

## Moderate Islam vis-a-vis Salafism in Indonesia: An Ideological Competition

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### Abstract

A unique moderate style of Islam in Indonesia was believed to be the first entrance of Islam to the Indonesian archipelago. This model adopted a moderate approach of spreading Islam, not fundamental nor radical. The oil boom of Saudi Arabia in the 1970s promoted the spreading of Salafism in Indonesia. This group, known as Wahhabism, started to flourish from the 1970s until now. This study examines the contestation of moderate Islamic movement vis a vis Salafism in Indonesia from the 1970s to 2018. The data in this study were collected from any related literature such as books, articles, and internet sources. All information was presented by using a method of formal library research. This study reveals that the competition between these two groups has been taking place since the 1970s. With the massive attack from the Salafism group, the Moderate Islamic movement responded by introducing 'Islam Nusantara' (Islam that accommodates customs and cultures in the Indonesian archipelago) to strengthen the moderate style of Islam in Indonesia. The response of the Moderate Islamic movement includes many aspects, such as through the educational sector and establishing mass Islamic organizations.

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*Model Islam Moderat yang unik di Indonesia diyakini sebagai pintu masuk pertama Islam ke Nusantara. Model ini memilih pendekatan media penyebaran pembelajaran Islam, tidak fundamental dan tidak radikal. Ledakan minyak Arab Saudi pada tahun 1970-an berdampak*

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*pada penyebaran Salafisme di Indonesia. Kelompok yang dikenal sebagai Wahhabi ini mulai berkembang dari tahun 1970-an hingga saat ini. Artikel ini mencoba memaparkan persaingan gerakan Islam moderat versus Salafisme di Indonesia dari tahun 1970-an hingga 2018. Deskripsi dan data dalam penulisan ini dikumpulkan dari beberapa buku, artikel, dan halaman internet. Setiap informasi dijelaskan dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kepustakaan formal. Kesimpulannya, persaingan dua grup ini sudah berlangsung sejak tahun 1970-an. Dengan serangan masif dari kelompok Salafisme, gerakan Islam Moderat meresponnya dengan memperkenalkan 'Islam Nusantara' untuk memperkuat gaya moderat umat Islam di Indonesia. Perlawanan gerakan Islam Moderat mencakup banyak aspek seperti pendidikan dan ormas Islam.*

**Keywords:** moderate Islam; salafism; Islam Nusantara

## Introduction

Islam in Indonesia is a kind of unique because it is not radical nor liberal Islam. In Islamic learning, it is also not Salafism nor Sufism either. The majority of Muslims in Indonesia choose a moderate way by looking at the history (Kersteen, 2017) and the number of Islamic organizations' followers. Kersteen (2017, p. 111) also said NU and Muhammadiyah are the two biggest organizations in Indonesia, often labelled as moderate group. The coming of Islam of Indonesia has many versions. In Indonesia, Hashim Ash'ari as the founder of NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) – which mean 'The Raising up of Ulama' – the biggest mass Islamic organization in Indonesia, has introduced a kind of moderate Islam by following Shafi'i school, but modified with Indonesian custom and tradition to make an Indonesian moderate Islam (Kersteen, 2017).

Jahroni (2012, p. 175) said after Salafism grew up in 1970, they started to ask people to follow the right Islam, refer to Wahhabism, and accused moderate Islam in Indonesia of doing *bid'a* (heresy) and so that it is *haram* (illegitimate). Meanwhile, the moderate Islamic movement in Indonesia is not just waiting and see. They have opposed the Salafism movement from the early in 1970 era until the present. NU, as the biggest Islamic organization with a vast number of followers, lead the other group

to prevent the influence of Salafism. They move out from small education into big action. The latest movement is the development of an idea about Islam Nusantara. The new term of moderate Islam movement which modified by supporting to customs and traditions of Indonesian people (Tjandrasasmita, 2009).

The clash between moderate Islam with Salafism in Indonesia is always becoming an interesting topic to discuss. As the starting point to discuss Islam moderate versus Sufism in Indonesia, it will be good to look back on the history of Islam in Indonesia. The time when Islam came to Indonesia is debatable. Some Indonesian scholar believes that it started on the 7<sup>th</sup> century. But, the most accepted opinion is that Islam came to Indonesia in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Among the books, '*A History of Islam in Indonesia: Unity in Diversity*' written by Carool Kersten is an interesting source to give information about Islamisation in Indonesia. The author noted that Islamisation in Indonesia was started at the 13<sup>th</sup> century. He wrote that Indonesia was connected with the Islamic world through the Indian Ocean and how finally Indonesia created its style of Indonesian Islam as the moderate Islamic movement. One paper report from 11 Indonesia Update Conference '*Indonesian Muslims and Their Place in the Larger World of Islam*' by Martin van Bruinessen talked about the role of Indonesian Muslims in the world and the characteristic of Islam in Indonesia as the unique moderate Islam. These two sources give information about the effort of the Indonesian people to create a moderate Islam style after the postcolonialism era in Indonesia (Bruinessen, 2011).

Another two essential articles are beneficial for discussing the moderate Islamic movement in Indonesia. First, '*Islam Nusantara as Moderate and Tolerant Islam: a Literature Research*' written by Zuly Qodir (2016). The second one is '*The Position of Islam Nusantara in Geopolitical Dynamics of Islamic World*' written by Abdul Chalik (2016). Both authors explained the idea of Islam Nusantara in Indonesia as the character of moderate and tolerant of Indonesian Muslims, which started since early of Islam entrance in Indonesia. They expose moderate Islam in

Indonesia that many scholars always ask. It is called '*Islam Nusantara*' to make it a unique character of the moderate Islamic movement in Indonesia. Nusantara means '*Indonesian Archipelago*'. So, the name '*Islam Nusantara*', which echoes in 2015, wants to strengthen the position of the moderate Islamic movement in opposing the '*Islam Arabic*' that labelled to Sufism movement which comes later.

To explain the Salafism movement in Indonesia, two books with the same title '*Islam*', one written by Fazlur Rahman and the other written by H.A.R Gibb (1975) give much history of the advance of the advance Wahhabi movement. They explained about the beginning of it movement start until how it spread around Arabia and even out of it. It is interesting to know because the term of Salafism group in Indonesia – which is used in this study – is part of the Wahhabi movement. By knowing the history of the Wahhabi movement, we can consider the good and bad side of it and understand the positive and negative impact of the Wahhabi movement.

More specific information about Salafism in Indonesia and their effort to spread the influence of Salafi-Wahhabi understanding can be found in some articles. Mark Woodward, the one who wrote '*Resisting Salafism and the Arabization of Indonesian Islam: a contemporary Indonesian didactic tale*' by Komaruddin Hidayat' presented the view of Komaruddin Hidayat, a professor and Muslim scholar in Indonesia, about his view toward Salafism and Arabization in Indonesia. His view is important information about resistance from moderate Islamic Movement toward the influence of Salafism in Indonesia. Next, '*The political economy of knowledge: shari'ah and Saudi scholarship in Indonesia*' written by Jajang Jahroni (2012) exposed the effort of the Saudi government in political reason and economy reason by giving a scholarship to Indonesian students, intended to spread their Salafism ideas. It will give us the reason behind the vast number of scholarship from Saudi Arabia to other countries, including Indonesia (Woodward, 2017).

In addition, Noorhaidi Hasan (2010) wrote '*The failure of the Wahhabi campaign: Transnational Islam and the Salafi madrasa in post-*

9/11 Indonesia'. He explained the efforts of Saudi Arabia in spreading their Wahhabi-Salafism concept into *madrasa* (Islamic school) in Indonesia. But this effort is not so successful after the 9/11 terror. The terror impacted the distrust from global Muslims, including Indonesian Muslims, because they worried if the Salafi-Wahhabi school would teach the students about radicalism in the name of jihad. These three articles give much idea to explain the kind of Salafi-Wahhabi's approaching by using the money to spread their understanding. It will show what it has done in Indonesia to provoke resistance from the moderate Islamic movement.

Besides those sources, to give more academic information on this study, another article, papers, and a chapter of books and printed journals will also be used. It needed to serve a good analytical understanding of the resistance from the moderate Islamic movement to the Salafism movement in Indonesia from 1970 to 2018 when this research was done.

### **Moderate Islamic Movement in Indonesia (1970-2018)**

To start discussing moderate Islam in Indonesia, we need to understand the definition itself. This term emerges with theology and ontology basics. It's believed as the part of Universal Islam. In Arabic literature, the term moderation is '*wasatiyyah*'. So, the term Moderate Islam has similarity with the Arabic term '*ummatan wasatan*' (the middle community) or '*al-din al-wasat*' (the middle religion). This opinion is believed to come from Quran. There is a verse in Quran (2:143) that said:

“And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you...” (Sahih International)

“Thus, have We made of you an Ummat justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves...” (Yusuf Ali)

“And it is thus that We appointed you to be the community of the middle way so that you might be witnesses to all mankind and the Messenger might be a witness to you...” (Maududi, n.d.)

The bold marker on those three translations of the Quran is the term '*ummataṅ wasaṅṅan*' in this verse. The transliteration of Sahih International and Yusuf Ali interpret it as '*just community*', although Yusuf Ali added it as just and balanced. Meanwhile, Abul Ala Mawdudi interprets this term as '*community of the middle*' (Maududi, 1947). The term 'Moderate Islam' uses as the opposite of the Radical Islam and Liberal Islam. So, Moderate Islam wants to state that they oppose the violent ways from Radical Islamic groups and the free-thinking ways of Liberal Islamic groups.

Yusuf Qardawi cited by Schmid (2013, 2017), says his opinion about moderation in Islam:

'Moderation, or balance, is not only a general characteristic of Islam, it is a fundamental landmark. The Quran says: "Thus we have made you an umma [community] justly balanced, that you might be a witness over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves" (Quran 2:143). As such, the Muslim umma is a nation of justice and moderation [...] Islamic texts call upon Muslims to exercise moderation and to reject and oppose all kinds of extremism.'

It seems that he stressed the importance of moderation in Islam as the centre of Islam. Regardless of his position as the main figure in *Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (Muslim Brotherhood organization) – which said as radical Islam by Western – Qardawi understand that Islam will gain the victory if Muslims are not forced their ambition by the sword but change it by promoting the moderate Islam to preach the right face of Islam into non-Muslim and get their sympathy.

Besides Indonesia, the other country concerned about spreading the term moderate Islam is Malaysia. The Malaysian government held a conference in 2012 named the International Conference on Global Movement of Moderates (ICGMM). This conference is located in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, and is attended by 850 delegates from around 70 countries. In this conference, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Najib Razak stressed moderate Islam as the opposition to extremist Islam. He said it as *fiṅṅrah* or God's essence, and moderation value refers to acceptance, freedom, tolerance, compassion, justice, and peace. Then, as a

continuation from this conference, the Global Movement of Moderates declared 'The Langkawi Declaration' in April 2015. This declaration held in unison with the 26th ASEAN Summit in Malaysia. They have a deal to promote moderation as the value of ASEAN in security, peace, and development process, especially through the education and academic life in the fight against the extremist's groups.

### **Founding Mass Islamic Organization**

The moderate Islamic movement in Indonesia always referred to some Muslim groups or organizations that opposed with Salafism movement. *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) and *Muhammadiyah* are considered the two biggest civil society organizations representing the moderate Islam group in Indonesia. Many authors reported that the vast number of Muslims in Indonesia are members of these two organizations. However, the *Muhammadiyah* movement said to be the modernist and puritan, while NU said as the traditional and syncretic one, both are giving religious, social, and even education actions for Muslims in Indonesia. *Muhammadiyah* is focusing on building many schools, universities, and hospitals around Indonesia, and NU keeps its traditional orientation by creating many *pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding schools) and *madrassa* (informal Islamic schools). The moderation of both NU and *Muhammadiyah* appeared to support the Indonesian Pancasila state and never debates to substitute Indonesia from the Pancasila state into the Islamic state. Syafiq Hasyim (2013) noted they even changed their organization ideological from Islam as the ideological foundation into Pancasila in 1985.

### **Establishing Educational Institution**

According to Syamsun Ni'am (2015), *pesantren* in Indonesia has a significant role in revealing Islam's moderation in Indonesia. In commenting about the role of *pesantren*, Ni'am said although the image of *pesantren* shows a positive and moderate way in Islamic learning, it cannot be denied that a few numbers of *pesantren* allegedly shows a negative image and far from moderation way. He named some Salafism

pesantren, such as, Pesantren *Al-Mukmin* Ngruki in Solo which led by Abu Bakar Bashir -the leader of the radical group *Majelis Mujahidin* Indonesia; Pesantren *Al-Islam* in Tenggulun village, Lamongan, East Java; Pesantren *Umar bin Khattab* in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, and etc.

NU and *Muhammadiyah*, the two biggest representation of Moderate Islam movement in Indonesia, have many thousand pesantren around Indonesia. There is no clear information about the amount because some pesantren are not a member of NU or Muhammadiyah but claimed their affiliation with NU or Muhammadiyah. They are divided into three groups; the old-style pesantren (pesantren *Salaf*), the hybrid pesantren (mixed old and modern style), and the modern-style pesantren (pesantren *Khalaf*). The total of these three kinds is 24,000 and spread around Indonesia. The official website of NU claimed that approximately 13,700 from 24,000 of those pesantren are the old-style pesantren and affiliated with NU.

### **Mass Media Promotion**

NU as the biggest moderate Islam organization in Indonesia also uses electronic media in their activities. On Ramadhan 17, 1434 Hijriyya or coincident with July 25, 2013, NU launched their television channel, *Aswaja* TV. They confirmed that the launching of *Aswaja* TV as the counter-attack of ideology from another group who deviated from *Ahlussunnah wal-Jama'ah* path by spreading the radical preach which contains heresy and shirk accusation. They also said NU has a responsibility to give a good and appropriate understanding of Islam in Indonesia and worldwide. Meanwhile, *Muhammadiyah* did not neglect this chance. As the second biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia, they established TvMU, a channel of television which stands for Television of Muhammadiyah. This channel launched on November 18, 2013, same year with NU's television. Muhammadiyah said that they want to use television as the media to *da'wah* (propaganda) and increase their role as well as the increase of technology's development.



## The Movement of Salafism in Indonesia (1970-2018)

To fight against Egypt's influent in exporting Islamic Education by Al-Azhar University, Saudi Arabia established the Islamic University of Medina in 1961. The fight between Egypt and Saudi Arabia in exporting Islamic Education around the 1960s actually is the fight between Arab-Socialist and Salafi-Wahhabist. Saudi wants to hamper the influence of Egypt with their Al-Azhar University by establishing the Islamic University of Medina. But, in 1970s oil booming and suddenly, Saudi Arabia become the richest Muslim country, which made them use this chance of exporting Salafism ideology around the world. The primary way is using education. The prosperity of this kingdom brought them to be the main funder for almost all educational institutions around the Muslim world. This is also a chance of propagating Wahhabism and the political interest of Saudi Arabia.

In 1974 Saudi Arabia founded a new university, the Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University in Riyadh, as the largest Wahhabi media to spread their idea of education. It has five branches abroad in United Arab Emirates, Djibouti, Tokyo, USA, and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the branch is named LIPIA (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab*, The College of Islamic Knowledge and Arab) founded in 1980.

There is an interesting report by Amanda Kovacs from GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area Studies) of Leibniz-Institute in 2014. It is report that Saudi Arabia started to be an exporter of Islamic education since the 1960s. This role became larger after the fight with Iran on 1979 by founded more schools and universities overseas. LIPIA College was founded in Jakarta by Saudi Arabia in 1980. She considered the establishment of LIPIA as the reaction of Arab Saudi to the success of Ayatollah Khomeini found a Shi'ite country in Iran. Jahroni (2012) in commentary about LIPIA says:

‘LIPIA (Institute for Islamic Knowledge and Arabic) is the first and the largest Saudi project in Indonesia. It was founded in 1980 in Jakarta. This institute is extremely important since it shapes the subsequent transmission of Salafism to Indonesia. This can be seen in the fact that most of the Indonesian Salafi leaders previously studied at this institute. They are

credited with transforming Islamic movements of the 1970s and 1980s and linking them to transnational and global organizations.'

Jahroni argued that LIPIA was established as the first movement of Salafism from Saudi Arabia to Indonesia. He believed it has a significant role in transferring Salafism from Saudi to create Salafi leader in Indonesia. They use education as the way to make Salafism the transnational movement.

Kovacs (2014) considered a secret plan of Saudi Arabia to establish LIPIA in Indonesia. On a bigger scale, this plan is for Indonesian Muslims and every Muslim in Southeast Asia. They focus on embedding the spirit to support Saudi Arabia and their policies. Furthermore, it also promotes Wahhabi ideology and opposes the Shi'ite as the deviated Islam. The daily activities and lifestyle in LIPIA also adopted the Salafi lifestyle. There is no music nor television or the other entertainment devices. Female students should wear a veil completely like Saudi's woman. Male students also imitate the dress style of Saudi's man. This radical style of exporting educational of Saudi Arabia is cannot be underestimated. They use the educational export project to help them export Wahhabism, with saying it as Salafism to Indonesia.

Since it was established in 1980 until 2018, LIPIA has approximately twenty thousand alumnus who then come back to their hometown around Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries. Most of these alumni then make their educational foundation or school to prepare students in the local region to enter LIPIA in Jakarta. Jajang Jahroni reported until 2012, LIPIA has more than 2500 students, around 25 percent is female. It also becomes a favourite destination to study, especially for poor students with the availability of scholarship and free tuition fees (Jahroni, 2012).

### **The Movement of FPI (*Front Pembela Islam*, Islamic Defenders Front)**

This front was founded in 1999 by a graduate of LIPIA College who continue his study to Riyadh named Habib Rizieq (Kovacs, 2014). His full name is Muhammad Habib Rizieq Shihab ibn Hussein. Indra said FPI declared on August 17, 1998, in Pesantren *Al-Um*, Jakarta. This

declaration attended by some Habaib, Ulama, preachers and Muslim activists. He founded this group to fight immoral activities, un-Islamic groups, and entertainment venues that indicate alcohol and prostitution. Also to apply the implementation of Islamic law in the secular system of Indonesian law. This front also persecutes some non-Sunni groups, such as *Shiite* and *Abmadis*. According to Kovacs (2014), this movement has a similarity with hisba (Saudi's religious police) as the moral guardians to bring peace for Sunni Muslims in Indonesia.

Furthermore, this movement grows up and has agents in almost all provinces of Indonesia. Each provinces' branch has the divisions in some big cities. They become more active to raid immoral places such as discotheques, pubs, and bars on *Ramadhan* (Fasting Month). They raid discotheques, pubs, and restaurants that serve alcohol and the restaurants that open on the day during Ramadhan month. This movement becomes excessive and radical because Indonesian law is not sure about matters like the persecution of non-Sunni groups and the raid of immoral spots. Also, the non-Islamic constitution of Indonesia makes Habib Rizieq and his followers consider their movement as the agent of change to execute *sharia* (Islamic law) against the raids and immoralities.

There is some violence of FPI reported by Indra (2016, 2017). On August 27, 2001, they demanded the Indonesian House of Representatives apply the first draft of Pancasila according to Jakarta Charter 1945, which includes sentences for implementing Islamic law in the first chapter. On October 9, 2001, they disturbed the demonstration in front of the US embassy in Jakarta. The most sensational one was the attack on *Ahmadiyah* followers in Bogor, West Java on July 2005. FPI forced them to empty their living-complex. On April 12, 2006, FPI damaged Playboy magazine's office and attacked some immoral place in Jakarta May 2006. FPI attacked the group they believed as the deviant group and another Muslim with a different ideology, like on May 23, 2006 they expelled Abdurrahman Wahid (NU leader) from Interfaith Dialogue Forum Purwakarta, West Java. Finally, cited from some scholars, Indra said:

“Although FPI organizational-structural is not explicitly stated part of the Wahhabi, but in terms of similarity orientation, ideology, and the target movement genealogically no kinship closely between the movement of radical Islam groups in Indonesia with Wahhabi.”

#### **Establishing of LJ (*Laskar Jihad*, The Jihad Force)**

Like Islamic Defender Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI), Warriors of Jihad (*Laskar Jihad*, LJ) was also established by a graduate of LIPIA College in Jakarta named Jafar Umar Thalib. This Salafi movement is more radical than FPI because they were trained militarily and joined the fight between Muslims and Christians on eastern Moluccas Island, Indonesia. Most of them were trained in Afghanistan during the war to Uni Soviet. A thousand followers of this group came from around Indonesia and went to the Moluccas to attack the Christians. Laskar Jihad appeared on the public in early 2000, and it was influenced by the most puritan sect of Wahhabi Salafism. Bruinessen said Ja'far Umar Thaib was the disciple of some of the most famous Wahhabi Salafism Ulama in Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

*Laskar Jihad* is not interesting in political or economic issues because they focus on increasing the moral values of Muslim individuals and defends the oppressed Muslims. Therefore, they get involved in the Moluccas' conflict, as they want to defend Muslims there. After the September 11, 2001 WTC tragedy, Laskar Jihad and Majelis Mujahidin were suspected of having a connection with Osama bin Ladin and finally, this movement dissolved itself in 2002. Nevertheless, some ex-members of *Laskar Jihad* still alleged to spread the strictest Salafism idea underground.

#### **Establishing Salafi Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School)**

According to Kovacs (2014), other LIPIA graduates such as Abu Nida, Ahmad Faiz Asifuddin, and Aunur Rafiq Ghufroon contributed to establishing some *pesantren* (Islamic Boarding School) with Salafism ideology and they can spread Salafism through that. Based on an unofficial report from a website on the internet, there are 36 pesantrens

which found or funded by Salafis-Wahhabi groups. It spread around Indonesia, from Sumatera Island to Sulawesi Island. Those pesantrens believed by moderate Islam group to teach students by using Wahhabi Salafism curriculum, following only Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab in tauhid, Hanbali madzhab in fiqh, forbids the Sufism learning and practice, and considers some Islamic traditions in Indonesia which always practiced by NU, Muhammadiyah, and another moderate Islam organizations as the heresy and *shirk*.

### **Mass Media Promotion**

Zain al-Muttaqin, Nurcholis Ridwan, and Hepi Andi who also graduated from LIPIA College, established a magazine that focuses on spreading Salafism by raising the sentiment of anti-West anti-Semitic, anti-globalization. The magazine entitled '*Sabili*' (My Path) and survived from 1988 to 1993. This magazine was inspired by a small Islamic discussion group (*usrab*) in some universities which then joined and made a '*Tarbiyah Movement*' (Educational Movement). This movement is following the Salafism idea of *Ikhwanul Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood) in Egypt. Until 1993, *Sabili* has produced 60.000 exemplars. But it has no official license from the government and it was closed in 1993. Later in 1998, this magazine applied for their license, and they started producing again in 1998. The *Sabili* magazine is concerned about reporting news about Islamic revivalism and foreign Muslim countries' news like Palestine, Syria, Afghanistan, etc.

Through television media, Salafism in Indonesia spread their idea from *Rodja TV*, established in 2009. Atabik (2013) in his report argued that Salafi-Wahhabi owns this television. Other TV channel of Salafi-Wahhabi in Indonesia is *Wesal TV* and *Insan TV*. He said the character of those three channels is the same. They spread Salafism from the radical idea of Wahhabism, such as often accusing *bid'ah* (innovation or heresy) and *syirik* (*shirk*) to the other group of Muslim in Indonesia. The program in *Rodja TV* emphasizes *tawhīd* (Oneness of God) issues. They want to purify Islamic learning in Indonesia, which they consider the deviation in

Islam by acculturation with local tradition. So that, they always blame NU and or Muhammadiyah traditions concerning Islam and call it *bid'ah* and *shirk*. The *da'wah* (preach or sermon) program in Rodja TV usually brought by graduates of LIPIA Jakarta and Universities in Saudi Arabia (Atabik, 2013). Rodja radio was the elder brother of Rodja TV which was established in May 2007. Like Rodja TV, this radio also used by Salafi-Wahhabi to spread their idea in Indonesia.

### **Giving Scholarship**

As the Saudi's government tried to spread Salafism and anti-Shia ideology, they started and focused in the educational process. People can consider that the LIPIA as the formal Saudi's Wahhabi educational institution in Indonesia has inspired their alumnus to make some movements from the 1970s to 2018. Kovacs (2014) quote is their religious engagement Islamising Indonesia with the shade of Salafism, it is also Arabising the country. This quote shows that the Salafism movement from 1970 has targeted Indonesia as their main country in Southeast Asia. They also spread the Salafism idea with changes in Indonesian Muslim into the Arabisation process.

### **Some Debatable Issues between Them**

Since LIPIA has established by Saudi and become the centre for disseminating its ideology to Indonesian Muslim, there is a various reaction to it. Although it did not get attention from moderate Islamic organizations initially, in further development, LIPIA can make a network with Islamic organizations that reject Salafism. Some students from *Muhammadiyah*, *al-Irshad*, and *Persis* joined LIPIA. Only NU is the organization that keeps away from it, despite a small number of NU followers in LIPIA. NU as the traditionalist group that keeps the Islam moderate in Indonesia looks at LIPIA as the agent of Salafism from Saudi which wants to change Islam moderate into radical puritan Islam. Salafism remains a hidden movement to spreading their idea behind the activities of LIPIA from 1980s until 1998 when the reformation happened.

After the reformation, they feel free and more aggressive to show their activities. This action did not ignore by the moderate Islam movement in Indonesia. They fight back to the Salafi attack and often raise the clash between the moderate Islamic movement and Salafism in some issues in Indonesia. Here are some essential issues which always becoming the occasion of the moderate Islamic movement versus Salafism in Indonesia.

### **Debating the Bid'ah Issue**

The Salafi groups in Indonesia keep concern using the bid'ah issue to attack non-Salafi groups and attract ordinary Muslims to join Salafism. The debates about *bid'ah* in the 20th century were a direct debate in mosques or pesantren. The moderate Islam and Salafism groups defend their argument face to face in front of hundreds of audiences. This discussion is always attended by many ordinary Muslims who try to find out about Islamic learning. Entering the 21st century, the advancement of technology affects the way of debate. As Jahroni (2012) argued, the Salafi group uses books, TV, radio, internet, and any kind of social media to propagate their ideas. Nevertheless, the alteration of this *da'wa* pattern minimalized the physical conflict and reduced the number of persecutions between the Salafists and non-Salafists in Indonesia.

### **In Academic and Campus' Life**

Starting from the 20th century, the clash between Salafism and Moderate Islam is happening wider. Both do not only play in the grass-root level of Muslims but also target the academic level. With their substantial financial support, Salafism starts to enter campuses in Indonesia, whether it is an Islamic college or not. Jahroni (2012) argued that a small number of members of student organizations such as KAMMI (*Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim*, The Unitary of Indonesian Muslim Student Action), HMI (*Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam*, Islamic Student Association), and even *Hizb al-Tahrir* are found within LIPIA. They promote Islamism issues as the alternative system to fight secularism in

Indonesia. The students interested in this issue then joined their *halaqah* (group discussion) and slowly changed their view into Salafism. In commenting this issue, Jahroni says:

”It is found that the Salafists survive due to the strong support of campus. The Salafists are in fact students previously studied at various campuses in the city. They converted to Salafism for several reasons. In most cases, they converted due to the willingness to seek for true Islam. In some cases, they converted due to friendship, family ties, and marriage.”

From this commentary, it obvious that Salafism has entered to some campuses with their *halaqah* program. This program has become wider for high school students. Some college students who have converted to Salafism then come to high schools to promote their ROHIS (*Rohani Islam*, Islamic Spirit) and teach them about Islam from a Salafism perspective. They are targeting the youth due to the unstable soul of a young age to seek the right way and redirect them to the Salafism way as the true Islam.

Moderate Islamic movement, mainly through NU is not neglecting the Salafism movement into students. They established their student organization, PMII (*Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia*, Indonesian Muslim Student Movement). Found in Surabaya in April 17, 1960, PMII first established as the forum for NU membership students and youth because their aspiration on another student organization is not accommodating well. Nuril Huda, one of the PMII founder said that around 1960s several big parties have youth or student organization like HMI and Masyumi. But, NU as the biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia did not have that. This is the main reason to establish PMII. PMII focuses on promoting NU's *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah* basic faith to students in campuses around Indonesia. Later, after the Salafism movement infiltrates to campuses, PMII as the representation of Moderate Islam started feud with it. KAMMI, as the student organization which linked with PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, Welfare and Justice Party) considered as the main representation of Salafi due to the relation of PKS with Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. PMII always oppose KAMII and



hardly ever cooperates in any activities about students, although they exist in the same city.

Another case of Salafism versus Moderate Islamic movement became a hot topic related to the academic life in some UIN (Universitas Islam Negeri, Islamic State University) and/or IAIN (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*, Islamic State Institute) which in fact under the responsibility of Ministry of Religious Affair. In 2006, Hartono Ahmad Jaiz (2006), a Salafi scholar in Indonesia, wrote *Ada Pemurtadan di IAIN* (The Apostasy in Islamic State Institute). He exposed several reports of cases. In 1985, Harun Nasution, rector of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta (now UIN Syarif Hidayatullah) changed the academic curriculum of IAIN from *Ahlussunah* to *Mu'tazilah*, which he said as the rationalist path. Some curriculum of those universities leads to pluralism in religiosity, as the lecturer are graduates of Western University. In 2004, in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, at the induction gathering of new students, some senior students provoked the new students to say some slogan that contains insultation to Islam and God. That is some cases in UIN that Salafist sued. But, those examples have been disproved by the Moderate Islam group in those campuses. But there is a statement that Hartono's statement is slander because Hartono never studied at IAIN or UIN, so that's just his guess; he does not distinguish Islamic learning in academic life and real life and not every lecturer is an admirer of the Western curriculum (Kharish, 2015). Furthermore, Moderate Islam said some controversial lecturer who teaches the deviation of Islam are Liberal Islam.

The latest issue of Moderate Islam resistance the moderation in academic life is what happened in February 2018. Rector of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, issued a regulation prohibiting female students from wearing a *niqab* (veil). He said this regulation was issued to ban radicalism in the college because they suspect there are around 42 female students who wear the veil are member of Islamic radical group, refers to Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), an organization that has dissolved by the government. Yudian Wahyudi, the rector of this college said he wanted to help them to avoid radicalism and fundamentalist ideology.

Meanwhile, this regulation triggers a polemic rapidly. Many groups assumed this is a controversial decision because it potentially raises conflict in academic life in that college. Some female students also reject this decision and keep wearing their veil. Some Salafists also reject this regulation and sue the college to revoke it. Then, UIN Yogyakarta clarified this problem. They said this regulation is not to ban the wearing of the veil for female students but to record the data of veiling students and remind them of the danger of radicalism. However, the university then canceled the regulation on March 10, 2018. This phenomenon showed the effort from Moderate Islam to fight the Salafism influence in academic life.

#### **Debating Pancasila as the state ideology**

In the connection between Islam and state, Indonesian Muslim prefer to choose democracy rather than Islamic law. So since earlier, they agreed to make Indonesia as the Pancasila state, not an Islamic state. Moderate Islam group supports Pancasila as the ideology of Indonesia. Since the declaration of independence until now they have never demanded to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state. Salafism movement, which has flourished since the 1970s started to question the position of Pancasila as the basic ideology of Indonesia. According to Hasyim (2013), although the Salafism group persuades and provokes people to question the Pancasila as the basic ideology, they are still confused about establishing an Islamic party. Hasyim says about this confusion:

'In this regard, they are divided into two largest group; first, those who views that the establishment of sharia party is important and second, those who view that party system is against Islam because it is not based on the Quran, but on democracy. The first group seems to be inconsistent because if they want to change the ideology of Indonesia from Pancasila to a total sharia law, they should struggle from within the existing system. This is actually a problem dealing with the Salafi-Wahhabi...'

Because they reject the democracy system, the Salafism movement just spread and provoked their wish to change Pancasila with Islamic law underground through electronic media like TV, radio, and social media

accounts. Nowadays, some of Salafist who do not anti-politic joined PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, Welfare and Justice Party) as the party connected to Muslim Brotherhood Salafi. PKS also became their choice because of their puritan in Salafism ideology and their effort to apply Islamic law in Indonesia. However, this is not an ideal vehicle in practical political action in Indonesia because not every member of PKS follows the Salafism lifestyle. As a result, some elite members of PKS involved in corruption cases, some have been jailed, and the other one is still running in court.

To resist the Salafism movement in debating the form of the Indonesian state, since the Reformation era, NU and Muhammadiyah played a more significant role than before to keep the stability of Indonesia as a democratic state and keep Islam in Indonesia in a sensible way. Also, the independent ulama organization, MUI (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, Indonesian Council of Ulama) confirmed in 2006 that the NKRI (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia) is the best for Indonesian people. It seems that these three Islamic organizations agreed with the Pancasila as the basic ideology for Indonesia. Nevertheless, MUI is still opening the occasion for Islamic law to be applied in the legal law of Indonesia with a condition it must constitutionally and procedurally be done through the democratic process.

### **Islam Nusantara versus Salafi Da'wah**

The latest movement from Moderate Islam to resist the influent of Salafism in Indonesia is the declaration of "*Islam Nusantara*". This term means *Archipelagic Islam*, refer to the spirit of moderate Islam in the Indonesian archipelago since early. NU is the pioneer of this movement based on their five principles in facing the matters related to religion. Those five principles are *tasāmuḥ* (tolerant), *tawāzun* (harmony), *tawāsut* (moderate), *ta'ādul* (fair), and *amar ma'rūf nahi munkar* (establish the good and forbid the bad). NU initiated to re-introducing *Islam Nusantara* in 2015 as the type of moderate Islam in Indonesia since early. The affirmation

of this issue also as the impact of radical Islam movements like *al-Qaeda* and ISIS, which has made a negative view of Islam (El-Mawa, 2015).

Azyumardi Azra (1994) explains Islam Nusantara as below:

“Nusantara Islam is a distinctive Islam resulting from vivid, intense and vibrant interaction, contextualization, indigenization, and vernacularization of universal Islam with Indonesian social, cultural and religious realities—this is Islam embedded. Nusantara Islamic orthodoxy (Ash’arite theology, Shafi’i school of law, and Ghazalian Sufism) nurtures the Wasatiyyah character—a justly balanced and tolerant Islam. Nusantara Islam, no doubt, is very rich with Islamic legacy—a shining hope for a renaissance of global Islamic civilization.”

The emergence of the radical movement that bringing Islam label such as *al-Qaeda* and ISIS also the strong excuse to the declaration of Islam Nusantara movement. *Al-Qaeda* terror, especially the 9/11 WTC terror in the USA has made a negative image for Islam globally. Islamophobia raised very significantly in some Western countries. This condition became worse after the emergence of ISIS in 2014 in Iraq and Syria. The perception that Islam as the ‘grace for the universe’ (*rahmatan lil ‘ālamīn*) has been dashed and the new perception is that Islam is radical and terrorist's religion to spread by the sword. This condition back to the Salafism impact. As we know that *Osama bin Laden established al-Qaeda*, a Saudis who practiced Salafi-Wahhabi became radical in protest of the influent of a foreigner – especially the USA – in Saudi Arabia. He understood the jihad meaning literally and began to attack Westerners in the name of the jihad spirit. Later, Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi, who wished to establish a Khilafah Islamiyah under his leadership, proclaimed the ISIS movement to seize some cities in Iraq and Syria by using violence and making the face of appropriate Islam darker.

The idea of ISIS to found an Islamic empire is similar to the *Hizbut Tahrir* movement by Taqiyuddin an-Nabhani. It makes the world's opinion of Islam and Muslim civilization change. Some cases of Muslims were arrested because he suspected a terrorist or a member of a terrorist group. Although *al-Qaeda*, ISIS, and *Hizbut Tahrir* did not claim themselves as the Salafi or followers of the Salafism group, the background of their figure shows the relation to it.

Furthermore, to recondition the negative image on Islam, moderate Islamic movements in Indonesia, especially NU declared the movement of Islam Nusantara. NU wants to promote the model of Indonesian Islam to the world as moderate Islam, acculturated with local tradition, and respect to the non-Muslim. Chalik (2016) said that *Islam Nusantara* in Indonesia assumes that a leader is not always Muslim and a country is not always Islamic. However, the most important thing is both leadership and the country should give benefits to society. This statement explains that in political concept, Islam Nusantara did not dispute the form of a state. A country is no need to be an Islamic country, although most of the population are Muslim. They strengthen the purpose of a state to make a welfare community, and both leadership and government should give benefits to people in the society. With any wish and hope for Islam Nusantara's role in the Islamic world, it has a high bargaining position. Kuipers and Askuri (2018) cite the statement of Gus Dur (Abdul Rahman Wahid), the former Indonesian president and NU leader, about the 'Arabisation'. He stated:

'Islam did not come [to Indonesia] to change our ancestral culture into something Arabic. It did not come to turn "I" into "ana" [Arabic pronoun for "I"], or "you" into "antum" [a second-person Arabic pronoun], or "brother" into "Akhi." We can defend what is ours, we must filter the culture, but not its teachings.'

Gus Dur said that we need to distinguish between Islamic learning and Arabic culture. Becoming a Muslim does not means imitate every Arabian culture, fashion, and language. He believed the robe, turban, veil as the Arabian fashion style as well as to keep the beard. According to him, this is not an obligation for every Muslim and just the habit of Arabian people.

Meanwhile, the Salafists said that as the Sunnah from Prophet Muhammad and Muslim should follow every habit from him and his companions to be a good Muslim. The different view in understanding this problem has been a clash between moderate Islam versus Salafism in Indonesia. On one hand, Moderate Islamic movement which represented by NU reconfirming the term 'Islam Nusantara' or Archipelagic Islam as

the symbol of the moderate way in applying Islam of Indonesian without imitating the whole of Arabian culture. This group wants to protect the unique Indonesian Islam from the orthodox and puritan Islamic group. On the other hand, Salafism movement after Saudi Arabia oil booming grows up in Indonesia by re-introducing the pure Islam, imitating the Arabian culture, and leave the traditional culture of Indonesia in practicing Islam.

## Conclusion

Form all these merits, demerits, and problems into some considerations, there are a number of conclusions to predict the future of the competition between moderate Islam and Salafism. First, this competition seems to be a continuously process. As the biggest Muslim country in the world, this fact impact to the interest of many sides. In domestic side, this number gives hope to gain as much as the follower to strengthen their social and economic benefits because vast follower means vast income. But, this competition gives bad impact toward the Muslim bound domestically. Islamic groups in Indonesia never have agreement in general election. So, it can be understanding why in this country there many Islamic parties are but all of them has a less follower than the secular one. Second, at the same time, the economic and politic atmosphere in Indonesia rather disturbed by this clash. Salafism with their strict understanding of Islamic learning rejects the modernisation in daily life while the moderate one accepts it to increase the welfare of Indonesian people.

In foreign scope, this competition influences relationship between Indonesia and the Muslim world. Saudi Arabia -who spread their Wahhabism since the 1970s in Indonesia, successful in convincing them as the saviour of Muslim world. In fact, moderate Islam group considers them as the betrayer because they keep relation with the Western country but never help to solve conflicts in some Muslim country such as Palestine, Rohingya, Kashmir, and Indonesia itself. Finally, the competition from the 1970s between two groups will not stop in 2018, but it will simultaneously

happen until trigger the destruction in the Islamic bound in domestic and the foreign policy of Indonesia. The final effect could destroy the role of Muslim in economic and politic aspect in Indonesia.[w]

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