decades the so-called revitalization of religion

has come to the fore in the US. The call of return to the sacred source of religion has been widespread. Ridwan assured Indonesian fellow Muslims that it is not necessary to waste time to discuss these issues because they have also been rejected by the Christians.

Ridwan was trying to impose his interpretation and definition regarding secularism, pluralism, and liberalism to be accepted by Muslim communities. In fact, the meaning of these issues has always been contested; there is no single definition of secularism, pluralism, and liberalism. The fact that MUI did not held participatory discussion on these issues makes some believe that MUI is now controlled by those figure who have no capability of solving the problems of Muslim communities. Since Din Syamsuddin, the chairman of Muhammadiyah, has assumed the Secretary General of MUI, MUI tends to be more conservative. A number of hard-line Muslim figures such as Umar Husein, leader of the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Commission for Islamic Missionaries-DDII), and Kholil Ridwan were installed to assume membership of the edict (edict) commission of MUI.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is save to argue that political Islam in post-Soeharto Indonesia is colored by the contest between the RCI

languages and approaches. For certain level of societies, particularly for the ordinary people or laymen Muslims, the languages and approaches of the proponents of the PLI are often considered as too sophisticated. As a result, the laymen Muslims often misunderstood the ideas of this critical-idealist group. For example, the ideas of progressive-liberal Islam on the deconstruction of shari'a, pluralism, gender equality and others are sometimes too academic for the laymen Muslims who aspire for a more pragmatic and simple way of thinking of Islam. As a result, only well-educated Muslims and intellectual communities responded positively to their ideas. On the other hand, ordinary Muslims used to deal with simple thinking and practical approaches toward Islamic faith and other socio-political issues. In other words, misunderstanding and intellectual gap between PLI proponents and ordinary Muslims persist. This situation inevitable led to a condition in which ordinary Muslims were seeking a simple approach and alternative groups regarded as more capable to accommodate their religious attitudes and concerns for contemporary socio-political issues.

As a participant observer, my main criticism towards the PLI proponents is that they are often over-confident about the power of their ideas while at the same time they tend to neglect the power of the masses. Indeed, this may have been a source of their strength; however, this is also their major weakness. In contrast to the intellectuals, RCI groups are able to develop social network with ordinary Muslims. Using a conventional theological approach, communicative language and better social network these groups are able to gather support from the ordinary Muslims.¹¹²

Therefore, it is important for the PLI to develop simpler and more communicative languages on most publications of PLI groups and approaches in disseminating their ideas to the ordinary Muslims. In my simple observation, most publications of PLI groups have used undue sophisticated and uncommunicative languages and approaches that are too difficult for laymen Muslims to understand.

that the programs can be pursued in a larger scale with a wider scope throughout the country.

The big question is whether Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono will be

Islam and the Prospects for Democratic Consolidation', paper presented to the Conference on 'Consolidating Indonesia's Democracy', Ohio State University, 11–13 May 2002, pp. 15–18. See also, Jamhari, 'Mapping Radical Islam in Indonesia', *Studia Islamika*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2003, pp. 10–12, Rizal Sukma, 'Militant Islam and Indonesia's Frail Democracy',

seat), PPII Masyumi (1 seat), and PKU (1 seat). There are two parties

Rizieq (Chairman of FPI), Jakarta, 5 August 2004. See, also Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, *Bahaya Islam Liberal*, Jakarta: Pustaka Al Kaustar, 2002, pp. 82–6.

56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. See, M. Dawam Rahardjo, 'Mencari Bentuk Negara yang Emansipatoris', Nuansa, December 1984, pp. 75-7.
59. Ibid., p. 77.
60. M. Dawam Rahardjo, 'Teologi Emansipatoris', op. cit.
61. See, Kuntowijoyo, *Dinamika Ummat Islam Indonesia*: Yogyakarta: Shalahuddin Pres, 1985, pp. 92-3.
62. Ibid.
63. Ihsan Ali Fauzi, 'Political Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: A Closer Look at Liberal Islam',

74. Nasaruddin Umar, 'Women's Liberation Theology', Liberal Islam Network, English Edition Web (www.islamlib.com), 29 July 2001.
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