

## *Islamic radicalism in Indonesia and its development*

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### Biography

**Zora A. Sukabdi**, PhD, is a forensic psychologist. Her holistic approach to terrorism includes psychosocial, vocational, spiritual-ideological and cultural aspects, and is evidenced by her involvement in a number of disengagement and deradicalisation programmes. She is the patent owner of a 3D model of Motivation-Ideology-Capability Terrorism Risk Assessment and Rehabilitation for offenders (known as MIKRA), which she presented at the Indonesian Presidential Palace in 2017. Her work includes identifying parameters of successful rehabilitation, as well as aftercare programmes for bombing victims and terrorist offenders. Zora has designed the National Rehabilitation Guidelines for terrorist offenders, developed a curriculum for security entities, served in reintegration efforts, and has acted as coordinator among government institutions and civil society in Indonesia. She received the Allison Sudradjat Prize from the Government of Australia for her role in leadership.

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### Abstract

Indonesia boasts the world's largest Muslim population. As such, it has formulated standardised instruments to detect religious radicalism in schools and working spaces. This article reviews Islamic radicalism and its historical roots, and aims to provide an understanding of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia and its development. The review discusses the differences between the closely related concepts of Islamic radicalism and extremism, and their indicators. In terms of the development of religious radicalism in the country, there is a large number of organisations and sub-groups related to religious radicalism in Indonesia that have evolved as a reaction to colonialism and political turbulence.

**Keywords:** [Radicalism](#); [Extremism](#); [Indicators of Islamic radicalism](#); [Terrorism](#); [Development of radicalism](#)

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### Introduction

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population (approximately 225 million) but scores high in religious tolerance among believers. The 2019 Religious Tolerance Index, published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2020, indicates an improvement of the score from 70.9 in 2018 to 73.83 on a scale of 0 to 100 (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2020a, 2020b). The Index score has been consistently above 70 for the past five years, which means that Indonesia is a country with high religious tolerance (Nathalia, 2019). There are three aspects measured in

the Religious Tolerance Index: 1) *Tolerance*, 2) *Equality* and 3) *Cooperation* among believers of different religions. Of the three, *Cooperation* often attains the highest score, whereas it is the opposite for *Tolerance*. *Tolerance* consists of two indicators: *acceptance* and *respecting differences*. *Equality* consists of three indicators: *protecting each other*, *sharing opportunities* and *avoiding superiority*. *Cooperation* consists of two indicators: *active collaboration* and *showing empathy to outgroups* (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2020a, 2020b).

Despite its achievements regarding religious tolerance, the Indonesian government is demonstrably concerned with religious radicalism, as there have been multiple terrorist acts in the country (Mahfud et al., 2018; Zulkarnain and Purnama, 2016). President Joko Widodo has appointed Fachrul Razi, a former military general, as the Religious Affairs minister to tackle anything related to Islamic radicalism. The first target of the anti-radicalism project was the civil service (Hermawan, 2019). The Religious Affairs, Education and Culture, and Interior ministers have all declared war against Islamic radicalism, by initiating new policies to keep the civil service and the student body within the remits of mainstream political ideology. The heads of these three ministries are among the counter signatories of a joint ministerial decree to rid the civil service and student body of radical ideologies (Hermawan, 2019; Ghaliya, 2019). In total, the decree was signed by eleven ministries and the heads of various state bodies, and explicitly bans civil servants from expressing any opinion on social-media platforms, which contains “hate speech” against Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, other types of documents of national consensus, and the government. The decree also foresees sanctions for civil servants who “like” tweets containing hate speech, and a website was established, where anyone can report civil servants promoting radical ideas (Hermawan, 2019). Further, the government announced a plan to apply radicalism screening in schools and government offices (*CNN Indonesia*, 2019; Puspita, 2019). This screening system intends to separate radical students and workers from the majority of the population in schools and workplaces (Chaterine, 2019; Sean, 2019). Accordingly, the government has invested in the development of screening tools and instruments for this purpose, through governmental and non-governmental agencies (*CNN Indonesia*, 2019; Sean, 2019). In spite of these intentions, however, the concept and definition of religious radicalism in the country is still unclear (*CNN Indonesia*, 2019).

The vague characterisation of religious radicalism, according to Harits Abu Ulya, a human rights activist from The Community of Ideological Islamic Analyst (CIIA), may potentially lead to abuse of power, such as expelling vocal students from educational institutions and workers from offices based on the assumption that they are ‘radical’ (*CNN Indonesia*, 2019). He then suggests that Indonesia should adopt clear definition(s) of religious radicalism to be used in the country, and in particular Islamic radicalism since the majority of the population is Muslim, before developing screening instruments and implementing them to educational institutions and the workplace. He explains that, currently, the definition and indicators of Islamic radicalism are ‘non-definitive’ and that forcing the screening system is dangerous,

as it would impact people's access to education and economic resources (*CNN Indonesia*, 2019). He goes on to argue that clear indicators of Islamic radicalism would help practitioners detect radicalism and design effective intervention programmes, for example building proper counter-narrative ideas, approaches and methods.

Against this background, this article reviews Islamic radicalism along with its indicators and historical roots within the current Indonesian context. Tracing the development of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia provides an understanding of the phenomenon as perceived today. The article may help practitioners, both within and outside government bodies, in systematically formulating instruments to identify radicalism in Indonesia.

### Religious radicalism

The term radicalism comes from the word *radix*, which means 'root or base' (Mufid et al., 2011). In a religious context, the 'root' forms the fundamental base of a religion and is usually its sacred text (Putra and Sukabdi, 2013). Radicalism, according to Hornby (1992, p. 985), is the '*belief in radical ideas and principles*'. Bötticher (2017, pp. 74–75), who also studied the term, describes radicalism as follows:

*Radicalism refers to a political doctrine embraced by socio-political movements favouring both individual and collective freedom, and emancipation from the rule of authoritarian regimes and hierarchically structured societies. [...] Historically, radical political parties were key drivers in the progress towards greater democracy in a number of states. Radicalism as an ideological mindset tends to be very critical of the existing status quo, pursuing the objective of restructuring and/or overthrowing outdated political structures.*

Drawing from the description above, religious radicalism is defined in this article as *a religious political belief or doctrine connected to radical ideas and principles, which is very critical towards the existing system, aims at restructuring and/or overthrowing political structures, believes in narratives which contain utopian religious elements, and has a variety of means at its disposal with which to achieve its goals*. In spite of the above, it would be mistaken to assume that religious radicalism can be elegantly framed within a strict category distinct from "moderate" or "liberal" beliefs, as in reality radicalism is a continuum or a situational state of mind. The boundaries between 'radical' and 'moderate' thinking are blurred (Fealy, 2006). Radical ideas can have a remarkably broad appeal within some mainstream religious movements (Fealy, 2006). This explains how radicalisation as a process is capable of changing an individual's mind, attitude and behaviour (Kruglanski, Bélanger and Gunaratna, 2019; McCauley and Moskalenko, 2011). Deradicalisation, as a term, is used by practitioners to signify the removal of an individual from a state of risk of being radicalised or actually being so (Ashour, 2007; Bjorgo and Horgan, 2009; Frieden, 1999; Gunaratna, Jerard and Rubin, 2011; Horgan, 2008; Hwang, 2017; Koehler, 2017a; Koehler, 2017b; Kruglanski,

Gelfand and Gunaratna, 2011; Lowry, 2018; Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez and Boucek, 2010).

Acting as the Head of the Deradicalisation Directory of the Indonesian Anti-Terrorism Agency, Idris (2019) argues that religious radicalism has both positive and negative connotations. The positive include defending the country, working, studying and favouring good governance, while the negative include showing intolerance, anti-national consensus and *takfiri*, a term used to describe those who tolerate murder but not other people's values, faith and beliefs (Wahab, 2019). The negative connotations appear as religious radicalism and are often used together with or as an explanation of the term "extremism" (Milla, 2019). While the USA and other countries use the term "countering violent extremism" or CVE, and its tools (e.g. VERA I and II) to describe their counterterrorism efforts and investigate individuals, Indonesia uses the term "counter-radicalism" in its policy. This creates a confusion among scholars in Indonesia as to whether *extremism* as a concept is similar to *radicalism*, and whether instruments for *extremism* can also be applied to measure *radicalism* (Milla, 2019).

Bötticher (2017, p. 74) describes the fundamental differences between the two terms. The following explains the term *extremism*:

Extremism characterises an ideological position embraced by those anti-establishment movements, which understand politics as a struggle for supremacy rather than as a peaceful competition between parties with different interests seeking popular support for advancing the common good. Extremism exists at the periphery of societies and seeks to conquer its centre by creating fear of enemies within and outside society. [...] Extremism is, due to its dogmatism, intolerant and unwilling to compromise. Extremists, viewing politics as a zero-sum game, tend – circumstances permitting – to engage in aggressive militancy, including criminal acts and mass violence in their fanatical will for gaining and holding political power.

The key distinctions between *radicalism* and *extremism*, according to Bötticher (2017, pp. 74–75), are the following:

By their opponents, radicals are often portrayed as violent, but this is only partly correct, as radicalism tends to be associated historically more with a progressive reformism than with utopian extremism, whose glorification of violence it rejects. Radicalism is emancipatory and does not seek to subjugate people and enforce conformity like extremism does. Radical narratives contain utopian ideological elements, but they do not glorify a distant past. Although unwilling to compromise their ideals, radicals are open to rational arguments as to the means to achieve their goals. Unlike extremists, radicals are not necessarily extreme in their choice of means to achieve their goals. Unlike extremists who reject the extremist label, radicals also self-define themselves as radicals [...] Extremists glorify violence as a conflict resolution mechanism and are opposed to the constitutional state, majority-based democracy, the rule of law, and human rights for all.

The distinctions between *radicalism* and *extremism*, thus, can be summarised as follows: 1) radical movements tend to apply political violence pragmatically and selectively, whereas extremist movements view violence against enemies as a justifiable or even mandatory form of political action; 2) extremism has a strong notion of “re-creating” a golden past, whereas radicalism looks more into a golden future, even though both “-isms” have a narrative reference beyond the present; 3) extremism is anti-democratic; 4) extremism explicitly resists the concept of universal human rights; 5) extremists try to narrow the scope for the free exchange of ideas, and are extreme in both their goals and their choice of means by which to reach them, while radicals do not destroy diversity in society despite being against the continuation of the status quo; 6) radicalism as a form of rebellious opposition is against the establishment, while extremism is against all those who do not accept its dogmatic value for transforming society; 7) when numerically weak, radicals can withdraw from society and isolate themselves, whereas extremists take part in provocative and violent acts against the established order; 8) extremism is described as having a moral code that only applies to its own members, whereas radicalism is more open to a universal morality; 9) the concept of extremism is closely associated with authoritarian totalitarianism, while radicalism has been historically more egalitarian; and 10) radicalism is strongly linked to enlightenment, human progress and the power of reason, while extremism is related to an irrational, usually religious, and fanatical belief system, which claims a monopoly of truth and strives to transform society according to its regressive, conservative vision.

Radicalisation is the first step towards extremism (Adnan and Amaliyah, 2021). Accordingly, this article firmly argues that religious extremism comprises radicalism, but that radicalism does not always include extremism: ‘religious extremists are radicals, but not all religious radicals are extremists’. Religious radicalism becomes extremism when violence is used as the one and only means to achieve goals. The next section will review both Islamic radicalism and extremism.

### **Islamic radicalism and extremism**

As with other labels for militant Islam, the term “radical” needs careful consideration. When applied to Islamists, the term is often used to connote condemnation (Fealy, 2006). ‘Radical Islamic groups’ are defined as having numerous inter-connected characteristics, which Fealy (2006) explains. First, these groups believe that Islam must be applied in its full and literal form (*kaffah*), as stated in the Qur’an and the *sunnah* (a body of traditions derived from the Prophet Muhammad’s own practices). They mainly highlight sections of the Qur’an, which mention rules about social relations, devotions and punishments. They then convince others that the rules must be performed to the letter. Second, they are sensitive, reactive and even combative to language, ideas and perceived enemies, or what they view as secular, materialist or deviant forces, all the while endorsing physical violence. Radical Islamic groups are considered hostile towards the status quo and view the fundamental teachings of Islam as offering the foundation upon which to rebuild society and the state. Most observers

associate Islamic radicalism with Islamic fundamentalism (Muhammad, 2013).

Jamhari and Jahroni (2004) argue that there are five characteristics of radical Islamic groups: 1) they often exhibit physical violence; 2) Islamic law is frequently enforced with violence; 3) they tend to be anti-government or anti-establishment; 4) they take *jihad* as proof of honouring religion and as the supreme symbol of their true faith in God; and 5) they often carry prejudice towards non-Muslims due to the conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims in many areas. In terms of Islamic values, teachings and religious understandings, there are various ideological orientations available to practising Muslims (Al-Azmeh, 1993). Thus, different viewpoints on particular religious doctrines are unavoidable. The term *jihad*, for example, has positive meanings, such as the “struggle” or “striving” in the path of God, working for a noble cause with determination in a full-hearted attempt to gain God’s blessing (Knapp, 2003; Mufid et al., 2011). It should be implemented wisely and is divided equally among three elements: the self (e.g. maintaining good health, resting, achieving a good quality of life), other activities (e.g. working, studying, raising a family, building society, peacekeeping) and God (e.g. praying) (Ahmad, 2009; Aminullah, 1978; Imam Ghazali, cited in Adib and Alawi, 2014; Abdul-Matin, 2010). Still, the term is often misinterpreted by some radical Islamists as physical military struggle or holy war against God’s enemies (Hilmy, 2013; Putra and Sukabdi, 2013).

For moderate Muslims, *jihad* is a powerful term that has nothing to do with violence. A number of wars throughout Muslim history, however, has originated in the literal meaning of *jihad* as “struggle”, which can vest the term with a violent physicality as opposed to being merely the spiritual struggle to gain God’s favour (Kroll et al., 2002). Nonetheless, some Muslims exhibit a rigorous understanding of religion, i.e. radical Islamists, and perceive *jihad* as physical holy war (Hilmy, 2013; Putra and Sukabdi, 2013). According to radical Islamists, the original meaning of *jihad* is holy war, regardless of the fact that this interpretation is not literal or that the term does not mean “war” (Farmer, 2007; Wahab, 2019). Such an understanding is based on an interpretation by a particular segment of classical Muslim scholars that the Qur’anic verses of peace were superseded by verses of war in times of conflict and chaos (approaching the end of the world as they understand it) or due to exigent circumstances (for example, being discriminated against or oppressed by non-Muslims) (Habib, 2020; Wardani, 2010); hence, according to them, the meaning of *jihad* cannot be linked to peace efforts. This type of understanding of the term *jihad* underlies a belief system widespread among radical Islamists in Indonesia. A possible explanation for this diverse appreciation of the contents of Islam relates to the formal training of Islamic teachers. This means that religious teachings are delivered in formal settings without being filtered through comparative debates in terms of approaching, reading and appreciating the meaning of Islam and its philosophy. Comparative studies would allow exposure to religious materials from various schools of thought (Hilmy, 2013).

A number of individual characteristics of Islamic radicalism have been identified in the literature. The first is its “totalitarian character”, namely that it makes a comprehensive claim on life (Davis, 1984; Wahab, 2019). Radical Islamists place emphasis on a unified vision of Islam as both religious doctrine and social practice (Hilmy, 2013). They believe that Islam covers all aspects of life, which include matters of the here-and-now, as well as the hereafter. These are referred to as the “3 Ds” (*din, dunya, dawlah* or religion, world, state). As such, religious expression should also be implemented at the state level (Ayubi, 2004), as well as in law and regulations (*sharia*/Islamic law) (Shepard, 1987).

The second characteristic is the “literal approach to sacred texts” (Ghadbian, 2000; Wahab, 2019). This denotes the literal acceptance of the Qur’an and the Hadith without reference to historical context. Radical Islamists consider a rational approach to the verses of sacred texts unnecessary as long as an issue is stated explicitly. One’s devotion is measured by the extent to which one has matter-of-factly and literally practised what is instructed in the texts. Interpretations based on context or logic are avoided. Practising Islam outside of the written texts is considered a heresy (*bid’ah*) and is forbidden (*haram*) (Hilmy, 2013).

The third characteristic is “symbolic religious understanding”. Radical Islamists emphasise symbols rather than philosophy or essence (Farmer, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). This means that symbols play an important role in determining radical Islamist attitudes towards the outside world and how it is perceived. Symbolic religious understanding entails the tendency to simplify and reduce complexity; hence, radical views are often seen as the musings of immature thinkers (Hilmy, 2013; Wahab, 2019). A radical mindset simplifies complex reality by connecting ideas in the absence of critical thinking. For instance, Judaism is seen as the equivalent of Israel and vice versa, while Christianity is equated to the West and vice versa (Hilmy, 2013).

The fourth characteristic is a “Manichean approach to reality”, namely a concrete, black-and-white style of thinking (Sivan, 2004). This approach divides the world into two spheres (e.g. right and wrong, black and white, pious and sinful, reward and punishment, mandated/*halal* and forbidden/*haram*). The Manichean approach to reality is predominantly implemented in the area of Islamic law, that is, something is either mandated (*halal*) or forbidden (*haram*), disregarding the other three juridical regulations of Islam, namely *sunnah* (commendable), *makruh* (abominable) and *mubah* (allowable or neutral) (Bruinessen, 2002). It follows that dichotomous ways of thinking limit the choices available and, as such, are perceived by Muslim scholars to be immature since they simplify the complex problems with which the world at large is rife (Hilmy, 2013; Hidayat, 2014; Shihab, 2008). This characteristic explains the reason why radical Islamists are seen as intolerant (Idris, 2019).

The fifth characteristic of Islamic radicalism is “narrow-mindedness” or the rejection of external influences and ideas. Radical Islamists merely interpret what is seen as the truth

and overvalue physical appearance (e.g. certain style of *higab* or dress). Thus, they reject any type of change (Lakoff, 2004). The physical appearances they value are constructed on the basis of the sacred texts (Hilmy, 2013). This characteristic also explains in part why some radical Islamists interpret the word *jihad* (the struggle for a greater purpose or gaining God's blessings) as a physical fight.

The sixth characteristic is “the attempt at purification”, which involves avoiding other religious practices that they perceive as contaminated by ‘un-Islamic’ elements (Arjomand, 1984). This is based on the theological authenticity inherent in Islamic doctrine and practice aimed at preserving the purity of Islam as thought to be practised by their religious predecessors, called *al-salaf al-shalih*. This notion of purification originates in an understanding based on the sacred texts (*hadith*) that the best Muslim generations are the three generations that came right after the Prophet Muhammad. This is linked to the concept of the “authentic self”, which is related to core values (*hadlarah*) (Hilmy, 2013).

The seventh characteristic is *hakimiyyah*, namely the principles asserting that Allah is the only God to be revered and that only He is responsible for creating the system and social order to be followed by humankind (Khatab, 2002; Nasir, 2011; Zain, 2019); thus, it is forbidden for humans to make laws. Any resistance to this idea is considered as a serious digression or *thaghut*, a term used to describe false deities and any objects of veneration that go against the rules of God, whether they come in the form of demons, idols, humans or others (Talafihah, Amin and Zarif, 2017; Zulkarnain and Purnama, 2016). These principles justify behaviours opposing the establishment, status quo or national consensus (Siddiq, 2018; Idris, 2019; Mudassir, 2019). In Indonesia, the national consensus consists of four criteria: 1) Pancasila, which is the national constitution and its founding philosophy; 2) Undang-Undang Dasar 1945, which forms the basis of the law; 3) Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (NKRI), which is the official name of the country; and 4) Bhinneka Tunggal Ika [Unity in Diversity], which is the official national motto, set out by the founding fathers (who are humans). Islamic radicals in Indonesia would like to remove this consensus as, according to them, it has not been established by God (Wahab, 2019).

The eighth characteristic is “exclusiveness”, demonstrated by behaviours such as thinking of one's in-group as the most righteous, focusing on differences in society, differentiating between “us” and “them”, rejecting relations or collaborations with non-Muslims, and even expressing hatred towards outgroups (Idris, 2019; Nurdin, 2005; Wahab, 2019). In Indonesia, for example, some Islamic radicals reject national citizenship documents, discard any benefits stemming from the government, and refuse the aid of civil servants. This behaviour is a type of rebellion, as they perceive the government and its officers as *thaghut*, which is a representation of evil, wrongdoing and ungodliness (Putra and Sukabdi, 2013; Wahab, 2019).



Finally, the ninth characteristic of Islamic radicalism is “revolutionary behaviours”, such as dispersing meetings held by perceived enemies (Idris, 2019; Wahab, 2019). Such behaviour is possible in Indonesia, as Islamic radicals are numerically strong (Hamli, 2020; Nadzifah, 2018).

Based on the literature review, Islamic radicalism covers three domains: cognition (mind), affection (attitude), and psychomotor (overt) behaviours and actions (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom et al., 1956; Harrow, 1972; Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, 1964; Wilson, 2016). Consequently, the instruments for radicalism screening planned by governments at schools and working spaces need to address these three domains. Moreover, as the condition of “being radical” is situational and triggered by numerous factors (Azra, 2006b), the careful implementation of these screening systems is imperative.

As stated above, Islamic radicalism may involve extremism but not vice versa, namely Islamic extremists can be radicals but not all Islamic radicals are extremists. Islamic radicalism can become extremism when *takfiri* ideology, which leads to physical violence, is present (Idris, 2019; Zulkarnain and Purnama, 2016; Wahab, 2019). Islamic extremism itself has been known since the early days of Islam. Prophet *Muhammad had to reckon with the extremist Dzul Khuwaishirah, when managing economic resources in 630. Khuwaishirah physically confronted Muhammad in a violent manner during the latter’s attempt to divide assets fairly by prioritising non-Muslims, who at the time were a minority (Ahsan, 2019; Jauzi, 2019). None of the Prophet’s companions and fellow Muslims viewed the division as unfair except Khuwaishirah (Ahsan, 2019). The Prophet asked the man in whom he had placed his faith if not in the Messenger of God. Instead of replying, Khuwaishirah walked out. The Prophet did not punish the man although his companions urged it (Ahsan, 2019; Jauzi, 2019); however, the Prophet warned Muslims about the inevitable proliferation of people like him after the Prophet’s death (Afa, 2020; Jauzi, 2019). Dzul Khuwaishirah has become the first Khawarij, a term defined in Islam to explain a type of Muslims who are violent, distrustful and murderous towards anyone whose religious views differ from their own (takfiri) (Mufid et al., 2011). The case of Khuwaishirah shows that Islamic extremism, which is anti-establishment against the Prophet’s proclamations, has existed since the time Muhammad was alive.*

After the death of the Prophet, three of his closest and most reputable companions, who were also religious leaders (Umar ibn Khattāb, Uthmān ibn Affan and Alī bin Abī Talib), were murdered by Islamic extremists (Mufid et al., 2011). Following the battle of Siffin between Alī bin Abī Tālib and Mu’awiyah in 657, Islamic extremism showed its teeth through the rise of the *Khawarij, the heirs of Dzul Khuwaishirah (Ahmad, 2019; Mufid et al., 2011). While radical thinking and its associated expressions, such as mosque bombings, Christian killings and fa’i (bank robberies) in the name of God, could be eradicated at some point in time, in certain parts of the world, they continue to inspire new devotees, with or without the legacy of the Khawarij (Mufid et al., 2011). Having said that, it is not entirely appropriate to jump*

to the conclusion that all Islamic movements are similar to the *Khawarij* (Nasir, 2011), which only explains Islamic extremism.

### The development of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia

There is no single explanation as to why and how Islamic radicalism has come into being. Generally, two main groups of factors can be used to explain the emergence of Islamic radicalism, namely internal and external (Azra, 2006b). Internal factors refer to the struggle of Islamists to reject the perceived advancement of other communities, notably the Western civilisation. Moreover, internal conflicts, as well as political degeneration among Muslim elites, have driven Islamists to revive the spirit of Islam. To the contrary, external factors as the name suggests, involve colonialism or invasions (Azra, 2006a). Roy (2004) argues that the leading factors to have caused the birth and rise of Islamic radicalism are external and unrelated to religion, such as economic discrepancies and social confusion. Ideology alone serves as a mass-mobilising factor that escalates radicalisation, especially when delivered by what is known as the ‘actor factor’, namely charismatic religious leaders or ideologues (Hilmy, 2013). As Dekmejian (1985) argues, there is an enduring pattern in history in the form of a cause-and-effect relationship between social crises and the rise of religious revolutionary or revivalist movements, which seek to transform the established order for the benefit of building a new society based on their particular ideological perceptions.

Religious radicalism in Indonesia has an extensive history (Mufid et al., 2011). In contrast with the religious radicalism present in contemporary Indonesian society, religious radicalism in the colonial period had gained support from the majority of people in the country. This is because the objective of the radicals was to fight against Western colonialism and promote the cause of independence. Religious leaders, such as Imam Bonjol and Prince Diponegoro, became national heroes in Indonesia and were respected by all, irrespective of their religious background.

The internal factor that most affected the emergence of religious radicalism in nineteenth-century Indonesia was the tightening of the relationship between Indonesian Muslim scholars and their base in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Islamic religious education became increasingly intense, in the form of *pesantren* (religious boarding schools) and Sufi orders (congregations of *tarīqah* or Islamic teachings related to spirituality). Subsequently, new communities uniting Muslim scholars, pilgrims and merchants emerged. These communities were anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist, developing the doctrine of the Sabil War and a movement inclusive of all Muslim students (*santri*) in Indonesia. In West Sumatra (1821–1837), the Padri War was encouraged by a trio of Muslim pilgrims and scholars who had just returned from their Islamic studies in Mecca, namely Haji Miskin (Imam Bonjol), Haji Sumanik and Haji Piobang, who quickly became local celebrities and fought against the Dutch. In Central Java, the Muslim prince Diponegoro also fought against the Dutch, supported by Kyai Mojo and Sentot Alibasya

Prawirodirdjo. Diponegoro was seen as *Herucokro* or *Ratu Adil* (messiah), whose coming was eagerly awaited to improve the life of the Javanese people.

In 1888, traditional Muslim religious students became engaged in the uprising of peasants in Cilegon, Banten, which formed the climax of student resistance against the colonial powers. This rebellion was motivated by the revitalisation of religion through the Sufi order (*tarīqah*) of al-Qādiriyah. Moreover, Aceh also took part in the Sabil War against the Dutch. The uprising in Aceh gave birth to famous heroines, including Tjoet Njak Dien, Cut Meutia and Malahayati, who strove to free people from Western colonialism (Geertz, 1968; Kartodirdjo, 1984; Steenbrink, 1984; Suryanegara, 1995).

Religious radicalism persisted in various areas in Indonesia after the movement in Aceh. Within the framework of *santri* (religious) radicalism, resistance against Western imperialism grew rampantly. Various types of religious movements emerged, occasionally identified as revivalist or reformist, but most often as messianic, such as Mahdiism or Ratu Adil (Mufid et al., 2011). Among these reform movements was the Rifā'iyah movement, which emerged in Kalisalak, Batang, Central Java, in 1850. Led by K.H. Ahmad Rifa'i (1786–1875), it is often referred to as the *santri* movement of *Tarjumah* or *Budiyah*. It was called *Tarjumah* because the followers of Rifa'i used Arabic books translated in Javanese and written in Arabic Pegon. As for *Budiyah*, followers of this movement prioritised virtuous life and the moral practice of religion (*'ubūdiyyah*). According to the movement's teachings in the nineteenth century, Rifā'iyah was reformist, seeking to 'go back to the original form' and, at the same time, revivalist, i.e. characterised by trying to bring back the righteous living experience of the past (Darban, 1982; Steenbrink, 1984). Religious revivalism in those days was seen as a sectarian movement because adherents separated themselves from the mainstream. Unlike other movements, however, the movement of reform and revivalism, or the so-called puritanism of later periods, had gained support and has been regarded as a modern movement in Islam (Noer, 1978).

In the nineteenth century, a rebellion by farmers, led by village elites, including religious teachers and leaders of Sufi orders, took place in the form of protest movements against the encroachment of Western economies and the increase of their political control pressing against the traditional social order. Upsetting the balance of traditional Indonesian society caused frustration and feelings of exclusion, generating mass restlessness. Such conditions culminated in leaders inciting people towards radicalism. These were seen by their followers as legitimate leaders of the religious resistance (*millenari*) and became revered (Kartodirdjo, 1984).

In contrast to the late nineteenth-century Islamic movements, which were communal, reliant on solidarity and centred on charismatic leaders, the resistance movements that emerged in the twentieth century in Indonesia were nationwide. In the twentieth century, political

movements spread through a modern political approach pioneered by HOS Cokroaminoto. The Syarikat Islam party, whose first congress in London in 1916 was led by Cokroaminoto, demanded independence or self-government (*zelf bestuur*) (Suryanegara, 1995). The main characteristics of this movement were that its leaders were no longer from a rural background but were representative of the urban middle class, and there was a form of modern organisation associated with organic solidarity.

The resurgence of the Syarikat Islam (SI) movement, especially locally, was the culmination of attempts to eliminate the powerlessness experienced by rural people, and the many types of discrimination they faced (Mufid et al., 2011). The movement took the form of demonstrations and riots across Java. SI was successful in raising awareness regarding the role of individuals in society, which would ultimately contribute to the emergence of a sense of social consciousness. Therefore, SI is seen by Indonesian anthropologists as ‘proto-nationalist’ (a sort of pioneering nationalism) rather than just a nationalist movement (Kartodirdjo, 1984). Cokroaminoto’s radical-leaning leadership promoted equal rights between local people (Indonesians) and foreigners. He suggested that the rise of nationalism, which guaranteed human rights, improved the financial welfare of local people by liberating them from colonialism. According to Cokroaminoto, human rights had been granted by God. He believed that, through nationalism, individuals would be raised to a *natie* (nation) level. His was the first attempt towards self-government or, at least, the first attempt to grant Indonesians the right to express their opinion on political issues.

Abdoel Moeis, another SI leader, also argued that nationalism was the fastest way to independence for a nation-state. He based this on the belief that Islam encourages human equality while at the same time upholds the power of the state; furthermore, Islam is the best religion in terms of educating people concerning proper behaviours and manners (Noer, 1996). SI adhered to Islamic philosophy, which fosters unity among Muslims within the remits of a broad social movement (Suryanegara, 1995).

Prior to Independence Day and while other Islamic organisations, such as Jamiat Khair (1905), Muhammadiyah (1912), Al Irshad (1913), Persyarikatan Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Religious Scholars Union, 1917), Persatuan Islam (Islamic Union, 1920) and Nahdlatul Ulama (1926) grew, SI remained the primary political organisation among Muslims in Indonesia (Noer, 1996). From 1911 to 1916, SI focused on settling its leadership, preparing its statute, and regulating the relationships between the central and local organisations. In its second phase, between 1916 and 1921, the SI prioritised issues in politics and religion. During this time, it split into two, SI white and SI red, which later transformed into the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) (Mufid et al., 2011). Agus Salim, a prominent figure of the Islamic movement in Indonesia, played a significant role in this dispute on the part of SI white, as he spearheaded a return to Islamic identity, standing against the communists (Mufid et al., 2011).

In the movement's third phase between 1921 and 1942, SI split into factions, among which a new party emerged in 1927 that advocated the ideology of secular nationalism (PNI). In 1934, following the death of its central figure, Cokroaminoto, SI became riddled with internal conflicts and numerous members of the board were dismissed. One of the high-profile leaders to be expelled was Sekarmaji Marijan Kartosuwirjo, who later went on to create Darul Islam or the Islamic State of Indonesia (often called DI/NII), which gave free rein to Muslim jihadists in Indonesia to perform violent crimes in the name of Islam (Mufid et al., 2011). During this period of internal conflict, SI adopted a policy of political *hijrah* (transformation) (Benda, 1980). This concept of *hijrah* was pioneered by Abikusno Cokrosuyoso and upheld by Kartosuwiryo (1905–1962), who had been elected secretary-general of PSII (Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Islamic Union Party) at the age of 26. As the PSII elites debated whether they should cooperate with the Dutch colonial government or not, Kartosuwiryo chose a radical stance of non-cooperation. In other words, Kartosuwiryo implemented radical (non-cooperative) *hijrah* (transformation), which was at odds with his fellow PSII members. For this, he was summarily expelled from the party. Later, he collaborated with other members of PSII, including one Kamran, who went on to become commander of the Darul Islam (DI) (Boland, 1985), the early Islamic radical group advocating terrorism in Indonesia.

During the Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945, there was no significant Islamic radical movement in Indonesia. Indonesian Independence was achieved on 17 August 1945. The leader of the Japanese Dai Nippon army managed to unite Islamic leaders against the West. During the occupation, Islamist activists and students (*santri*) benefitted from the establishment of the Office of Religious Affairs, called *Shumubu* centrally and *Shumuka* regionally, as well as from military exercises. Only one rebellion was recorded at that time, led by Mustafa Zaenal, a Muslim leader in Singaparna, Tasikmalaya. The revolt was triggered by farmers disgruntled at Japanese military leaders forcibly demanding rice donations in 1944 (Benda, 1980).

On 17 August 1945, eight days after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Indonesia declared its independence. As stated earlier, not long after that, Kartosuwiryo used the joyous occasion to inaugurate the Islamic State of Indonesia party, providing justification to Muslim jihadists in Indonesia to perform violent crimes in the name of Islam (Mufid et al., 2011). Despite its reputation for violence, the name Darul Islam originates in the terms *Dār al-Islām* or *Dār al-Salām*, which literally mean “house of peace”, but this can only be the case if Muslims have their religious freedom. *Dār al-Salām* is the antithesis of *Dār al-Harb*, or the “house of war”. Under the Prophet Muhammad and his followers and successors, the city of Medina in Saudi Arabia (the *al-Khulafā' al-Rashidūn*) was the ideal model for the concepts surrounding *Dār al-Islām* in the Islamic world. As such, it also became a model for the DI movement in Indonesia. DI was inspired by an agreement between the Prophet Muhammad and the people of Medina, who were both Christian and Jewish, known as the

Constitution of Medina (*Mīthāq al Madinah*) (Benda, 1980).

Islamic struggles against colonial forces of occupation, namely the Dutch and their allies, did not end after Independence Day. Muslims across the country, in Aceh, Demak, Ternate and other sultanates, continued to resist through wars, rebellions and protests. Experiencing this perpetual state of war and conflict had an impact on Muslim attitudes towards the government, including the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. Alongside the establishment of the new country, both the radical left and right incited various rebellions. These were spearheaded by the rebellion of the Communist Party of Indonesia (known as PKI Muso) in 1948 in Madiun, followed shortly afterwards by a rebellion orchestrated by DI/NII, proclaimed on 7 August 1949, at Malangbong, Garut, West Java, by Kartosuwirjo (Boland, 1985). DI justified their actions as part of their goal to establish a new independent Islamic State (known as NII) based on an Islamic constitution similar to the Constitution of Medina (Mufid et al., 2011).

A dispute between secular and Islamic nationalists concerning the position of Islam in the new state led to a decision “to meet in the middle”. Most of these nationalists finally reached an agreement and proclaimed Indonesia a “Pancasila-based state”, rooted on an abstraction of Indonesian ancient wisdom and philosophy. Pancasila alludes to the “Five Fundamental Commandments” and includes the following **Five Principles**: 1) belief in one God; 2) human rights; 3) unity in diversity; 4) consent and democracy; and 5) social prosperity. Pancasila addresses religiosity in the First Principle, known as the “First Sila” (Jannah and Kusno, 2020; Nurhadi, 2019; Sahrani, Suyasa and Basaria, 2018; Wijaya, 2018). Still, Pancasila was not considered appropriate for DI, as it does not envisage the literal implementation of sharia laws, perceiving the government as secular (Benda, 1980).

The DI movement, which was seen as a rebellion against the Soekarno government in 1949, is a classic example of Islamic radicalism. Their use of violence (e.g. robbery) firmly placed them within the remits of Islamic extremism, although no suicide bombings were undertaken unlike contemporary Islamic extremism. The roots of the DI rebellion could be found in social disorganisation, economic privatisation and the bankruptcy of the powers that be during the Japanese occupation. At this point, Islamic teachings had contributed significantly to the building of the state, civic culture, national solidarity and spirit, and the *jihad* ideology, as well as social norms. Conversely, they have had no effect on political power/legitimacy. Legitimacy was attributed to the state, parties and individuals. In other words, Islam as a political force has always been suppressed, while Islamic ritual practice and cultural Islam routinely received support throughout the political history of Indonesia, not only from the colonial government but also from the successive governments of Indonesia (Jackson, 1980; Kuntowijoyo, 1997; Taba, 1996).

The DI/NII vision was not endorsed by the government, religious leaders or Muslims in general due to the movement’s violent reputation. In fact, the central leadership of the

Masyumi Party urged Kartosuwirjo to dissolve NII immediately because Indonesia was no longer colonised by the West or other nations (Syukur, 2003). Nonetheless, many Muslim leaders agreed with the idea of an “Islamic state” and the implementation of sharia laws in the country, which would be tantamount to receiving God’s ‘full blessing’ (Putra and Sukabdi, 2013). For the followers of Kartosuwirjo and the next generation of radicals, the creation of an Islamic state in the DI/NII spirit would never disappear. This is evidenced by current cases of terrorism in Indonesia. For example, perpetrators of bombings in the country from 2000 to 2010 have always invoked the spirit of DI/NII as a justification.

Following the execution of Kartosuwirjo in September 1962, no one rose to the leadership of the DI for more than a decade. During this time, some of its former leaders were involved in government-run deradicalisation (e.g. a three-day reunion entitled *Silaturrahmi ex-NII* [Reunion of ex-NII members] attended by approximately 3,000 people) and empowerment programmes (International Crisis Group, 2005). These deradicalisation efforts were ineffective and, in 1974, the DI elites met at a house in Jalan Mahoni street, North Jakarta, to revitalise the radical movement. The meeting, known as the “Mahoni Meeting”, was attended by top-rank members, such as Daud Beureueh of Aceh and Ali Achmad Tholib of Makassar. It resulted in the formation of the *Dewan Imamah* (Imamate Council) headed by Daud Beureueh. Gaos Taufik was appointed military commander. Daud Beureueh and Ali Achmad Tholib (also known as Ali AT) jointly held the foreign affairs portfolio. Adah Djaelani, assisted by Aceng Kurnia and Dodo Mohammed Darda, alias Abu Darda and son of Kartosuwirjo, acted as interior ministers. Danu Muhammad Hasan was the military commander in West Java. At this time, the DI was divided into three major territorial commands: Java–Madura under the leadership of Danu Muhammad Hasan; Sumatra, including Aceh, led by Gaos Taufik; and Sulawesi and eastern Indonesia led by Ali Achmad Tholib. The participants of the Mahoni Meeting reiterated their commitment to establishing an Islamic state (Solahudin, 2011).

Another group operating after Indonesia’s independence was Komando Jihad (KOMJI). The Jihadist Command group perpetrated a series of violent acts starting in 1975. According to the International Crisis Group (2002), KOMJI was established by Ali Moertopo, an official in the State Intelligence Coordinating Agency (BAKIN). His decision to form KOMJI was the result of a meeting with Taufik and Danu Muhammad Hasan, and the purpose of the organisation was to launch a revolution that would culminate in the creation of an Islamic State. KOMJI formed a special force by approaching both new and former DI recruits. The group’s operations launched simultaneously in North, South and West Sumatra, as well as in Lampung. In North Sumatra, KOMJI was responsible for throwing a grenade at the Indonesia (then) National Quran Competition (Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran / MTQ) held by the local government. Subsequently, successive bomb attacks were carried out in Immanuel Baptist Hospital in Bukittinggi and Nurul Iman mosque in Padang, West Sumatra. An important figure of this group was Haji Ismail Pranoto (Hispran). Abdullah Sungkar, the founder of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), later swore an oath of allegiance to Hispran (International

Crisis Group, 2002). Al-Chaidar (1999) notes that Komando Jihad was a government ploy, devised by the intelligence officer Ali Moertopo to identify DI militant fighters and their connections. Active cells involved in the radical movement of KOMJI were arrested and prosecuted, including Timsar Zubil, who was known for his terrorist activities in Central Java and Yogyakarta, and Musa Warman, who had been responsible for the death of a university vice-rector and for robbing the wages of university employees in Malang in the name of God. Such “justified” robberies were known as *fa’i* (International Crisis Group, 2005).

From 1979 to the early 1990s, numerous NII members were arrested in the aftermath of operations, such as the Woyla hijacking and the 1989 Lampung incident, which involved the Warman group. Adah Djaelani was now the leader of DI. Meanwhile, Abdullah Sungkar and Ajengan Masduki broke away from Adah Djaelani’s faction and quarrelled over the leadership. Soon enough, Sungkar and a junior colleague, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, were forced to escape to Malaysia after being involved in the *Usrah* movement in Indonesia and being accused of partaking in an anti-government movement during the Suharto era. In Malaysia, Sungkar and Ba’asyir propagated Islamic education in 1991 at the Lukmanul Hakim Islamic boarding school in Johor (Mufid et al., 2011). The dispute over the leadership of DI/NII following the death of Teungku Daud Beureueh continued, and DI/NII split into two factions: Mujahidin Fillah and Mujahidin Fisabilillah (Mufid et al., 2011). The first was led by Djadja Sudjadi and the second by Adah Djaelani Tirtapradja. Both were former NII elite members. The Fillah faction was effectively annihilated when Sudjadi and his followers were shot and killed by members of the Fisabilillah faction (Syukur, 2003). Mujahidin Fillah was then led by Dr Sensen Komara in Garut, who claimed to have about 3,500 followers. This NII faction under Komara continued its struggle to establish the Islamic Republic of Indonesia. Conversely, the regular structure of Fisabilillah further split into several groups: 1) the faction of Abdullah Sungkar, whose authority covered the areas of Central Java and Yogyakarta, and whose headquarters were at the Al Mukmin Ngruki boarding school; 2) the faction of Atjeng Kurnia, whose territory stretched over the areas of Bogor, Subang, Serang and Purwakarta; 3) the faction of Ajengan Masduki, whose territory covered Purwokerto, Subang, Cianjur, Jakarta and Lampung, and who claimed to have the largest number of followers, measuring them in the millions, and provided education and military training for *mujahideen* by sending them to Afghanistan; 4) the faction of Abdul Fatah Wiranagapati, whose area of operation covered Garut, Bandug, Surabaya and Kalimantan; and 5) the faction of Gaos Taufik, whose authority stretched over the island of Sumatra and who trained military pilgrims (Mufid et al., 2011).

Quarrels within Fisabilillah continued, between the factions of Ajengan Masduki and Abdullah Sungkar, or between Adah Djaelani and a group led by Tamhid Kartosuwiryo, which was resolved by the transfer of leadership of the NII Ninth Division (known as NII KW IX) to Abu Toto (also known as Shaikh Panji Gumilang). Later, Toto became the leader of Al Ma’had Al Zaytun, an Islamic boarding school in Indramayu. In January 1993, the DI/



NII faction led by Abdullah Sungkar was renamed into Al Jamaah Al Islamiyah (JI) (Mufid et al., 2011).

Originally, JI in Egypt and Indonesia were very similar in terms of ideology and organisation, even though they were not officially linked. In terms of history and philosophy, JI in Southeast Asia branched out from the transformation of NII (Mufid et al., 2011). JI's territorial expansion to Southeast Asia occurred after meetings with organisations that had similar ideologies, such as NII, JI in Egypt, and Al-Qaeda (Mufid et al., 2011). In Southeast Asia, JI was initially led by Abdullah Sungkar and then by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. The General Guidelines of JI (known as PUPJI) are largely seen as a copy of the General Guidelines of the Egyptian Al Jamaah Al Islamiyah, with little deviation observed between the Arabic original and the Indonesian translation (Mufid et al., 2011).

According to Nasir Abas, the former JI leader in Indonesia and the Philippines, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, and Abdullah Sungkar founded JI, splitting from neo-NII, which was established in 1966. The Indonesian government's intelligence agency allegedly formed neo-NII to terminate any form of non-structural NII after the government eradicated NII in 1962. Abdullah Sungkar swore his *bay'ah* (oath) as an NII member in 1978. Accused of being involved in KOMJI's coup against the Republic of Indonesia, he was arrested, along with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, and sentenced to jail in 1982 for nine years. In 1985, they both moved to Malaysia. They controlled the NII movement from there and set up a programme to send soldiers (*mujahideen*) to Afghanistan on behalf of NII to be trained for battle (physical *jihad*) until 1992 (Abas, 2005). The movement of Sungkar and Ba'asyir was strongly influenced by Abdullah Azzam, Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden (Abas, 2005; Samudra, 2004).

In terms of Islamic radicalism, ideas transfer among Islamic militants and activists. Rasywan (2006) explains how radical teachings spread in the case of JI. There were three stages of JI development. The first phase was when Ba'asyir and Sungkar were released from prison in 1982 and began building *Usrah* (study centres) with approximately eight to 15 members in each group. This represented an attempt to implement Islamic law in everyday life. The concept of *Usrah* was also used to prepare for the manifestation of Dawlah Islamiyah (Islamic caliphate), as developed by Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Many students were attracted to these *Usrah* groups. Some of these were based in Yogyakarta, pioneered by Fikiruddin Muqti (Muhammad Iqbal Abdurrahman or Abu Jibril), Muchliansyah, Irfan Suharyadi and Irfan S. Awass. These young men spread the ideas of *Usrah* by publishing the *Ar Risalah* magazine in 1981 and forming the Coordinating Board of Indonesian Mosque Youth (BKRMI) in 1982. The religious notions that circulated in these study centres were associated with the ideas and practices of Darul Islam and were inspired by the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Mufid et al., 2011).

The second phase unfolded when the leaders of JI moved to Malaysia in 1985. There, Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar built JI's soldier base (*tajnid*) and attended a meeting of JI leaders, which established a connection between JI in Indonesia and JI in Egypt. One of the Indonesian leaders was Abdul Wahid (known as Kadungga), who had emigrated to Germany in 1971 to study, joining the European Union of Muslim Youth (Rabitah al-Shabab al-Muslim fi Uruba) (Mufid et al., 2011). Kadungga moved to the Netherlands in the 1980s, and in 1989 he met with Usama Rushd, one of the leaders of the Egyptian JI in the area. The ideological link between the JI of Egypt and that of Indonesia is thought to have been established in 1995. It was from there that the idea of founding an Islamic State of Indonesia developed into the aspiration to create a sovereign Khilafah Islamiyah (Islamic Caliphate or Global Islamic Leadership) (Mufid et al., 2011).

The third phase involved the inclusion of a radical wing within JI. This took place when Sungkar and Ba'asyir returned to Indonesia in 1998, during the collapse of the Suharto regime. JI was led by Ba'asyir after the death of Sungkar in 1999. During this time, radical concepts were spread together with physical actions (terrorist attacks). For example, in 2000, JI launched attacks against the West, the US and Christians in general, and carried out bombings at several churches in various cities in Indonesia, culminating in the Bali bombing of 2002, the JW Marriott and the Australian Embassy bombings of 2003, and the second Bali bombing of 2005 (Rasywan, 2006). Prior to carrying out the attacks, JI bombers usually issued an official explanation. Their statements were intended to disseminate their radical ideas. Moreover, they published books and articles in social media to influence a wider audience. In order to prevent the spread of Islamic radical ideology and the proliferation of terrorist groups, the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) issued a *fatwa* on the illicit nature of terrorism (Fatwa No. 3/2004). It also established preventive programmes and sought to correct erroneous approaches, including the widely misunderstood meaning of concepts such as *jihad*. As part of its counterterrorism programme, MUI held national reconciliation events relating to the prevention of terrorism in various cities (Mufid et al., 2011).

The UN Security Council designated JI as a terrorist organisation on 25 October 2002 (Mufid et al., 2011). From time to time, leaders and members of JI were either arrested or killed. Several cases of JI raids, however, revealed the involvement of members of other organisations, such as Agung Abdul Hamid from Laskar Jundullah, members of the Committee for Crisis Prevention (KOMPAK), members of the Forum against Conversion Movement (FAKTA) in Palembang and members of Jamaah Tauhid wal Jihad. More specifically, Laskar Jundullah is the military wing of the Preparatory Committee for Islamic *Shariah*/ Law Enforcement (KPPSI), an organisation led by Agus Dwikarna. Laskar Jundullah was involved in the bombing of a McDonald's outlet in Makassar, South Sulawesi. KOMPAK is an organisation formed in 1998 by the Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia) in response to the conflicts in Ambon, Maluku and Poso, Central Sulawesi. Abdullah Sonata, who was a senior member of KOMPAK, was involved in hiding

terrorism suspects (e.g. Umar Patek and Dul Matin) and committing terrorism offences, such as the Australian Embassy bombing in Jakarta. FAKTA was an organisation based in South Sumatra. It was involved in a number of terrorist acts in Bandung, Palembang, West Sumatra and Ambon. Jamaah Tauhid wal Jihad was a movement spearheaded by Aman Rahman or Aman Abdurrahman, a cleric from Sumedang, West Java, in 2003. Since 2004, Aman's activities involved organising religious sermons in Cimanggis Depok and conducting military exercises. Aman and his followers were arrested and imprisoned in Cipinang. In 2007, along with Lutfi Haedaroh (also known as Ubed), he translated a book written by the radical Egyptian Abdul Qadir bin Aziz, entitled *Melacak jejak thagut* [Tracing evil]. Kafayah Cipta Media, which was owned by JI, published the book. Following his release on parole in 2008, Aman was once again involved in terrorist activities, i.e. recruiting military trainees for Al-Qaeda in Aceh (Mufid et al., 2011).

In a subsequent iteration, JI experienced a dramatic change. A number of its leaders were involved in the formation of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), which was inaugurated on 8 August 2000 in Yogyakarta. This organisation, however, was short-lived and Ba'asyir, its leader, later founded Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) on 17 September 2008 at the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) dormitory in Bekasi. MMI leadership was transferred from Ba'asyir to Abu Thalib, with Abu Jibril Abdurrahman acting as vice deputy. Ba'asyir's reason for leaving MMI and establishing JAT was that MMI was still using a collective leadership system, which according to him, did not follow the proper rules of Islam. In Ba'asyir's view, collective leadership was a secular system of Jewish origin (Mufid et al., 2011).

The Reformation Era (post-Suharto regime) is a critical phase, where Indonesians appear to value freedom of speech, welcoming all ideas, including religious radicalism. At this time, the public's level of confidence in the work of Islamic radicals peaked; hence, the rapid proliferation of Islamic radical groups and their rising popularity at the expense of a weakened government are not surprising (Mufid et al., 2011). During the transformation of JI, many of its former members, including Ba'asyir and Aman Abdurrahman, supported the Islamic State (IS or ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) (Anshary et al., 2014; **Sohuturon, 2018**).

At present, Aman is one of Indonesia's most provocative advocates of Islamic extremism, known to adopt *takfiri* ideology and quick to label others as infidels (Sumpter, 2018). Receiving the death penalty in 2018, he has been for years the most influential leader among the Islamic extremism networks in Indonesia. His actions include translating texts written by radical scholars in the Middle East, and publicising sermons beyond the prison walls via mobile phone and recorded cassette tapes. His focus is on the works of Jordanian cleric Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, spiritual mentor to the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, founder of ISIS. Aman agrees with al-Maqdisi's emphasis on resistance against the 'near enemy', identified as the secular/un-Islamic governments of Muslim-majority nations, over carrying out symbolic attacks against the 'far enemy' in the West (Sumpter, 2018).

## Conclusion

Indonesia's concern with religious radicalism flies in the face of its documented high religious tolerance (Religious Tolerance Index well above 70 at 73.83), according to the Indonesian National Ministry of Religious Affairs. Religious radicalism screening systems for students at schools and workers at government offices are considered essential, with the government making arrangements for religious radicalism screening instruments. The concept and definition of religious radicalism in the country, however, are muddled. Clear indicators of religious radicalism, particularly Islamic radicalism since 225 million Indonesians are Muslim, would help practitioners design effective intervention programmes. This article has aimed at shedding light on those indicators of Islamic radicalism and its development in Indonesia.

Religious radicalism is defined in this article as a religious and political *doctrine connected to radical ideas and principles*, which is very critical of the status quo, aims at restructuring and/or overthrowing political structures, believes in narratives which contain utopian religious elements, and has a variety of means at its disposal to achieve its goals. The principles of Islamic radicalism are drawn from the sacred texts of Islam. As such, religious radicalism may be viewed as a continuum, where the line between “radical” and “moderate” believers is obscured.

According to the Indonesian Anti-Terrorism Agency, religious radicalism has both positive and negative meanings. The positive incorporate all efforts towards a better future, such as defending the country, working and studying, while the negative include intolerance and anti-national consensus, as set by the founding fathers of Indonesia.

The fearsome reputation of religious radicalism is owed to its close connection with religious extremism. Islamic radicalism can become extremism once *takfiri* ideology is invoked, namely beliefs that glorify bloodshed and are set against other people's faith, thus leading to physical violence. Radical Islamic militants become extremists when violence is used as the only means to achieve their goals. Islamic extremism itself has been known since the times of the Prophet Muhammad, as exemplified by the case of Dzul Khuwaishirah, who objected to the Prophet's *prioritisation of non-Muslims as a minority*.

Islamic radicalism encompasses nine individual characteristics, according to the literature: first, a “totalitarian character” claiming a holistic approach to life; second, the “literal approach to sacred texts”; third, a “symbolic religious understanding”; fourth, a distinct black-and-white style of thinking”; fifth, “narrow-mindedness”; sixth, “attempts at purification”, which disregard other religious practices; seventh, *hakimiyyah*, which is the principle that Allah is the only God to be revered; eighth, “exclusiveness”; and ninth, “revolutionary behaviours”. Based on these indicators, Islamic radicalism presents itself in the domains of cognition, affection and overt behaviours/actions. Accordingly, the anti-radicalism instruments prepared

by the Indonesian government should target these domains. As “being radical” could be a situational state for both students and workers, the careful implementation of religious radicalism instruments is recommended.

The development of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia has been heavily influenced by its colonial history, which has led to the formation of radical and extremist groups. The literature review has shown that there is a large number of Islamic organisations and subgroups, including radical ones, that emerged as a response to colonial powers and political turbulence in the country. As a result, resistance and revolution have played a pivotal role in Indonesian history.

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