

Embracing Faith and Fun: The Emergence of Bikers Subuhan in Central Java

A Thesis

Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Islamic Studies at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (M.A.)



by:
Muhammad Rosyid
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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Name : Muhammad Rosyid
Programme : Islamic Studies
Title : Embracing Faith and Fun: The Emergence of Bikers Subuhan in Central Java

This thesis examines the emergence of Bikers Subuhan (BS) which has grown rapidly in the past six years. The movement identifies itself as a community of motorcycle enthusiasts promoting congregational Dawn (*Subuh*) prayer in mosques. Presently, BS has established 108 communities spread throughout cities in Indonesia. This study demonstrates that there was an increase in members within the BS movement, most recruitment takes place through interpersonal relations between the BS members, the Safar Ride event, and the utilization of social media. This research focuses on the BS movement in Solo, considering that the city is known as a nest for various Islamic radical groups, where Islamist ideas remain strong and prevalent. This research applies the theory of Pop-Islamism promoted by Dominik Muller; he argues that Islamist ideas are still being voiced, albeit in different forms/languages, namely through the adoption and adaptation of pop culture. This research employs ethnographic fieldwork for approximately six months (February-July) through participatory and digital observation, interviews, content analysis, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with 26 participants, consisting of one staff member from the PKS faction, four *awwalun* (leaders), three *murabbis* (religious mentors/advisors), and 18 members of Bikers Subuhan. Through content analysis, the study will discuss the narratives propagated through Islamic religious preaching (*pengajian*), private groups, and discussions that followed during their activities. This study found that the BS community tends to lean more toward an Islamist movement rather than a motorcycle enthusiast community. In short, this religious movement utilizes the motorcycle community as a camouflage to attract participants and supporters toward their envisioned goals. This thesis argues that the Bikers Subuhan continue to advocate for disseminating Islamist narratives and endorse implementing Islamic laws, including establishing an Islamic state, albeit primarily within their internal circles. This study is expected to contribute to the literature on Islamic activism that utilizes fun as part of movement mobilization in Indonesia, with a concentration on Solo. Considering that this research is limited to the BS movement in Solo, the findings and analysis of this thesis do not generalize the direction of the Bikers Subuhan movement in Indonesia, which may give an orientation towards supporting Islamism.

Keywords: *Fun, Islamism, Pop-Islamism, Bikers Subuhan Movement, and Solo.*

ملخص البحث

الاسم : محمد رشيد

القسم : الدراسات الإسلامية

الموضوع : اعتناق الإيمان والمرح: ظهور "بايكرز سوبوهان" في وسط جاوة

ناقشت الرسالة ظهور حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان" (Bikers Subuhan) التي نمت بسرعة خلال ست سنوات الماضية. تُعرّف هذه الحركة نفسها بأنها فريق ركوب الدراجات النارية يروجون لصلاة الفجر المشتركة في المساجد. حالياً، قامت "بايكرز سوبوهان" بإنشاء 108 فريقاً منتشرة في مختلف مدن إندونيسيا. توضح هذه الدراسة أن هناك زيادة في أعداد الأعضاء داخل حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان"، وأن معظم عمليات التجنيد تحدث من خلال العلاقات الشخصية بين أعضاء الحركة، وحدث ركوب السفر (Safar Ride)، واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. هذه الدراسة مركز على حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان" في مدينة سولو، نظراً لأن المدينة معروفة بأنها عيش لمجموعات إسلامية راديكالية متنوعة، حيث تظل الأفكار الإسلامية المتشددة قوية وسائدة. تستند هذه الدراسة إلى نظرية "الإسلام البوب" المرؤجة من قبل دومينيك مولر (Dominik Muller)؛ حيث يُجادل أن الأفكار الإسلامية لا تزال تُعبر عن ذاتها، ولكن بأشكال ولغات مختلفة، وهي من خلال اعتماد وتكييف الثقافة الشعبية. المنهج المطبق لهذه الدراسة يكون بالعمل الميداني الإثنوغرافي لمدة تقريبية ستة أشهر (من فبراير إلى يوليو) من خلال المشاركة والمراقبة الرقمية، والمقابلات، وتحليل المحتوى، والوثائق. تمت المقابلات مع 26 مشاركاً، يتألفون من عضو واحد من جماعة حزب العدالة والرفاهة، وأربعة الأتولون (قادة)، وثلاثة مرّين (مرشدين/مستشارين دينيين)، و18 عضواً من "بايكرز سوبوهان". من خلال تحليل المحتوى، ستناقش هذه الدراسة السرديات التي تُنشر من خلال الخطب الدينية الإسلامية، والمجموعات الخاصة، والمناقشات التي تلت هذه الأنشطة. توصلت هذه الدراسة إلى أن مجتمع "بايكرز سوبوهان" يميل بشكل أكبر نحو حركة إسلامية بدلاً من أن يكون فريق ركوب الدراجات النارية. وباختصار، تستخدم هذه الحركة الدينية مجتمع ركوب الدراجات النارية كتمويه لجذب المشاركين والداعمين نحو أهدافها المتصورة. يُجادل هذه الدراسة في أن "بايكرز سوبوهان" ما زالوا يدعون إلى نشر السرديات الإسلامية ويؤيدون تنفيذ القوانين الإسلامية، بما في ذلك إقامة دولة إسلامية، على الرغم من أن ذلك يحدث أساساً داخل دوائرهم الداخلية. من المتوقع أن تسهم هذه الدراسة في الأدب حول النشاط الإسلامي الذي يستخدم الترفيه كجزء من تحفيز الحركة في إندونيسيا، مع التركيز على مدينة سولو. نظراً لأن هذه الدراسة مقتصرة على حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان" في سولو، فإن النتائج والتحليلات المقدمة في هذه الرسالة لا تعمم اتجاه حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان" في مدن إندونيسيا، والتي قد تكون موجّهة نحو دعم الإسلام السياسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المرح، الإسلامية، الإسلام الشعبي، حركة "بايكرز سوبوهان، و سولو.

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman
ا	a	س	s	ل	l
ب	b	ش	sh	م	m
ت	t	ص	ṣ	ن	n
ث	th	ض	ḍ	و	w
ج	j	ط	ṭ	هـ	h
ح	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ي	y
خ	kh	ع	'		
د	d	غ	gh		
ذ	dh	ف	f		
ر	r	ق	q		
ز	z	ك	k		

Short Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
َ	a	جَلَسَ	<i>jalasa</i>
ِ	i	رَكِبَ	<i>rakiba</i>
ُ	u	كُتِبَ	<i>kutiba</i>

Long Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
آ/إي	ā	جَرِي/سَافِر	<i>jarā/sāfar</i>
ي	ī	سَلِيم	<i>salīm</i>
و	ū	سَجُود	<i>sujūd</i>

Diphthong

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
و	aw	مولا	<i>mawlā</i>
ي	ay	غيب	<i>ghayb</i>

Notes:

1. Consonant with shaddah (ّ) for instance, أُمَّة is written as *ummah* (double letters).
2. Arabic letter *hamzah* (ء) at the beginning of a word is transliterated into “a” not into “ʿ”. For instance, أحمد is written as *aḥmad* not *ʿaḥmad*.
3. Arabic script of *alif-lam qamariyah* (ال) is written as “al” at the beginning of words and *alif-lam shamsiyah* (ا) is written in accordance with the first letter at the beginning of words. For instance:
المائدة : al-māidah
الرحمان : ar-rahmān
4. Arabic letter *ta' marbutah* (ة) is written as “h” when it is located at the end of the words, such as البقرة is written as *al-baqarah*. When located in the middle of a sentence is written as “t”, such as أُمَّة وَسَطًا is written as *ummatan wasaṭan*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The accomplishment of my studies and the composition of this thesis owe a debt of gratitude to a multitude of individuals and institutions. Foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my supervisor, Professor Syamsul Rijal, Ph.D., whose guidance and unwavering encouragement were pivotal throughout the course of my fieldwork and the composition of this research. His insightful comments and constructive critiques have adeptly guided me in the development of my arguments and refinement of my analysis within this work. I have derived immense benefit from his supervision, particularly in writing and understanding the Islamist movement in Indonesia, with a specific focus on Solo.

I am compelled to express my gratitude to all the esteemed professors and lecturers who have generously shared their knowledge and cultivated my perspectives across a spectrum of subjects, particularly those concerning Muslim societies, politics, youth, radicalism, culture, and religion in Indonesia. I would like to mention Professor Noorhaidi Hasan, Yanwar Pribadi Ph.D., Haula Noor Ph.D., Zezen Zaenal Mutaqin S.J.D., Bhirawa Anoraga Ph.D., and other lecturers, whose erudition has indelibly enriched my academic journey.

In addition, I am indebted to the Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, which graciously endowed me with a fully-funded scholarship, facilitating my pursuit of a two-year study within the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIS). The invaluable administrative assistance extended by the FIS staff merits sincere acknowledgment. Particularly, I am deeply grateful to Anindhita Timika Aryani, M.Sc., Fakhriyan Ardyanto, S.M., and other staff members for their friendliness and invaluable support in navigating academic affairs.

The realization of this research would not have been possible to complete without the cooperation and participation of Bikers Subuhan Communities in the Soloraya region. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my informants such as the *awwalun* (founder) of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo, Bikers Subuhan Klaten, and the *murrabbis* (religious mentor) of both communities, whose generosity in sharing their time and insights during the six-month of fieldwork research has been

immeasurable. I am also indebted to my friend Muhammad Nur Fadli, a staff member of the Prosperous Justice Party in the Regional Legislative Council of Sukoharjo, whose initial support enabled me to access the Tarbiyah movement in Solo, ultimately facilitating enduring connections.

I am additionally inclined to convey my deepest gratitude to my beloved parents, Muhaimin and St. Yulidah, who have steadfastly supported my pursuit of a Master's degree. Although they may not fully comprehend the specifics of my studies, they always encouraged me to complete my studies and prayed for success in my academic career and further life. Lastly, I must acknowledge the unceasing moral support and steadfast prayer by Beni Dahlan, Intan Rahimah, Faisal Fathoni, Febry Savira Salsabila, Afifah Nur Khasanah, Azizah Nur Rahmah, Ghazi and Maryam, all of whom have played an instrumental role in fortifying of these remarkable individuals. Despite the contribution of so many people above, let me acknowledge that any deficiencies present within this thesis are enterily mine and thus my own responsibility.

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GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS DIRECTORY

Glossary

Abangan	Nominal or less observant Muslims.
Akhlaq	Islamic moral conduct and behavior.
Alim	Pious, devout, understanding of religious teachings.
Alun-alun	Public field square.
Awwalun	Founder; Leader.
Da'wah	Proselytizing; Propaganda; or Missionary.
Hadith	Prophetic traditions as secondary Islamic text.
Halal	Permissible in Islamic law.
Halaqah	Islamic religious circle.
Haram	Forbidden in Islamic law.
Hijrah	Migration; Changing from less religious individuals to Islamic.
Jannah	Heaven.
Jihad	Effort holy war; Struggle against the enemies of Islam.
Juz	Section of the Qur'an.
Kejawen	Javanese syncretistic mysticism.
Khilaf	Un/Intentional mistakes.
Laskar	Paramilitary group.
Masjid	Mosque.
Milad	Anniversary.
Muhammadiyah	Muslim reformist association, the second largest organization in Indonesia.
Murabbi	Islamic religious mentor.
Nahdlatul Ulama	Muslim traditionalist association, the largest organization in Indonesia.
Pengajian	Islamic religious preaching.
Pesantren	Traditional Islamic boarding school.
Priyayi	Bureaucratic upper class.
Qur'an	Words of God as a primary Islamic text.
Rasulullah	The Prophet Muhammad.
Safar	Traveling.
Santri	Student in a <i>pesantren</i> ; Pious or practicing Muslim.

Sedekah	Islamic voluntary giving.
Shariah	Islamic religious law based on the Qur'an.
Swapraja	Self-governing region.
Syahid	Martyrdom.
Takmir	Mosque management.
Tarbiyah	Literally means education, an Islamic movement based on the method and ideology of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.
Ukhuwah	Brotherhood.
Ulama	Scholar or cleric of Islamic learning.
Ummah	The community of all Muslims.
Zakat	Islamic almsgiving.

Abbreviations

ANNAS	Aliansi Nasional Anti-Syiah (National Anti-Shia Alliance).
Ansor	Aliansi Soloraya (the Soloraya Alliance).
BBM	Bersih-bersih masjid (cleaning mosque together).
BIN	Badan Intelijen Negara (State Intelligence Agency).
BPS	Badan Statistik Indonesia (the Central Bureau of Statistics).
BS	Bikers Subuhan.
BSK	Bikers Subuhan Klaten.
BSS	Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo.
DDII	Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation).
DI/TII	Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (Islamic State and Indonesian Islamic Army).
DMI	Dewan Masjid Indonesia (Indonesian Mosques Board).
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (the Regional Legislative Council).
DSKS	Dewan Syariah Kota Surakarta (Shariah Council of Solo City).
FPI	Front Pembela Islam (Front for the Defence of Islam).
HTI	Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (the Liberation Party of Indonesia).
JAD	Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (Helpers of the State Congregation).
JAT	Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (Helpers of the Tawhid Congregation).
JI	Jamaah Islamiyyah (Islamic Congregational).

KAMMI	Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (Action Committee of Indonesian Muslim Students).
KOKAM	Komando Kesiapsiagaan Angkatan Muda Muhammadiyah (the Muhammadiyah's Paralimilitary Group).
Kopdar	Kopi Darat (hanging out together).
KTP	Kartu Tanda Penduduk (Identity Card).
Masyumi	Majelis Syura Muslimin Indonesia (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims).
MBI	Muslim Bikers Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Bikers).
MMI	Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Council of Indonesian Holy Warriors).
MUI	Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Ulama Council).
NKRI	Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia.
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama.
P3M	Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat (Association for Islamic Boarding School and Community Development).
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party).
PPIM	Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (Center for the Islamic Study and Society).
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, (the Development of Unity Party).
SDI	Sarekat Dagang Islam (Islamic Trade Association).
SI	Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association).
Tikum	Titik Kumpul (meeting point).
UIN	Universitas Islam Negeri (Islamic State University).
Ust.	Ustadz (religious leader).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The recent *hijrah* movement poses a potential threat to the established Islamic religious authority in Indonesia. The emergence of various *hijrah* communities with their interesting program has challenged established religious authorities, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. They, gradually, along with their supporters and affiliated communities, can form new enclaves of religious authority. This movement has gained a significant following due to its unique and compelling mode of communication, employing contemporary approaches and personal connections. The term “*hijrah*” traditionally signifies migration, its current context emphasizes the transformation from a less religious individual to a more devout one. In the spiritual sense, *hijrah* entails abandoning a worldly lifestyle and identity to embrace the sacred self, fully committed to adhering to the teachings of Islam.¹

The *hijrah* movement has become a growing trend among Indonesian Muslims.² For them, *hijrah* is understood as not simply being Muslim, one is required to *hijrah* to become a devout and comprehensive Muslim (*kaffah*). Muslims who move and commit to the bonds of *ukhuwah Islāmiyah* (universal brotherhood) or Muslims who dare to abandon un-Islamic identities, cultures, and values. The doctrine of *hijrah* promises its practitioners a meaningful, useful, rewarding life, and heaven. They offer a view to remain committed to their religion while still being able to enjoy modern culture, which is why the movement can attract a wide range of Muslims.

In recent years, Islam has become more visible and articulated in public, evidenced by its adaptation and acceptance of modernization and globalization, one of the most remarkable developments. Beginning with the wave of Islamic revival in the mid-1970s, Muslims did not hesitate to show their religious identity in the public sphere. This phenomenon allowed most Muslims to engage in political

¹ Élise Imray Papineau, “Hey! Ho! Let’s Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety in Java, Indonesia,” 2019, 108.

² W. P. Utomo and R. Noormega, “Indonesia Millennial Report 2020,” *IDN Research Institute* 1 (2020): 54.

expression, economic transactions, and social and cultural activities.³ Indonesia has also witnessed this wave of Islamic revival marked by the prominence of religious symbols (Arabization), Islamic educational institutions, and new Islamic lifestyles.

The fall of Suharto's leadership in 1998 witnessed the emergence of Islamic movements. The increasing demand for the comprehensive implementation of Islamic law in various parts of Indonesia became a benchmark for this revival.⁴ The success of 'the Bela Islam' (Defending Islam) rallies in 2016-2017 provides clear evidence that Islamism is still thriving in contemporary Indonesia. Various Islamic movements with new religious authorities are gaining momentum to 'fight' with mainstream Islamic authorities for the hearts of Indonesian Muslims.⁵

In addition to political aspects, Indonesia also faces other external factors, namely the rapid flow of modernization and globalization, which has a turbulent effect on established and entrenched ideas of religious identity. This fact makes religious authority in Indonesia increasingly fragmented. Another impact, according to Fealy and White (2008), resulting from modernization is the emergence and development of middle-class Muslim groups.⁶ In line with the increasing influence of the growing Indonesian Muslim middle class, Islam gradually began to gain momentum, which they envisioned as having great power. In short, they have developed into a network that allows people from diverse social backgrounds to unite and connect based on a sense of community. As a result, the messages of the Islamic revival resonated loudly across the social and political spheres, providing a credible pathway for greater mobility.⁷

³ Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere," *Contemporary Islam* 3, no. 3 (October 2009): 229, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-009-0096-9>.

⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, ed., *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013), 2.

⁵ Wai Weng Hew, "The Art of Dakwah: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siau," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (2018): 75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757>; Robert Rozehnal, *Cyber Muslims: Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age*, ed. Robert Rozehnal (Ireland: Bloomsbury Publishing, n.d.), 211; Martin van Bruinessen, "Indonesian Muslims in Globalising World," *RSIS Working Paper*, 2018, 1.

⁶ Greg Fealy and Sally White, eds., *Expressing Islam Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), 4.

⁷ Hasan, "The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere," 231.

The message of revival is characterized by the increasing number of Muslims, particularly the youth, implementing religious teaching in all aspects of life. There can be little doubt that this message inspires Muslim youths to constantly strive to cleanse (read: purity) the public sphere. The youth are considered capable of playing a central role in political and cultural shifts. The cultural behavior of Muslim youth can be understood as being situated in the political realm and representing a new arena of authority contestation. In addition to being labeled the builders of the future, the youth are often associated with disruptive agents vulnerable to radicalism and chaos.⁸ Islamist groups also realize the huge role of youth in changing the landscape of a region's socio-political order. The group spreads anti-fun rhetoric to entrench their militant and loyal spirit towards religion.

This anti-fun principle has inspired some Muslims, particularly youth, to struggle against activities that deviate from Islamic teachings. It was evident in the 1980s when Egyptian Islamist students caused disruptions during music concerts, dramas, and other forms of entertainment. They also mocked and condemned male and female students who freely associated with others or pursued everyday pleasures. Furthermore, they prohibited the screening of films, dancing, and classical and popular music, which they considered threats to Islamic culture and deviated from religious values. Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, fun and leisure are under state control, justified in the name of morality and righteousness. They consider all expressions of happiness as forms of immorality and wastefulness. Personal characteristics and morality that should be the responsibility of individuals (private) became serious concerns for Islamist groups and were handled under their responsibility (public).⁹

Bayat explains that the emergence of anti-fun discourse articulated by Islamist groups is not solely due to the religious doctrines or beliefs they understand. Considering that in several hadith narratives, the Prophet did not prohibit the companions from doing various pleasures such as hanging out,

⁸ Asef Bayat, *Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North, 2010, 3, https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=6Up7AteyarEC&oi=fnd&pg=PA27&dq=asef+bayat+muslim+youth&ots=MKc0HUP5tG&sig=xX5BLaxrs7Yes896_8auKvmqfjk.

⁹ Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (California: Stanford University Press, 2007), 435–36.

spending time on the side of the road, horse racing, wrestling, and others.¹⁰ The Islamist group's voice of anti-fun tends to be for political reasons, which view that fun has a subversive power that can weaken their influence and position.

Moreover, fun is often interpreted as a mere profane affair that distances a person from religious values. Thus, fun is only considered a single variable that does not tend to Islam. In contrast to some Islamist groups that aggressively campaign for anti-fun, some contemporary Islamic movements use fun to attract attention and sympathy among Muslims. Sahabat Hijrah, for instance, utilizes fun as an instrument to strengthen a sense of community and, at the same time, increase their faith.¹¹ Similarly, Jaga Sesama Solo, a *hijrah* community, can become a magnet for Solo Muslim youth because of their efforts in combining fun and faith, such as futsal, archery, and swimming.¹²

Bikers Subuhan (hereinafter BS) also practices the combination of faith and fun. This community utilizes fun (especially the hobby of motorcycle riding) as an instrument to strengthen not only the shared interest but also a profound sense of togetherness, which in this context is understood as unity among the Muslim community (*ummatan wāhidan*). Bikers Subuhan or the Dawn Prayer Bikers has 108 communities in nearly all districts or cities in Indonesia. Therefore, in this research, I refer to them as a movement rather than merely a community.¹³ According to Schwab, Islamic movements are not just united groups based on the similarity of Islamic ideology, but also on a sense of community (hanging out together) and common goals.¹⁴

Bikers Subuhan is a movement affiliated with the Bikers Subuhan Lampung community that began in 2017. BS is a group of bikers who created a ritual that

¹⁰ D. Sofyan et al., "Sports in Indonesian Islamic Community Culture," in 1st Paris Van Java International Seminar on Health, Economics, Social Science and Humanities (PVJ-ISHESSH 2020) (Atlantis Press, 2021), 357–60.

¹¹ Dony Arung Triantoro and M. Alam Zumiraj, "Dakwah, Kesenangan, Dan Sense of Community: Sahabat Hijrah Pekanbaru," *Harmoni* 20, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 32, <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v20i1.472>.

¹² Abraham Zakky Zulhazmi and Erma Priyanti, "Eksistensi Komunitas Hijrah Dan Dakwah Masa Kini: Studi Komunitas Jaga Sesama Solo," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 40, no. 2 (2020): 174.

¹³ Interview with Ahmad, one of the advisers of Bikers Subuhan Klaten, 18th February 2023. It should be noted that all names in this thesis are pseudonyms.

¹⁴ Wendell Schwab, "Islam, Fun, and Social Capital in Kazakhstan," *Central Asian Affairs* 2, no. 1 (2015): 51, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142290-00201004>.

simultaneously associates the expression of their faith and passion through riding.¹⁵ In the initial stage, I assumed that the movement bore a resemblance to the conventional *hijrah* movement, wherein emphasis is placed upon personal piety, and utilizing pop culture to captivate the interest of the Indonesian Muslims. After several observations and following a series of activities carried out by BS, especially in the city of Soloraya (hereinafter Solo),¹⁶ this movement tries to lead its members into the political agenda and social change doctrines. Some preachers often criticized public policy, hate speech against certain religious groups even other religions, rejected the Israeli national team, and support certain Islamic political parties.¹⁷

I limit this research to focus on BS in Solo, considering that the city is one of the centers for developing the *hijrah* movements in Indonesia. There are several communities of the *hijrah* movement found in Solo, such as Exspreso (Ex Preman Solo, Former Solo Gangsters), Xpas (Ex Preman Pasar, Former Market Gangsters), Yuk Ngaji Solo (Let's Reciting for Solonese), Ngaji Asik.id (Reciting is Fun), Fath Sedulur Hijrah (Fath *Hijrah* Brother), Jaga Sesama Solo (Keeping Fellow Solonese), Ngadem (Ngaji and Membagi, Reciting and Sharing), Perisai (Pemuda Rindu Syariah, Youth Misses Shariah), and others which are estimated to be more than 50 communities. The *hijrah* movement offers a way to remain committed to religious teachings while still being able to enjoy modern (pop) culture. According to PPIM, this phenomenon is growing along with the increasing religious conservatism in Indonesia.¹⁸

1.2 Formulation of Problem Statement

This study investigates the Bikers Subuhan movement, with a specific focus on the clandestine doctrine propagated by the BS movement. The term 'invisible doctrine' is employed to refer to the process of indoctrinating Islamist ideology

¹⁵ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, Pious Bikies (Inside Indonesia, issued December 19, 2019), <https://www.insideindonesia.org/pious-bikies>.

¹⁶ Bikers Subuhan (BS) in Solo consists of 7 communities namely Sukoharjo, Klaten, Boyolali, Karanganyar, Surakarta, Sragen, and Wonogiri. Nowadays only the four communities mentioned earlier are still active, the rest will be tried to be revived at the moment of Ramadan, Zaenal, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo about future strategy of BSS, March 19, 2023.

¹⁷ Further discussion will be detailed in Chapter 4 on the Bikers Subuhan's political agenda.

¹⁸ PPIM, "Tren Keberagaman Gerakan Hijrah Kontemporer" (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, February 1, 2021), 1–2.

implicitly due to the repressive actions of the Indonesian government. This doctrine is continuously disseminated through means such as preaching and narratives shared within private groups until it becomes deeply embedded within the BS community. The ideology, gradually, embraced by this community can influence each member's involvement in the invisible doctrine. Berger (2016) labels this phenomenon as social influence, signifying an individual's decisions and behaviors are influenced by their environment or the individuals surrounding them.¹⁹ As a case study, this research explores the cityscape of Solo, which is intertwined with the dissemination of Islamist ideology.

There are two reasons for choosing this city. First, Solo is known as a place where various Islamic radical groups have flourished, even a nest of terrorists.²⁰ Therefore, the pattern of Islamization in the city is very strong and growing rapidly. Second, Solonese had an *abangan* Muslim majority and faced a dark historical past related to political, social, and even religious uprisings. Hence, a soft approach to attract the enthusiasm of the Solonese in preaching began to get a chance to proliferate massively. In turn, fans or followers can be led to the political sphere, which makes it possible to create an Islamic political identity. Thus, I intend to conduct research focusing on the Bikers Subuhan in Solo to unravel the phenomenon. The research primarily asks three questions: Why did the Bikers Subuhan movement proliferate in Indonesia? How did the movement emerge in Solo? To what extent do they articulate their invisible doctrines for social change?

1.3 Objectives of Study

The *hijrah* movement is considered capable of offering a positive impact on a person as an effort to achieve a better life following Islamic values. On the other hand, this movement is seen as vulnerable to exclusivism and leads to a conservative turn.²¹ In this regard, this research aims to investigate the ideological trajectory of the Bikers Subuhan, analyzing whether their movement aligns more

¹⁹ Jonah Berger, *Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior*, First Simon&Schuster hardcover edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016).

²⁰ Muhammad Wildan, "Youth Radical Islamism in Solo as Manifested by Front Pemuda Islam," *Socio-Politic* 8, no. 1 (2018): 90; Taufik Nugroho et al., "Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School Ngruki Sukoharjo, 'The Misunderstood Islamic School,'" *Jurnal Nuansa Akademik* 7, no. 2 (2022): 204.

²¹ Shinta Eka Puspasari, "Hijrah - Between Radical and Moderate Islam," *Strategic Review by SGPP Indonesia*, October 1, 2018.

with conservative tendencies observed in other *hijrah* movements or takes a more moderate stance. If so, to what extent this movement competes with mainstream religious authorities in Indonesia, especially in Solo, for influence in mobilizing supporters? This research also investigates how they can attract participants' sympathy to join this movement. Furthermore, this study aims to examine the political agenda or propaganda of the Bikers Subuhan movement in Solo City to create social change.

1.4 Literature Review

Various scholars have carried out research related to the Islamic movement, and the previous studies merely focus on how the Islamic movement emerges and remains on the surface. In contrast to the Bikers Subuhan movement -considering that BS is a new movement formed six years ago- which is still struggling to attract participants and seems confused or indecisive about the identity of the direction of their movement. For the mapping process, I divide the literature review into three scopes, such as fun, Muslim, and youth; piety and popular culture; as well as *hijrah* movements in Indonesia.

a. Fun, Muslim, and Youth

Being a Muslim seems to be identified with being rigid, restricted, anti-fun, and so on. Historical records state that Muslim countries in the past often campaigned against fun. It was considered profane and could lead away from the teachings of Islam.²² In contrast, being a contemporary Muslim is interpreted in this way; fun is instead used as a means of captivating hearts, especially youth, to convey the teachings of Islam (*da'wah*). Muslims are firmly part of the modern world and grapple with the challenges of modernity in various ways. They are required to reinterpret the teachings of religious traditions and are 'forced' to merge with the complex problems of today's contemporary world.

In Western countries, young Muslims have begun to develop their subcultures, changing the lyric music of religious rappers and wearing street

²² Asef Bayat, "Islamism and the Politics of Fun," *Public Culture* 19, no. 3 (September 2007): 433–35, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-2007-004>; Mona Harb, "City Debates 2008: Spaces of Faith and Fun," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 4 (2009): 1074.

clothes with Islamic slogans, stand-up comedy packed with Islamic messages, and others. These activities are outwardly oriented, intending to convey religious messages to non-Muslims through youth culture.²³ While in Kazakhstan, the inability of Islamic political parties and Islamic-oriented organizations to voice their goals or aspirations, ultimately led Muslim elites to build solidarity with small groups through fun activities. By developing intense social networks between members, they managed to create a new piety space and attract broader new members for Muslim Kazakhs.²⁴

While in a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia, Salafis, who are often associated with puritanical Muslims who reject pleasures, are finally starting to compromise with modernity, in this case, represented by Salafi youth. They are no longer limited to relying on the past doctrine of Salafiness but also displaying contemporary youth styles by engaging in pleasurable activities. In turn, although Misbah's research cannot illustrate the debate between Muslims and fun as a whole, at least his research can refute the discourse on Salafis that is still often associated with being rigid, narrow-minded, and anti-fun.²⁵

The studies that have been mentioned discuss the negotiation between Muslims and fun in the contemporary world. The vigilance against the wave of modernity has begun to be flexible (pragmatic) because of the compromise with the Islamic religion. They seem to have reinterpreted the rigid teachings of Islam; in the past, the Arab world rejected various sports games and responded by making the Islamic Solidarity Games, now, they are even hosting a grand event like the 2022 World Cup. Islam is no longer synonymous with anti-fun, instead adopting and adapting modernity.²⁶ In

²³ Maruta Herding, *Inventing the Muslim Cool: Islamic Youth Culture in Western Europe* (Dutch: *Deutsche Natio-nalbibliografie*, 2013).

²⁴ Schwab, "Islam, Fun, and Social Capital in Kazakhstan."

²⁵ Aflahal Misbah, "Fun and Religious Authority: Socializing Anti-Music on Instagram," *Jurnal Masyarakat & Budaya* 21, no. 2 (2019): 149–68.

²⁶ Alberto Testa and Mahfoud Amara, eds., *Sport in Islam and in Muslim Communities* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2016); Friederike Trotier, "Strengthening the Muslim Community in Indonesia and Beyond: The 2013 Islamic Solidarity Games in Palembang," *Studia Islamika* 22, no. 1 (2015): 65–96, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.15408/sdi.v22i1.1388>.

line with Bikers Subuhan, the movement seeks to integrate symbols of modernity (Western culture) into a more Islamic one.

b. Piety and Popular Culture

Da'wah with a soft approach that does not reject modernity but still incorporates Islamic values as part of emphasizing piety, is an important factor in attracting the interest of some Indonesian Muslims. Kailani describes the Tarbiyah movement as trying to fight Western culture by adapting and adopting pop-culture through music, novels, comics, and movies. The Tarbiyah group changed hip-hop music, identical to the West, that could be associated with Islamic music into *nasyid*. In sum, he concludes that Tarbiyah uses a method of preaching by negotiating piety and modernity to achieve their goals, which emphasizes the contraction of Muslim identity based on the Islamic way of life in contemporary Indonesia.²⁷

In line with Kailani, Nasir also proved how the explosion in popularity of hip-hop music which at the beginning of its presence, became a challenge for both religious authorities - considered incompatible with Islamic values- and state authorities - considered inappropriate with conservative cultural values- in the Asian region. The modernity of hip-hop music was able to gain their perception and began to gain space as an art form accepted by religious and cultural authorities.²⁸ The RISKKA (Remaja Islam Sunda Kelapa, Muslim Youth of Sunda Kelapa) group in Jakarta also demonstrates the negotiation between piety and modernity. This community is faced with various global aspects ranging from urbanism and cosmopolitanism, and at the same time, is required to be a devout religious youth. This study found that the lifestyle of young people (individuality) in the community is not one color, and they are respected among other

²⁷ Ahmad-Norma Permata and Najib Kailani, "Islam and the 2009 Indonesia Elections, Political and Cultural Issue; The Case of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)" (Bangkok: IRASEC (Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia, 2010).

²⁸ Mohamed Kamaludeen Nasir, "Hip-Hop Islam: Commodification, Cooptation and Confrontation in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Religious and Political Practice* 4, no. 3 (September 2018): 374–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20566093.2018.1525902>.

members, although in terms of religiosity, they have similarities and encourage each other to increase their personal piety.²⁹

These studies discuss how Muslims try to maintain their piety and adherence to religious teachings that face the challenges of modernity. The Bikers Subuhan movement also campaigns for this idea; they assume that the riding activities they do will be rewarded by God and replaced with the wishes of heaven.

c. *Hijrah* Movements in Indonesia

As explained, the fall of the New Order regime opened great opportunities for the emergence of Islamic movements, including the *hijrah* movement. Beta has examined the Hijabers Community in urban Indonesian Muslimah; she concludes that this community expresses a form of piety through a style of dress that is Islamic and modern at the same time. They tend to be more flexible than conventional forms of hijab trends, which makes it easier for them to appeal to the needs of the Islamic market.³⁰ The *hijrah* movement that combines religion with popular culture is also shown by Teras Dakwah; this movement can wrap religious doctrines through various social aspects (humanitarian actions) and sociocultural aspects that create a space for popular piety. The presence of Teras Dakwah contests with old authorities and can attract the attention of Muslims, especially youth broadly, who contest with mainstream religious authorities in Indonesia.³¹ Pejuang Subuh, as in Lengauer's research, developed its ideology and idioms of practice through offline and online activities. They design online communication to discipline their members towards religious awareness and social concern. They aim to increase the zeal of piety

²⁹ Ahmad Hakam, "Embracing Religion and Urban Life: Religiosity, Identity, and Style of Indonesian Muslim Youth" (London, Aga Khan University, 2010).

³⁰ Annisa R Beta, "Hijabers: How Young Urban Muslim Women Redefine Themselves in Indonesia," *International Communication Gazette* 76, no. 4–5 (March 7, 2014): 377–89, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048514524103>.

³¹ Arung Triantoro Dony, "Dakwah Dan Kesalehan: Studi Tentang Gerakan Teras Dakwah Di Kota Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Masyarakat & Budaya* 20, no. 2 (2018): 272–86.

(*semangat taqwa*), which is considered an act of getting closer to society (*hablu min Allāh wa ḥablu min al-nās*).³²

One of the *hijrah* movements that has grown rapidly in the past six years is Bikers Subuhan. At the time of writing, they claim to have more than 100 communities spread across various cities in Indonesia. There are several previous studies related to BS, Umar et.al. discussed religious character education carried out by BS Manado, and various supporting and inhibiting factors for the community were also described in the study.³³ Mujaahidah and Hadziq explain the role of BS Karanganyar in Islamizing the local community through their religious activities.³⁴ Putri and Amelia analyze the persuasive approach required by BS Pangkalpinang that can touch the emotional aspects of its members.³⁵

These previous studies only discuss the strategies carried out by the Bikers Subuhan movement in attracting Muslims in various regions. Meanwhile, this research focuses on the patterns and ways of bonding between members and communities to form an enclave of Islamic movements manifested through preaching, Islamic activities, and dissemination of information through social media. In this sense, this research spotlights the invisible doctrine in the movement that allows it to be directed in the political realm (propaganda).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

As a tool to process research data and gain research objectives, I used the theory of Pop-Islamism. This term was articulated to critique the theory of post-Islamism popularized by other scholars. Bayat defines post-Islamism society as a

³² Dayana Lengauer, "Sharing Semangat Taqwa: Social Media and Digital Islamic Socialities in Bandung," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2, 2018): 19, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1415276>.

³³ Mardan Umar, Feiby Ismail, and Zainal Arifin, "Religious Character Education in the Hijrah Community in Manado as a Muslim Minority Region," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14, no. 1 (April 28, 2022): 571–82, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i1.1769>.

³⁴ Dhiya Ulhaq Mujaahidah and Abdulloh Hadziq, "Bikers Subuhan Karanganyar: Dakwah Komunitas Dalam Kegiatan Keagamaan," *At Tabsyir: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam* 8, no. 1 (June 2021): 16–26, <https://doi.org/10.21043/at-tabsyir.v8i1.10307>.

³⁵ Sekar Putri and Amelia, "Strategi Komunikasi Persuasif: Komunitas Bikers Subuhan Pangkalpinang Dalam Mewujudkan Visi Organisasi," *Komunikasia: Journal of Islamic Communication & Broadcasting* 2, no. 2 (2022), ejurnal.lp2msasbabel.ac.id/index.php/kp.

tendency of political Islam that begins to secularize religion to gain broader supporters, such as support for democracy, pluralism, the concept of nation-states, and others. In addition, it is a phenomenon that focuses on individual Islamic lifestyles and modern consumption replacing political-religious orientation.³⁶ Meanwhile, pop-Islamism is a phenomenon that demonstrates that Islam has been repackaged, so religion is no longer seen as something separate from pop-culture. Muller has proven that PAS, especially its Youth Wing, still upholds and remains the goals of political Islamism oriented towards rejecting the nation-state. It is ambitious to fully reestablish the goals of an Islamic state and law to its political agenda.³⁷ In short, Pop-Islamism was born out of disagreement with the definition of post-Islamism, saying that there is no orientation of separation of religion and politics. Based on Muller's ethnographic study of the PAS, it was found that they still, and continue to, advocate the merging of state and religion represented in their efforts to establish an Islamic state, although both post and pop-Islamism are expressed by combining pop-culture.

The notion of post and Pop-Islamism, according to Hasan, is quite similar. The former refers to the ideology of Islamism, and the latter refers to the form of expression of Islamism. Looking at the difference in time and research subjects between Bayat and Muller, the post-Islamism offered by Bayat focuses on changes in Islamic activism after the Iranian revolution and other Middle Eastern cases at the end of the 20th century. In comparison, Muller focuses on Islamic parties in Southeast Asia, particularly Malaysia, in the early 21st century. I argue that the difference between the two notions depends on the actors or agencies of the Islamic movement. Both post and pop-Islamism use pop-culture to spread the teachings of Islam; some do not mention the enforcement of the Islamic state, and the rest seek to implement Islamic law ranging from the social order to the state. Alike to the

³⁶ Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*; Asef Bayat, ed., *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2013); Abdul Ghani, "Post-Islamism: Ideological Delusions and Sociological Realities," *Contemporary Arab Affairs* 12, no. 3 (2019): 3–20, <https://doi.org/10.1525/caa.2019.123001>.

³⁷ Dominik Muller, "Post-Islamism or Pop-Islamism? Ethnographic Observations of Muslim Youth Politics in Malaysia," *Paideuma* (Wiesbaden) (Frobenius Institute, 2013); Dominik Muller, *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS, Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia* (New York: Routledge, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.4324/94781315850535>.

Bikers Subuhan phenomenon, the movement utilizes pop-culture for Islamizing individuals, society, and the state as its ultimate goal, so the idea of Pop-Islamism is more suitable to be applied in this study.

1.6 Research Significance

In the sphere of religion, this research intends to contribute to a better understanding of how Muslims increasingly recognize the importance of engaging with popular culture, particularly in terms of fun and enjoyment. The dynamic interaction between Islam and fun has shifted from one of antagonism to one of compatibility. As a result, the soft approach to preaching, often referred to as “fun Islam,” has become the dominant choice for this movement, rejecting harsh techniques or violence. This study is expected to add to the current literature on Islamic activism in Indonesia, concentrating on Solo. This is especially important given the Bikers Subuhan movement’s growing influence.

1.7 Research Methodology

This thesis employs ethnographic fieldwork for approximately six months (February-July) through offline and online observation, interviews, content analysis, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with 26 participants, consisting of one staff member from the PKS faction, four *awwalun* (leaders), three *murabbi* (religious mentors/advisors), and 18 members of Bikers Subuhan (see Table 1). Through content analysis, the study will discuss the narratives propagated through Islamic religious preaching (*pengajian*), private groups, and discussions that followed during their activities.

1.8 Thesis Outline

This thesis encompasses five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that includes background, problem statement, objectives of study, literature review, research significance, theoretical framework, methodology, and thesis structure.

In the second chapter, I discuss the shifting Muslim attitudes toward popular culture starting from hostility to compatibility. It begins by introducing the emergence of Islamist ideology which rejects pop-culture. Further, I provide a brief discussion *hijrah* movement which is attempting to utilize pop-culture as a

promotional tool to gain broader followers. I also explain the theory of the research namely Pop-Islamism promoted by Dominik Muller.

The third chapter focuses on the proliferation of the Bikers Subuhan movement in Indonesia, particularly in Solo. I take two districts as representatives of the BS community in all districts in Solo, Klaten, and Sukoharjo. It provides the agenda and propaganda of each community and shows how the way BS has developed in terms of mobilization, expansion, and in the terms of collecting funds.

The fourth chapter examines the invisible doctrine propagated by the Bikers Subuhan movement in Solo. It begins by analyzing the process of indoctrination through preaching in mosques. Next, it clarifies the meaning of *hijrah* according to members of the BS community in Solo. Finally, this section deals with the strong impact of intensive indoctrination among members of BS by analyzing narratives or messages of awakening the Muslim ummah, supporting Islamic political parties, and advocating the implementation of Shariah among the internal circles.

The fifth chapter contains the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II

SHIFTING MUSLIM ATTITUDES TOWARDS POP-CULTURE: FROM HOSTILITY TO COMPATIBILITY

Nowadays, Indonesia as the largest Muslim-majority place in the world cannot be separated from the role of the Middle East, where Islam originated.³⁸ The Middle East has long been considered -and they see themselves- as the core of the Muslim in the world, with Islamic historical and developmental motifs initiating in that region. Various frictions ranging from conflicts between religions, sects, tribes, and ideologies, are easily found in the place where Islam was born. Whereas non-Arabic Islam, for example, Southeast Asia, tends to be considered as a periphery, including Indonesia, politically, it is seen as a more inclusive Islam because it has a democratic government, they are slowly trying to challenge the supremacy of the center of gravity of Islam, namely the Middle East.³⁹ While it cannot be denied that the role of the Middle East on Islam in Indonesia is significant, over the years, Indonesia has shown itself to be 'friendly' in accepting Middle Eastern ideas and thoughts, and this impact has continued to grow in the modern era.

The growing interaction between the Middle East and Indonesia coupled with Indonesia having the largest Muslim population, has made the country a main target for spreading complex trans-regional and global network ideas. As a result, transnational ideas that are incompatible with the national context (read: Indonesia) are inevitably unavoidable. The victory of the Iranian revolution is also a trigger for Islamic revival in various Islamic worlds, plus technological advances and globalization also have a real role in the spread of these ideas. This complexity is likely to be a means of spreading radical Islamism in Indonesia alongside numerous ideas and Islamic thought.⁴⁰

Indonesia, known as the smiling face of Islam, began to receive media attention after the Bali 1 bombing (12/10/2002) that left more than 200 people dead

³⁸ Nico J.G. Kaptein, "The Arab Middle East and Religious Authority in Indonesia," *Tebuireng: Journal of Islamic Studies and Society* 1, no. 1 (2020): 1–2.

³⁹ Angel M Rabasa et al., *The Muslim World after 9/11*, RAND Project Air Force (Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2004), xviii, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1r4xd2h.38>.

⁴⁰ Giora Eliraz, *Islam in Indonesia: Modernism, Radicalism and the Middle East Dimension* (Liverpool University Press, 2013).

and hundreds injured.⁴¹ The act was a manifestation of radical groups that were previously held responsible for the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center.⁴² These irresponsible acts have resulted in many casualties and have broadly impacted the strategic project of state security in tackling radical movements, and there have been more than 20 bombings since the incident.⁴³ The topic of Indonesian Islam, which has long been marginalized in Islamic studies, has been discussed by various scholars and researchers due to the emergence of these radical groups.

Islamic radicalism strongly colors the image of Islam in contemporary Indonesia; however, it is genuinely a new phenomenon in Indonesia.⁴⁴ Therefore, the ideology could not capture the main stage of Indonesian Muslims, especially the *ulama* responsible for spreading certain ideologies. The data shows that 71.44 percent of Indonesian *ulama* accept the concept of a nation-state accompanied by a rejection of violence in the name of religion. This figure can be understood as an indication of the failure of Islamist groups to compete in the public sphere.⁴⁵ The existence of radical groups in Indonesia is considered - by many Muslims from various circles, including *ulama*, community leaders, and scholars - to have tarnished Islam by misusing symbols of Islamic teachings. Also, the majority believe that the Unitary Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila are important elements in maintaining the existence of Islam in Indonesia.

How did a radical Islamist movement emerge and flourish in Indonesia? Why does a movement that seeks to implement Islamic law (*Shariah*) gain support

⁴¹ Bruinessen, *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn,"* 2.

⁴² Scott N Romaniuk and Emeka Thaddues Njoku, eds., *Counter-Terrorism and Civil Society: Post-9/ 11 Progress and Challenges* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021), 1; Ahmad Rizky Mardhatillah Umar, "A Genealogy of Moderate Islam: Governmentality and Discourses of Islam in Indonesia's Foreign Policy," *Studia Islamika* 23, no. 3 (2016): 401, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v23i3.3157>.

⁴³ Muhammad Khairil, "The Transformation of the Symbolic Meaning of Radicalism in Acts of Terrorism Post-Conflict in Poso Central Sulawesi," 2017, 283.

⁴⁴ Akh Muzakki, "The Roots, Strategies, and Popular Perception of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesia Islam* 08, no. 01 (2014): 19, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2014.8.1.1-22>.

⁴⁵ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Islamic Challenges of Politics And the Crisis of Legitimacy of Ulama," in *Ulama and the Nation-State: Comprehending the Future of Political Islam in Indonesia*, ed. Noorhaidi Hasan (Jakarta: PusPIDeP (Pusat Pengkajian Islam, Demokrasi, dan Perdamaian), 2019), 38.

from Indonesia's Muslim minority? This section of the chapter will elaborate on these puzzles in detail. Furthermore, I attempt to trace the development of 'newcomer' Islamic movements - represented by the *hijrah* movement - that challenge the dominance of mainstream local Islam in Indonesia. The emergence of such movements is an important phenomenon that is bound to change the Indonesian Islamic landscape and erode the importance of the role of the Islamic mainstream represented by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah in determining the moderate path. Given that the newcomer or immigrant Islamic movement certainly brings new ideas and notions that are sometimes not following the conditions of Indonesian Muslims. I adopt Muller's notion of pop-Islamism; he examines Islamism represented by the PAS (Partai Islam Se-Malaysia, the Malaysian Islamic Party) that uses popular culture to gain more supporters. They attempt to change the image of a conservative Islamic party into a dynamic one by adopting and adapting popular culture, although in general, the mission is similar, namely the Islamization of Malaysian Muslims.⁴⁶

It is important to emphasize in this research that Islamism should not be confused with Islamization, the term Islamism refers to the desire of a certain group to impose Islam in various fields, including political, economic, social, and law. They often use threats and vigilance - unsurprisingly violent ones - to realize their political agenda. However, Islamization refers to the process of shifting a society with a soft and harmonious approach towards an Islamic-based society. However, there is some concern that the border of Islamization lies in the process of Islamism that will inevitably continue to develop. Preventive measures to tackle the direction of Islamization are needed immediately. Given previous experiences, Islamist connotations that were not originally synonymous with violence became increasingly identical with radicalism and terrorism.⁴⁷ Therefore, Indonesian authorities must closely and carefully monitor the situation so that Islamization can move towards a moderate understanding rather than radicalism.

⁴⁶ Muller, "Post-Islamism or Pop-Islamism? Ethnographic Observations of Muslim Youth Politics in Malaysia"; Muller, *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS*.

⁴⁷ Noorhaidi Hasan, ed., *Literature Keislaman Generasi Milenial: Transmisi, Apropriasi, Dan Kontestasi* (Yogyakarta: Pascasarjana UIN Sunan Kalijaga Press2, 2018), 13–15, https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/8566/mengenal-generasi-millennial/0/sorotan_media.

2.1 History of Islamism in Indonesia

Islamism is one of the most influential political and religious ideologies in the modern world.⁴⁸ The term Islamist is also known as Islamic fundamentalism or Islamic revivalists, who interpret the sacred text of the Qur'an literally, along with the system that applies in a country must be based on Islamic law (*Shariah*) and must be applied to all people who live there, including non-Muslims. Islamism is a modern phenomenon that emerged as a reaction to Western penetration or hegemony over the Islamic world.⁴⁹ In sum, the term Islamism in this research refers to the affiliation of Muslims who want to make Islam not only a religion (values, morals, behavior) but also a system consisting of various dimensions, including social and political spaces.

The first wave of Islamism peaked during the Iranian revolution in 1979, politically marked by mass mobilization, Islamic militancy, the application of political and religious rules, and the search for an Islamic collective identity. Ideologically, it was shaped by the systematic efforts of the top religious authorities to Islamize society, the economy, and the country's legal system. In contrast, in the second wave of Islamism, there is a shift from classical Islamism, which tends to be oriented toward state politics, to an individual form of Islamic piety, oriented-cultural and compatible with modernity.⁵⁰ Although theoretically, Islamism promises that its people can live prosperously by implementing God-made laws, by mobilizing based on their leading slogan Islam is a solution (*al-Islām huwa al-ḥāl*). In practice, Islamism is only supported by a minority of Muslims because of the weakness of populism and the simple solutions it offers to increasingly complex contemporary problems. They assume that all the complex problems humanity faces currently can only be solved by applying Islamic law. One prominent scholar, Asef Bayat, has commented:

⁴⁸ Jon Armajani, *Modern Islamist Movements: History, Religion, and Politics* (United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 1.

⁴⁹ Roel Meijer, "The Problem of the Political in Islamist Movements," in *Whatever Happened to the Islamists*, ed. Amel Boubekeur and Olivier Roy (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1–224. Tibi argued that Islamism is about political order, not faith. In the case of Islamism, the religiousization of politics means promoting a political order that is believed to be derived from the will of God and not based on popular sovereignty. Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (London: Yale University Press, 2012), 1.

⁵⁰ Nilüfer Göle, "Islam in Public: New Visibilities and New Imaginaries," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 174.

The appeal, energy, and sources of legitimacy of Islamism are exhausted, even among its once ardent supporters. Continuous trial and error make the system susceptible to questions and criticism. Eventually, pragmatic attempts to maintain the system reinforce abandoning its underlying principles. Islamism becomes compelled, both by its internal contradictions and by societal pressure, to reinvent itself, but it does so at the cost of a qualitative shift of rights instead of duties (project), plurality in place of a singular authoritative voice, historicity rather than fixed scripture.⁵¹

In other words, the failure of Islamism to compete in attracting supporters at the international level is not much different from the rejection in every other Islamic country, including the majority Muslim country, Indonesia. Islamist groups were born as a counter-response or disappointment over various problems that occurred to them, which they credited to Western intervention. The desire for revenge is often taken in radical and even extreme ways, but it needs to be emphasized these groups and their supporters cannot be said to represent Islam in general.⁵² While in Indonesia, their main enemy at the time was the colonizers, so the effort to unite the community by establishing a modern movement based on religious spirit became an instrument to fight colonialism.⁵³

Modern Islamic movements in Indonesia first emerged in the early 20th century. Advances in education and the emergence of various social and political movements made many Muslim leaders aware of the efforts to build Islamic movements and organizations as resistance to Dutch colonialism and Indonesian-Chinese traders. In 1904, Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI) was started, which later became Sarekat Islam (SI), the first Islamic organization in Indonesia with more than 2 million members. After having many followers, SI changed its orientation from a traders' association to an Islamic political party in 1923.⁵⁴

During the Sukarno era (first President of Indonesia, 1945-1965), he succeeded in marginalizing Islamic leaders by eliminating Islamic activists who opposed him. The opposition movement that the President eventually disbanded

⁵¹ Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*, 10–11.

⁵² Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Islam: Against Extremism, the Middle Path of Moderation," *Foundazione Oasis*, September 13, 2021, <https://www.oasiscenter.eu/en/against-extremism-the-middle-path-of-moderation>.

⁵³ Muhammad Rusydy, "Transformasi Pemikiran Dan Gerakan Islam Indonesia Kontemporer," *Tajdid XVI*, no. 1 (2017): 38.

⁵⁴ Budi Twediana Hapsari, "The History of Contemporary Indonesian Muslim Groups and Muslim Media," *Afkaruna* 14, no. 1 (2018): 106, <https://doi.org/10.18196/aiijis.2018.0082.101-127>.

was DI/TII (Darul Islam and Indonesian Islamic Army), an Islamic separatist movement founded by Kartosuwiryo to establish an Islamic State in Indonesia and form an Islamic army.⁵⁵ He also confirmed that this movement would be applying all aspects of life based on Islamic law and not tolerating all forms of secularization and colonization systems. His commitment to conducting *jihad* to live in an Islamic state led him to be arrested by state authorities who had previously clashed with the fledging Republic's armed forces. Finally, on September 12, 1962, he had to take responsibility for the rebellion by being punished with death.⁵⁶

Similarly, Indonesia's second President, Suharto (1966-1998), marginalized opposing and dissenting voices under his rule. He also restricted Islamic activities and merged Islamic political parties into one party, namely PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, the Development of Unity Party). It could undoubtedly be seen that the President wanted to limit the influence of both Islamic activities and political parties in Indonesia. During his era, known as New Order, several Islamic movements were successfully established as a form of resistance to the limited role of Islam in politics, followed by intimidation of Islamic fighters. The movement was triggered by the transformation of Muslim activists and scholars who returned from the Middle East or transnational Islamic networks.⁵⁷

In 1967, Natsir⁵⁸ established DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, Indonesian Islamic Da'wa Council), an organization that supported Islamic revivalism and built cooperation with international organizations to strengthen the solidarity of *Ukhuwah Islamiyyah* (Islamic unity). Later, Natsir, Sungkar, and

⁵⁵ Riyadi Suryana, "Politik Hijrah Kartosuwiryo: Menuju Negara Islam Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Civilization* 1, no. 2 (2019): 91.

⁵⁶ Chiara Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in 20th Century Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), 168, <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004260467>; Anwar Sanusi, Anisah, and Didin Nuru; Rasidin, "Hijrah and Islamic Movement in Indonesia: Sekarmaji Marijan Kartosuwiryo's Perspective," *Buletin Al-Turas* 28, no. 1 (March 31, 2022): 23, <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v28i1.23628>.

⁵⁷ Hapsari, "The History of Contemporary Indonesian Muslim Groups and Muslim Media," 111–12.

⁵⁸ One of the former leaders of Masyumi, the largest Islamic party during Soekarno's regime. The formation of this Islamic political party is a great hope for Muslims to make Islamic law a legal reference in Indonesia. They have a strong commitment to the implementation of Islamic teachings and laws in the lives of individuals, society, and the state. For Natsir, Islam is a perfect ideology that is able to guide societies to achieve happiness in human life; see Rémy Madinier, *Islam and Politics in Indonesia: The Masyumi Party between Democracy and Integralism*, trans. Jeremy Desmond (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015), 44; G Argenti, "Ideological Praxis of Masyumi Islamic Party," *Researchgate.Net*, June 2021, 17.

Ba'asyir were three important figures who supported the Islamist movement in Indonesia. Particularly Sungkar and Ba'asyir were successors of the Darul Islam (Islamic State) movement that glorified Kartosuwiryo as a *mujahid* (fighter) in the *jihad* to establish Islamic law. Both became fugitives because they were strongly suspected of being linked to the activities behind terrorist acts by bombing several churches, discotheques, and Borobudur temple in the 1980s.⁵⁹ Eventually, both chose to move to Malaysia, assisted by Natsir. In the post-Suharto era, Ba'asyir was considered the leader of the underground Jama'ah Islamiyah (JI) movement, which was responsible for the series of bombings in 2002 and onwards.⁶⁰

After the collapse of the New Order Regime, Indonesia's democratic transition became more visible. The discourse of democracy, human rights, and freedom of speech at that time allowed people to express their thoughts and understandings. Islamists did not waste this momentum to emerge and develop on the surface, considering the various repressive measures that had been previously taken against them. Islamist groups can utilize the development of democracy to maintain and perpetuate the existence of their movement through various means. From the 1990s onwards, various radical Islamist groups emerged.⁶¹

Groups such as Laskar Jihad, Front Pembela Islam (FPI), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), and Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT) are the names of major Islamist groups that struggled to enforce Islamic law in Indonesia. Although these organizations were different in the way they expressed themselves. Laskar Jihad and FPI often demonstrate violent actions to implement Islamic law, the former involved in sending tens of thousands of Muslim militants to Maluku, FPI often involved in many raids on entertainment places that are considered dens of immorality and other vigilante activities. Meanwhile JI, JAT, and JAD are underground terrorist organizations involved in various bombing activities in Indonesia.⁶²

⁵⁹ Martin Van Bruinessen, "Traditionalist and Islamist Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia," JSTOR, October 2008, 217.

⁶⁰ Solahudin, NII Sampai JI: Salafy Jihadisme Di Indonesia (Depok: Komunitas Bambu, 2011).

⁶¹ Bruinessen, "Indonesian Muslims in Globalising World," 4.

⁶² Noorhaidi Hasan, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia," Indonesia 1, no. 73 (2002): 145–69; Solahudin, NII Sampai JI: Salafy Jihadisme Di Indonesia; Sukron Kamil, Islam & Politik Di Indonesia Terkini: Islam Dan Negara

However, recently, Islamists have begun to lose their supporters and have tried to gradually merge and transform into the modern context, especially their political views. The shift in Islamic patterns from revolutionary collective activism (apolitical behavior that opposes the state) to individual activism (personal piety) that accommodates modern life is referred to as post-Islamism by Bayat. Their participation in the discourse of the modern political system is a new phenomenon, which they previously considered as an un-Islamic political system. Some Islamist groups have turned towards secularizing their goals and objectives to compromise with modern political conditions.⁶³ Islamic political movements among hardline Muslims who were previously militant, exclusive, and fundamentalist have shifted towards a paradigm that respects inclusiveness, plurality, tolerance and have interpreted religion to support social and political change. For instance, the Tarbiyah movement, which is believed to be the pioneer of PKS (the Prosperous Justice Party), was inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood and HTI (Liberation Party of Indonesia), which was inspired by Hizb al-Tahrir (Lebanon).⁶⁴

While normatively, Islamism is not a movement that prioritizes a violent approach, the subsequent development of Islamism has shifted in expression towards radicalism, which, in turn, tends to be synonymous with extremism. The expression of Islamism, which sometimes manifests in the form of extremism, makes it seem as if supporters of the ideology are merging into acts of terrorism. The closeness between the two makes the face of Islamism not get consideration and attention in the public space, its supporters try to restore a positive image by strengthening its presence amid society through various soft approaches. Issues of good government management, anti-corruption, prohibition of drugs, alcohol, and

Dakwah Dan Poltik, HMI, Anti-Korupsi, Demokrasi, NII, MMI, Dan Perda Syari'ah, ed. Hilman Ridha (Jakarta: PSIA UIN Jakarta, 2013).

⁶³ Azlan Tajuddin, "Development, Democracy, and Post-Islamism in Indonesia," *International Journal of Social Science Studies* 4, no. 11 (2016): 41, <https://doi.org/10.11114/ijsss.v4i11.1924>.

⁶⁴ Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesian: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*, Islamising Indonesian: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), 2008, https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_459299; Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and Political Islam: Identity, Ideology and Religio-Political Mobilization*, ed. Routledge, Routledge (London and New York, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351240222>; Lukman Hakim, "Menelaah Kembali Konsep Darul Islam Dan Darul Harb," *tafsiralquran.id*, April 22, 2022, 46, <https://tafsiralquran.id/menelaah-kembali-konsep-darul-islam-dan-darul-harb/>.

concrete humanitarian issues in daily life have become a new trend for Islamism.⁶⁵ In this sense, people indirectly feel the presence of Islamism in a lovely face and a close form because it provides a kind of solution to the problems experienced, even though the political power base remains their main agenda.

In Indonesia, both Islamism and radical Islamist groups have failed to capture the imagination of most Muslims. Although PKS (the Prosperous Justice Party) party's vote share continues to increase the number of supporters in Indonesia except in 2014, the Islamic party is still far behind the secular one. Meanwhile, another Islamist group, HTI, has been disbanded by the government instead of law No. 2/2017 which is considered an Islamic radical organization that wants to establish an Islamic state.⁶⁶ They can only represent a fraction of the world's largest Muslim population and are only supported by a small minority; their goal of turning Indonesia into an Islamic state is far from reality.

The reason is that the religious zeal of Islamist groups in Indonesia has shown itself to be destructive, radical, and extremely similar to what has been portrayed in other Muslim worlds such as Saudi, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Islam was spreading in Indonesia by bringing a message of harmony and accommodation to local culture so that the religion was easily accepted by the wider community who used to embrace syncretism. In addition, violence in the name of religion has never happened before in Indonesia, even according to Madjid this homeland can become a Muslim majority because one of the factors is that the state has never used military force to spread religion. Peaceful penetration became the approach to Islamization in this country, so it is reasonable that the violent approach has very few supporters in Indonesia today.⁶⁷

The defeat of Islamist groups in capturing the main stage of Indonesian Muslims led them to maneuver by building affiliations with other Islamic groups, including the *hijrah* movements. In addition to eliminating the use of violence and

⁶⁵ Rubaidi, *Kelas Menengah Dan Gerakan Islamisme Di Indonesia* (Malang: Intrans Publishing, 2021).

⁶⁶ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "The Banning of Hizbut Tahrir and the Consolidation of Democracy in Indonesia," ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, no. 71 (2017): 1–10. This trend shows that Islamist groups are still struggling to gain a dominant voice in Indonesian society.

⁶⁷ Nurcholish Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experiences," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (1994): 59.

coercion, they no longer dare to loudly proclaim a visible voice of the Islamic state - although support for such an ideology still exists - because of the Indonesian government's restriction. By bringing a message of unity for Muslims and various soft approaches to spreading their conservative understanding while camouflaging their orientation from the establishment of an Islamic state to the Islamization of Indonesian society. Gradually they attempt to incorporate Islamic values in all aspects of society, law, economics, and politics, which remains their final ambition.

2.1 Proliferated of *Hijrah* Movement: From Idealism to Pragmatism

The term *hijrah* is derived from the Arabic word for migration; it is a physical or spiritual journey in which a person migrates to a place of Islam. It refers to Prophet's migration from Mecca to Medina to carry out his da'wah mission. The concept of *hijrah* or migration is sometimes understood messily by certain groups based on their goal.⁶⁸ For instance, al-Baghdadi interpreted the meaning of *hijrah* to migrate to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS.⁶⁹ Nowadays, the term *hijrah* refers to transforming a person from a less religious person into a more devout one. In a spiritual sense, *hijrah* is defined as leaving behind a profane lifestyle and identity, which is entirely devoted to becoming someone who follows Islamic teachings. It is an opportunity for Muslims to become more devout in their daily lives.⁷⁰

The phenomenon of *hijrah* began to appear in Indonesian public spaces in the early 2000s, marked by several artists who began to leave their careers in the entertainment industry, which was considered a sin and immorality, to a more Islamic way of life. The transformation is typically a change in appearance; women who initially did not wear the headscarf decided to wear it, or for men began to wear trousers below their ankles (*isbal*) as part of the process or way of *hijrah*.⁷¹ At that time *hijrah* was still an activity of personal piety. Over time followed by the development of social media, they became more organized by creating a

⁶⁸ Vanessa Vroon-Najem and Annelies Moors, “‘Making Hijra’: Mobility, Religion and the Everyday in the Lives of Women Converts to Islam in the Netherlands,” *Contemporary Islam* 15, no. 1 (April 2021): 36, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00463-5>.

⁶⁹ Laura Sabater Zamora, “Hijrah: Answering to the Call of the Caliphate” (Aalborg University, 2016), 6.

⁷⁰ Papineau, “Hey! Ho! Let’s Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety in Java, Indonesia,” 108.

⁷¹ Yuyun Sunesti, Noorhaidi Hasan, and Muhammad Najib Azca, “Young Salafi-Niqabi and Hijrah: Agency and Identity Negotiation,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 8, no. 2 (2018): 175, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v8i2.173-197>.

community as a forum to accommodate people who wanted to do the same object, namely becoming a better Muslim based on their version.

The term *hijrah* for someone who wants to become a better person/obedient to their religion is not a phenomenon that only occurs in Indonesia. Although using different terms, for instance, Roy describes the phenomenon - limited to Islam and Christianity - as it occurs in the UK by calling it born-again or true believers. It is an occasion where faith suddenly becomes the main motivation for religious adherents and must be immediately expressed in religious observance. They show their religion as an identity on public display, being unashamed to be a Muslim or a Christian and carrying out the process of re-Islamization or re-Christianization in their daily lives.⁷²

In contrast, Kose calls it a religious conversion for the British who experience increased devotion to Islam or a shift from no religious commitment to a devout religious life following the Islamic way. For them, Islam is a universal religion that must be beyond racial, ethnic, and national boundaries. Therefore, they want to practice an Islam that is more religious and accords with the purity of the teachings of the Prophet's tradition. Some converts attempted to start their groups or movements to achieve a 'pure' understanding of Islam.⁷³ In sum, these phenomena initially only describe personal spiritual meanings, but in turn, they become collective movements that significantly influence the social order.

Based on the typology of the *hijrah* movement in Indonesia conducted by PPIM (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, Center for the Islamic Study and Society) UIN Jakarta, they divide it into two ideologies, namely conservatism, and Islamism, and further divide it into three categories related to religious understanding, namely non-Salafi, Salafi, and Islamist.⁷⁴ Continuing this typology, I propose three trends related to the background of the formation of the *hijrah* movement in Indonesia.⁷⁵

⁷² Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search For a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

⁷³ Ali Kose, *Conversion to Islam: A Study of Native British Converts* (New York & London: Routledge, 2010), 20.

⁷⁴ PPIM, "Tren Keberagaman Gerakan Hijrah Kontemporer," 10.

⁷⁵ Although this typology needs to be further verified and developed, bearing in mind that the *hijrah* movement is fragmented into various significant communities. As an illustration, in Soloraya there are more than 40 varied *hijrah* communities in that city.

First, the similarity of religious understanding, this *hijrah* community has found in common certain ideological concepts, for instance, the Strangers al-Ghuroba and Terang Jakarta (Salafi), Shift Pemudah Hijrah, Cah Hijrah and Fath Sedulur *Hijrah* (Tarbiyah), Yuk Ngaji (Islamist) and others. Second, the similarity of hobbies or interests, these communities are formed because of the similarity of hobbies, for instance, Bikers Subuhan (riding), Pasoepati Mengaji (football), Muslim Archery Community (archery and horse-riding), Islamic adventure (climbing), and others. Third, the similarity of experience, this *hijrah* community is formed because of the similarity of work or past experiences, for example, Xbank (former bank employees), Xpas (former market gangsters), Expreso (former Solo gangsters), Punk Muslim (former punks), and others (see Diagram 1).

The proliferation of *hijrah* communities is in line with the development of research by scholars who are united under the umbrella of the *hijrah* movement. Weng scrutinized Felix Siau, who became a popular preacher in Indonesia and founded a *hijrah* community called Yuk Ngaji in 2015. For him, becoming a popular preacher does not merely require knowledge of religion; other skills such as communication, eye-catching appearance, and media control are also needed. Combining these elements, Siau has creatively utilized various social media platforms to increase visibility and popularity. In turn, he also mobilized his large following to become sympathizers in the struggle for Islamism.⁷⁶ Theoretically, the *hijrah* movement is born from personal religious awareness that arises from within to improve the quality of a better way of life.⁷⁷ However, in practice, *hijrah* is still interpreted superficially to the extent of changing the way of dressing, echoing marriage without dating, and consuming certain Islamic products, all of which seem to intersect between religious, economic, popularity, and other interests.

The concept of *hijrah*, which means a spiritual change from an immoral past to an Islamic lifestyle, is also applied by celebrities in Indonesia. Lyansari who focuses on three artists such as Rini, Sakti, and Almeera has proven that their *hijrah* actions open market opportunities for their economic products, so the new religious

⁷⁶ Hew, "The Art of Dakwah: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siau."

⁷⁷ Umar, Ismail, and Arifin, "Religious Character Education in the Hijrah Community in Manado as a Muslim Minority Region," 572.

trend among celebrities brings into the mode of the commodification of Islam. In short, the meaning of *hijrah* has been transformed from individual piety to consumerism, namely a bourgeois lifestyle but not leaving Islam as a symbol of piety.⁷⁸ The public has realized this paradigm shift as research conducted by Amna. They consider that the *hijrah* of celebrities is only limited to artificial piety or mere gimmicks to increase popularity and means of making sensations.⁷⁹ The public's biased attitude towards the *hijrah* community is also shown in responding to the presence of the Xbank Indonesia. Xbank and dozens of other communities that are incorporated into the anti-usury movement often campaign for the prohibition of usury that is mushrooming in Indonesia without providing solutions to the problem. It has caused various community reactions and even controversy.⁸⁰

Generally, it can be said that accepting Indonesian Muslims leads to a positive response. This is shown by the proliferation of *hijrah* communities that target various groups, not only young people or society at large but also the punk community that was once known as an 'un-Islamic' leftist radical group. Despite the post-New Order resurgence of religious conservatism, *hijrah* groups can facilitate religious learning and offer them a moral framework to deal with the difficulties of living in a modern capitalist world. Ultimately, they created a Muslim punk community as a solidarity stage that rivaled their previous group identities. Some of the young punks took part in forming the *hijrah* movement and popularized *hijrah* practices or activities, but it calls them moving towards religious fundamentalism or extremism.⁸¹ The phenomenon of Muslim punks opens a new

⁷⁸ Kirana Nur Lyansari, "Hijrah Celebrity Creating New Religiosities, Branding Economics of Lifestyle in the Age of Muslim Mass Consumption," *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 18, no. 2 (2019): 211–32, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v18i2.3066>; Sunaryanto, Sofyan Rizal, and Zulkifli Zulkifli, "Religious Bourgeois Lifestyle of Celebrity Hijrah: Reading the Resurrection of the Muslim Middle Class Based on Cultural Imperialism and Global Economic Factors," *Muharrrik: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial* 5, no. 1 (2022): 63–87, <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrrik.v5i1.1209>.

⁷⁹ Afina Amna, "Hijrah Artis Sebagai Komodifikasi Agama," *Sosiologi Reflektif* 13, no. 2 (2019): 331–50.

⁸⁰ Muhammad Ainani and Herman Indah Wahyuni, "Kampanye Komunitas Sebagai Gerakan Spiritual (Studi Kampanye Anti Riba Oleh Komunitas Xbank Indonesia)" (Yogyakarta, Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2021), <http://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/197173>; Sri Wigati, "Perception of Riba According to MTR-Masyarakat Tanpa Riba (A Community Without Usury)," *An-Nisbah: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah* 9, no. 1 (April 2022): 50–75.

⁸¹ Hikmawan Saefullah, "'Nevermind the Jahiliyyah, Here's the Hijrahs': Punk and the Religious Turn in the Contemporary Indonesian Underground Scene," *Punk & Post Punk* 6, no. 2 (October 6, 2017): 283–84, https://doi.org/10.1386/punk.6.2.263_1.

debate about the parameters and dynamism of Islam that can penetrate the popular culture.⁸²

The convergence between religion and popular culture is indeed the main orientation of most *hijrah* groups in Indonesia. Agencies utilize a personal approach through popular culture, which the young generation loves, to convince them to combine fun and faith simultaneously. Thus, they feel that their identity as youth is inherent to their identity as Muslims. Some of the fun adopted in the *hijrah* movement model include skateboarding, BMX, parkour, music (Shift Pemuda Hijrah in Bandung), futsal, climbing, and archery (Cah Hijrah in Semarang), riding, swimming, and horse riding (Bikers Subuhan Soloraya) and others.⁸³ In sum, the phenomenon of the popularity of the *hijrah* movement that has received public attention cannot be separated from the accommodating attitude of Islamic doctrine towards pop-culture. They offer a view to remain committed to their religion while still being able to enjoy modern culture, which is why the movement can attract a wide range of people.

The emergence of this dynamic *hijrah* movement allows them to compete with established mainstream Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah and NU. This phenomenon has become a new lifestyle and trend in contemporary Indonesian Islam, given the popularity of the *hijrah* movement among Muslims, whose members continue to grow.⁸⁴ The way of spreading Islamic teaching that uses unconventional ways, adaptive to various kinds of fun, and compromising popular culture with certain restrictions makes what is conveyed more easily accepted by its supporters. However, it is important to note that the massiveness of the *hijrah* movement, which seems to be only concerned with the formation or upgrading of personal piety compared to the emphasis on Islamism - which tries to reform society -, cannot be applied to the existence of these communities. Possibly some of them

⁸² Papineau, "Hey! Ho! Let's Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety in Java, Indonesia," i.

⁸³ Muhammad Halim Alfikri, "The Meaning of Hijrah in Quran Perspective of Cah Hijrah Community, Lampersari, Semarang" (State Islamic University Walisong of Semarang, 2020); Paelani Setia and Rika Dilawati, "Tren Baru Islam Melalui Gerakan Hijrah: Studi Kasus Shift Pemuda Hijrah," *Khazanah Theologia* 3, no. 3 (June 24, 2021): 131–46, <https://doi.org/10.15575/kt.v3i3.12708>.

⁸⁴ Hadri Hasan, "Contemporary Religious Movement in Indonesia: A Study of Hijrah Festival in Jakarta in 2018," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 1 (2019): 230–65, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.230-265>.

- not to say all of them - deliberately use the medium to spread or support Islamism implicitly. Therefore, it is important to accommodate the movement and establish collaboration to anticipate being dragged into the conservatism wave.

The presence of the *hijrah* movement has posed a challenge to religious authority. The *hijrah* communities affiliate with other communities to form new enclaves of religious authority. The movement's popularity should be a serious concern for Indonesian government authorities and stakeholders because the movement is likely to be mobilized into actions that fight for conservative, exclusive, and even Islamist ideologies.⁸⁵ Building cooperation between communities and directing their religious enthusiasm into positive activities to maintain multiculturalism and the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia is a step that the government must take immediately. Given that most of the *hijrah* community has been controlled or used by a group that provides support for Islamism, in turn, mass explosions of protests on the streets or public spaces that can mobilize millions of Indonesian Muslims can easily happen once, when there is an explosion or momentum that stimulates or provokes further actions.

2.3 Theoretical Framework: Pop-Culture, Pop-Islam, and Pop-Islamism

This research used the pop-Islamism theory offered by Dominic Muller to examine the phenomenon of the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), especially its Young Wing. The party has undergone an open and comprehensive pop-culture transformation in recent years. The PAS began accommodating modern marketing approaches to advertise their so-called Islamic struggle. Adopting Western culture, media-savvy, Islamic branding, pious rock music, etc. They attempt to blend their party with pop-culture for the mass mobilization process.⁸⁶ In line with the pop-Islamist notion, this thesis attempts to apply the theory to the Bikers Subuhan movement, especially in Solo region, which incorporates pop-culture for mobilization purposes. Before doing so, it is important to discuss the differences between pop-culture, pop-Islam, and Pop-Islamism.

⁸⁵ For instance, Punk Muslim Surabaya participated in the prosecution of the Ahok case in 2016; see Saefullah, “‘Nevermind the Jahiliyyah, Here’s the Hijrahs’: Punk and the Religious Turn in the Contemporary Indonesian Underground Scene,” 275. Bikers Subuhan Klaten (BSK) voiced support for the Palestinians by rejecting the arrival of the Israeli national team to compete in Indonesia in 2023, and other demands.

⁸⁶ Muller, *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS*, 6.

The term pop-culture has different meanings depending on who defines it and the context in which it is used. In general, pop-culture is also referred to as the culture of the people, as it is defined by what people make and do for themselves.⁸⁷ Pop-culture encompasses the most immediate, famous, and contemporary aspects of human life. Therefore, pop-culture reflects and influences people's daily lives. Storey argues that pop-culture has at least six important elements as follows: popular (well-liked by many people), inferior from high culture (an assessment of a certain status and class), mass culture (mass-produced commercial culture), authentic (a culture that originates from the people), hegemony (dominant in society), and post-modern culture (a culture that no longer recognizes the difference between high and popular culture). By considering these aspects, pop-culture can be defined as a form of expression and identity that is often encountered, accepted, liked, and approved of widely and characterizes a certain society and time.⁸⁸

Pop-Islam or Islamic popular culture is how pop culture adapts to Islamic values, beliefs, doctrines, and cultural practices. Initially, religion was understood as something sacred, eternal, priceless, and in contrast to pop-culture which is considered profane, human-made, and worldly. In this sense, Islam has been rebranded or repackaged so religion is no longer treated as something separate from one's life. Therefore, it is common to understand that pop-culture is considered to distance people from religiosity and morality. On the contrary, previous studies have shown how Islam coexists, blends, integrates, and adopts modern cultural forms in complex and complicated ways.⁸⁹ Globalization and modernity, seen as secular and threatening Muslims with spiritual aridity, eventually led to hybrid piety, a mixture of religious purity (Islam) and modernity (pop-culture). Islam, whether forced or openly, began to accept pop-culture and attempted to commodify it to be compatible with Islamic teachings.

⁸⁷ Ashley Crossman, "Sociological Definition of Popular Culture: The History and Genesis of Pop Culture," Thought.co, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/popular-culture-definition-3026453>.

⁸⁸ John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction* (New York & London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 5–13, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315226866>.

⁸⁹ Teguh Wijaya Mulya, "Faith and Fandom: Young Indonesian Muslims Negotiating K-Pop and Islam," *Contemporary Islam* 15, no. 3 (2021): 337–38, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00475-1>.

Consequently, Muslims feel confused about distinguishing between authentic Islam following the teachings of the Prophet and Islam that have been 'Islamized'. Dressing modestly, for instance, Islam teaches only to cover the *awrah* (private body's part), but nowadays, it is used to form an Islamic market by branding clothes with Islamic rules made by themselves. As if Muslims who wear certain clothing brands have presented what they consider piety. They can take advantage of market opportunities by giving Islamic labels to certain goods or activities to expand their business to mass consumption. At the same time, the identity of a Muslim is increasingly polarized.⁹⁰

Similarly, tourist attractions that are synonymous with fun can be used as a marketplace for some Muslims to make profits with an Islamic label. For instance, Daarus Sunnah Equestrian, which is horseback riding and archery tourism located in Bandung, the place has become a favorite and popular tourist destination. The Indonesian tourism Minister has successfully designated it as an Islamic-based creative tourism area.⁹¹ Some Indonesian Muslims assume that someone who does particular sports such as horse-riding, archery, and swimming is considered to be performing the *sunnah* (habitual practice recommended by the Prophet) that will get rewards from God.⁹² Pop preachers, Islamic musicians, Islamic sports, Islamic entertainment and more are examples of reconciliation between pop-culture and Islam. In other words, one can transform a certain product, place, or activity with Islamic packaging that is marketed to consumptive Muslims, especially the middle class, with the lure of 'reward or heaven' as an embodiment of piety. Consequently, piety is no longer defined as devotion to religious observance but rather allows it to be manipulated, ultimately resulting in artificial piety.

While pop-Islamism is almost the same as pop-Islam, the difference lies in the main actors or agencies involved in the movement, namely groups or supporters

⁹⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Piety, Politics, and Post-Islamism: Dhikr Akbar in Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 50, no. 2 (2012): 369–90.

⁹¹ Elan Jaelani, University Padjadjaran, and Susie Perbawasari, "The Religious Meaning of Equestrian and Archery Sport Tourism: A Phenomenological Analysis," *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 2020, 246, <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.2288111199--446666>.

⁹² Mahfoud Amara, "The Muslim World in the Global Sporting Arena," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* XIV, no. 2 (2008): 67–75; Testa and Amara, *Sport in Islam and in Muslim Communities*; Muharil, Aidil Ramadhani, and Rizki Ramadhani, "Sport Analysis in Islamic Religious Perspective," in *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Innovative Pedagogy (ICIP) 2017* (Banda Aceh: STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena, 2017), 115–22.

of Islamism. Islamists also combine pop-culture with Islamic values, except that they are passionately, or rather again, calling for an Islamic state. In short, pop-culture, including fun, is only used as a promotional tool in mobilizing the masses to support the enforcement of their main mission, namely the Islamic State either through the support of Islamic parties or by being apolitical.

Bayat notes that the history of Islamism has experienced a battle against fun, playfulness, and diversion with the hostility coming from the Islamist movement. In Egypt, in the late 1980s, Islamist students rioted at music, drama, and entertainment concerts and mocked as well as harassed male and female students who were associating freely or just pursuing the pleasures of everyday life. They also banned movies, dancing, classical and popular music which they considered a threat to Islamic culture. Later, radical Islamic groups such as al-Gama'a al-Islamiyyah (Egypt), ISIS (Iraq and Syria), and Taliban (Afghanistan) enforced strict codes of conduct for women under their control. In Cairo, they stopped the joyful music at weddings, they specifically wanted to eliminate the joyful culture of Islam, such as the Ramadan celebrations and the grand *mawlid* festival, all of which they regarded as a form of pleasure that distanced from religious values. Character and morality that should be the individual's responsibility (private); for Islamists, it becomes a serious problem and is handled under their responsibility (public).

Likewise, in Saudi Arabia, fun and leisure are under state control in the name of morality and piety. The Kingdom has banned movie theatres, music concerts, discos, and dating; even innocent joys like flying a kite are not tolerated. They view all expressions of happiness as immoral and wasteful. Even worse, in Afghanistan, during the Taliban rule in the late 20th century, they eradicated all signs of entertainment, fun, and creativity, such as television, music, painting, public joy, and personal appearance, which were harshly suppressed. Men were forced to grow beards, and women were forced to wear the *burkha* (a veil covering the entire body and face, excluding the eyes).⁹³

Such strict restrictions on 'outside' Islamic culture have shifted to a cautious and selective acceptance, but gradually coupled with the rapid flow of globalization, modernization, and urbanization led to a massive transformation. Some Muslims

⁹³ Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*, 435–6.

and Islamists are not only adopting pop-culture; furthermore, they are using pop-culture as a means of proselytizing in spreading their teachings or ideologies as well as mobilizing the masses for the benefit of their respective agendas or projects. I endorse Muller's notion of pop-Islamism in examining the phenomenon of the BS movement, where the agencies also use various activities that combine between pop-culture and religion.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the emergence of the radical movement in Indonesia, which gained momentum during the transition toward a democratic state. These movements offer an 'Islamic' solution to various complex issues, including the nation's crises. Since radicalism failed to capture Indonesian Muslims' stage or hearts, its message has been relayed through the *hijrah* movement, which began to proliferate in the 2010s. Unlike radical movements, which often resort to violence, the *hijrah* movement emphasizes a soft approach to delivering Islamic solutions for confronting challenges. As a result, the top-down formation of Islamism as an effort to transform the state's political landscape has shifted to the bottom-up individual-based nature of the *hijrah* movement. In sum, the political orientation attempting to Islamize the state's laws has transformed into a personal piety orientation that seeks to Islamize individuals, communities, and the state, which remains the goal.

Reflecting on Islamism's failed attempts to capture the Muslim community's main stage, the *hijrah* movement employs different strategies to appeal to Indonesian Muslims. They promote a message of unity among the *ummah*, cultural-oriented and compatible with modernity, enabling them to gain numerous followers. Adopting pop-culture, including fun and pleasures -previously perceived as a threat by some Muslims- the *hijrah* movement can compete with mainstream religious authorities in Indonesia. This chapter also demonstrates the rapidly growing popularity of the *hijrah* movement, leading to its fragmentation into various communities. I classify these *hijrah* communities into three typologies, one of which is formed due to a common hobby or interest. By negotiating between faith and fun (read: hobby/interest), they can be considered successful in attracting the hearts of some Muslims to join certain *hijrah* communities. They no longer view fun as a threat; instead, they use or utilize it to mobilize their movement.

CHAPTER III

RIDING TO PARADISE: THE STRATEGY OF BIKERS SUBUHAN MOVEMENT IN SOLO

The democratic system has allowed the freedom to express and criticize various state policies. Citizens no longer fear repression, as happened during the New Order era. Islamic radical groups can utilize this opportunity to represent aspirations to act violently in the name of religion. They committed various acts of vigilantism, closing places of worship of the Shia and Ahmadiyah groups, bombing churches, and so on, that they considered right even if the substance was contrary to the constitution. Talking about radicalism cannot be separated from one of the cities considered fertile ground for the growth of these supporters, namely Solo.⁹⁴ Furthermore, what the current condition of Solo is, whether it is still closely related to the term radicalism or vice versa, this chapter will discuss more regarding issues.

Vatikiotis in his book 'Indonesian Politics under Suharto,' quotes Mangunwijaya's words which are still very relevant in describing the condition of Javanese society, especially Solo. He says that "the people of Java are little different from the mountainous island on which they reside, a chain of volcanoes which can awaken to cough up phlegm of burning lava at any moment." It affirms that while the people of Solo are known for their patience, graciousness, and refined manners, they are in fact, holding anger upon anger that can explode at any moment. Facts have shown that the city has witnessed various conflicts ranging from religious, ethnic, social, and political sentiments.⁹⁵ In addition, Solo's social and political landscape is very dynamic; in terms of electoral politics, the city is a base for nationalist parties, but in terms of social behavior, Solo is mapped as a base for radical movements of extremism.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Muhammad Wildan, "The Nature of Radical Islamic Groups in Solo," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 7, no. 1 (2013): 50; Nugroho et al., "Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School Ngruki Sukoharjo, 'The Misunderstood Islamic School,'" 204.

⁹⁵ Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, "Dinamika Radikalisme Dan Konflik Bersentimen Keagamaan Di Surakarta," *RI'AYAH* 3, no. 2 (2018): 44.

⁹⁶ Mokhammad Zainal Anwar, Yuyun Sunesti, and Islah Gusmian, "Pro Dan Kontra Pancasila: Pandangan Politik Anak Muda Muslim Di Solo," *Politika: Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 12, no. 1 (2021): 123, <https://doi.org/10.14710/politika.12.1.2021.107-127>.

Solo is a unique city, closely associated with the Islamic radical movement, and identifies with most of the Abangan community,⁹⁷ two groups at opposite poles. Islamic radicalism groups are generally associated with rigid, literal religious understanding and radical actions. The group wishes to change the condition of society and even the country to establish an Islamic system. Meanwhile, *abangan* is a group that is less devout about religion, they just simply adhere to Islam without carrying out various religious obligations and choose to practice performs that have already existed (culture) in the community. However, both can be drawn with the common thread of being loyal to the fundamental principles of their respective groups. This, in turn, makes it easy for *abangan* groups to join and even become sympathizers of radical Islamic groups.⁹⁸

It is important to note that in this research, the term Soloraya (hereinafter Solo) refers to the residency area that existed during the Dutch occupation, or nowadays, commonly people call it the ex-residence of Surakarta, which consists of Surakarta (city), Boyolali, Sukoharjo, Karanganyar, Wonogiri, Sragen, and Klaten regencies or known as Subosukawonosraten. I need to reaffirm that Solo in the article refers to the seven regencies, considering that now the term Solo only

⁹⁷ Clifford Geertz in his book *Religion of Java* divides Javanese society into Priyayi, Santri, and Abangan. Although this trichotomy has a weakness and has been criticized by scholars, Geertz's conception of Javanese Islam has become a source of inspiration for cultural studies in Indonesia. He only researched one small town in East Java, which cannot represent the whole of Islam in Java. Given that the research was conducted more than 50 years ago, the three terms have experienced a shift in meaning. The term Priyayi is described as the Javanese aristocracy or noble class consisting of descendants of Kings and soldiers of their day. This class does not emphasize elements of Javanese syncretism, nor does it emphasize elements of Islam, but rather focuses on elements of Hinduism. Santri is a middle class generally associated with wealthy farmers and merchants who emphasize aspects of Islam, although originally the term was only used for religious scholars. The term *abangan* refers to a group that upholds syncretic Javanese traditions. In a modern context, *abangan* translates to a Muslim who is less devout in practicing his or her religion. Recently, the term has become known as Islam KTP (Islamic Identity card) or someone who claims to be Muslim but does not implement Islamic practices, especially obligatory prayers. Clifford Geertz, *Agama Jawa; Abangan, Santri, Priyayi Dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, ed. Aswab Mahasin and Bur Rasuanto (Depok: Komunitas Bambu, 2014); Yudi Setianto et al., "Transforming Preman to Radical Islamic Laskar in Solo, Central Java," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (June 27, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7285>.

⁹⁸ Muhammad Wildan, "Mapping Radical Islamism in Solo: A Study of the Proliferation of Radical Islamism in Central Java, Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 46, no. 1 (2008): 35–70; Nur Kafid, "Dari Islamisme Ke 'Premanisme': Pergeseran Orientasi Gerakan Kelompok Islam Radikal Di Era Desentralisasi Demokrasi," *MASYARAKAT: Jurnal Sosiologi* 21, no. 1 (2016): 57–79, <https://doi.org/10.7454/mjs.v21i1.4737>; Wildan, "Youth Radical Islamism in Solo as Manifested by Front Pemuda Islam"; Setianto et al., "Transforming Preman to Radical Islamic Laskar in Solo, Central Java."

refers to the Surakarta area. Various bombings and arrests of suspected terrorists, including the location of the al-Mukmin Islamic boarding school, which received serious attention from the government because of its role in hiding terrorists are in the Sukoharjo area.⁹⁹ However, many writings refer to it as Solo (Surakarta), even though both are different regions, while Sukoharjo people often refer to themselves as Solonese.

This research discusses the phenomenon of the *hijrah* movement represented by Bikers Subuhan, which claims to have affiliates in neighboring countries such as Singapore, Brunei, and Malaysia. In Indonesia, Bikers Subuhan has 108 branches located in almost all cities and districts. The movement was initiated by the emergence of Bikers Subuhan Lampung in 2017, which was originally a group of motorcycle gangs. During their activities, they felt that what they were doing was a waste of time, energy, and money on something less useful. Based on these concerns, plus the factor of age, they finally decided to migrate (read: *hijrah*) but still hold firmly to their identity as motorcycle gangs. In the end, they used the means of 'riding' for positive activities, especially those related to religion. They tried to inspire other motorcycle gang groups in various regions to do the same object (changing bad habits or activities into more Islamic ones). They attempted to integrate their hobbies and religious obligations, striving to coexist harmoniously without leaving each other. Over the years, the community has built networks and affiliations with Solo. There are BS communities in all seven regions of the ex-residency of Surakarta. However, currently, there are only four communities that are still actively conducting activities, such as BS Klaten, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, and Karanganyar, while the remaining, BS Sragen, Wonogiri, and Surakarta, are planned to be revived during Ramadhan.¹⁰⁰

Before I discuss the emergence and growth of the BS movement in Solo, it is important to primarily describe the dynamics of Solo's Muslim community and the background of why Solo has become fertile ground for the growth and development of various religious groups and sects. To what extent can the BS movement survive and attract sympathizers in Solo? Who is the authority behind

⁹⁹ Solahudin, *NII Sampai Ji: Salafy Jihadisme Di Indonesia*, 146.

¹⁰⁰ Zaenal, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo about the future strategy of BSS, March 19, 2023.

the movement? Limiting this research, I only focus on the activities of BS Klaten and Sukoharjo, which are considered to have represented all other areas in Solo.¹⁰¹

3.1 Past to Present: Rereading the Contemporary Solonese Muslim

The entrance of Islam cannot be separated from the influence of the Middle East and East Asia through trade. The cultural acculturation strategy that combines unity and diversity is an important point toward the acceptance of Islam in Indonesia. The Javanese are the largest tribe and Islamic population and became one of the centers of the spread of Islam in Indonesia. Islamic kingdoms in Nusantara (a local term for Indonesian archipelago) have an important role in shaping Islamic civilization in the region. One of the most famous kingdoms is the Mataram Islam, which was separated by the Giyanti Agreement in 1755 into the Ngayogyakarta Sultanate Palace and the Surakarta Hadiningrat Kasunan Palace. A year later, there was a rebellion led by Raden Mas Said who was not involved in the agreement. He demanded his rights related to honorary titles in the Kingdom. In 1757, an agreement was finally reached called the Salatiga Agreement which marked the establishment of Mangkunegaran, which appointed RM Said as the ruler of part of Surakarta.¹⁰²

Therefore, nowadays, Solo has the legacy of two kingdoms at once, Surakarta Sunanate and Mangkunegaran Praja. The city was once the capital of the Mataram Islam kingdom and the center of civilization and has had a strong Islamic influence in Java since the prime of the Islamic Mataram.¹⁰³ The presence of the Keraton gave birth to a cultural and Islamic spirit in the Surakarta (Solo) region.¹⁰⁴ In the 1800s, the Dutch established an overarching governmental institution to control the two kingdoms headed by a European Resident and known as the Karisidenan Surakarta region.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ The reasons for choosing these two areas will be explained in the next discussion.

¹⁰² Wasino, *Modernisasi Di Jantung Budaya Jawa: Mangkunegaran, 1896-1944* (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2014).

¹⁰³ Ihdina Sabili, Murni Rachmawati, and Purwanita Setijanti, "The Influence of Islam and Javanese Culture on The Meaning of Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat's Architecture," in *The 6th International Seminar on Science and Technology (ISST)*, vol. 0 (Surabaya, 2020), 144–49, <https://doi.org/10.12962/j23546026.y2020i6.9188>.

¹⁰⁴ The name Solo comes from the name of a local plant called the Sala tree with the Latin name *Coroptia Guianensia* which grows in every part of the palace area.

¹⁰⁵ Bruinessen, *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn,"* 192.

Talking about Solonese, it used to be what came to mind was a harmonious, peaceful, and respectful city, as it is the image commonly associated with Javanese society. Historically, however, the city has experienced conflicts with political, social, and even religious sentiments. In the early 20th century, Solonese radicalism manifested itself in the anti-Chinese movement led by Sarekat Islam. The movement was created due to concerns over economic and social issues when Solo batik merchants - the majority of whom were from the Sarekat Islam group - faced off against Chinese dominance in the struggle for consumers. The economic jealousy continued until its peak in May 1998, which became the biggest riot in Indonesia. In the middle of the same century, Solonese radicalism manifested in the form of the anti-Swapraja movement¹⁰⁶ that stopped the power of both the Kasunanan and Mangkunegaran palaces. The movement kidnapped royal dignitaries and advocated for separating the various regions that were the traditional territory of the Surakarta Palace to weaken its influence in the city. In the next phase of history, the anti-Swapraja movement is often referred to as the Social Revolution in Surakarta.¹⁰⁷ Shiraishi emphasizes that the social movements in Solo influenced the emergence of social movements in other parts of Indonesia.

Furthermore, after independence, Solonese radicalism was organized by the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party) with a narrative of anti-colonialism, capitalism, and feudalism. Solo was the headquarters for the PKI, which competed fiercely with the Islamic political force, Masyumi. After the PKI dissolved, another form of Solonese radicalism emerged, this time under the banner of Islam. Marked by the emergence of the *usroh* (literally, family) movement in the 1980s which later became the forerunner of Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), an underground movement responsible for various bombings in the early 21st century. In the last

¹⁰⁶ Swapraja comes from the words swa (autonomy) and Praja (city or country), which means a self-governing region. During the Dutch colonial period, Surakarta and Yogyakarta were swapraja regions with great influence. The anti-swapraja movement in Surakarta was initiated by intellectuals, youths, and students who rejected the formation of the Special Region of Surakarta because it was considered to revive the feudalism system which was contrary to democratic values. For good information see Edy S Wirabhumi, "Pemberdayaan Hukum Otonomi Daerah dan Potensi Wilayah: Studi Tentang Kemungkinan Terbentuk Provinsi Surakarta" (Disertasi, Semarang, Universitas Diponegoro, 2007), 115.

¹⁰⁷ Muhammad Anggie Farizqi Prasadana and Hendri Gunawan, "The Fall of Traditional Bureaucracy of Kasunanan Surakarta," *Handep: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Budaya* 2, no. 2 (June 17, 2019): 187–200, <https://doi.org/10.33652/handep.v2i2.36>.

two decades or so, simultaneously with the rise of terrorism in Indonesia, Solo has been in the spotlight because it is considered a center for spreading radicalism and various subversive actions against the Indonesian government. The arrest of suspected terrorists throughout the year until 2023 is actual evidence that Solo is still marked as a base for extreme radicalism.¹⁰⁸ Even acts of terrorism that occurred in Indonesia, if traced, almost all of them are connected to Solo ideologically and organizationally.¹⁰⁹

A series of cases related to Solonese radicalism continues to color the city's socio-history, whether with religious, social, or political backgrounds. It is not surprising that scholars state that Solo is a barometer of national stability.¹¹⁰ Looking at these historical facts' trajectory, it appears that radicalism is not a new phenomenon for Solo. Nevertheless, interestingly, radicalism that uses the label of Islam merely began to flourish after the New Order period. First, it was originally caused by the Islamization program during the New Order era, which initially aimed to fight communist ideology. The program seems to be a boomerang for the current government, considering that Islamization that moves towards radicalism continues to be practiced by vigilant groups in Solo until today. Second, the role of mainstream Islamic organizations that have a moderate understanding is still very small. The success of Sarekat Islam in Solo in the early 20th century may be a strong reason why Muhammadiyah and NU do not have significant influence in the city. However, both mainstream organizations have tried to preach and modernize Solonese. However, to say nothing of failing, they have been less prominent than other local organizations. Vigilante groups and other radical groups that are identical to spreading Islamization are louder than the two mainstream Islamic organizations.

The flourishing of Islamist movements in Solo can be proven by the proliferation of Islamist literature that can be easily found in the city. Solo is the most active city in producing publishers who produce such books. There is a parallel relationship between the growth of Islamic literature production and the

¹⁰⁸ M. Zainal Anwar and M. Endy Saputro, eds., *Dinamika Islam Dan Masyarakat Muslim Di Surakarta* (Yogyakarta: Sulur Pustaka, 2023), www.sulur.co.id.

¹⁰⁹ Fajar Purwadidada, *Jaringan Baru Teroris Solo*, ed. Eka Saputra (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2014), 70.

¹¹⁰ Wildan, "The Nature of Radical Islamic Groups in Solo."

development of the Islamist movement in that city.¹¹¹ The success of Islamist discourse in exerting its influence on Solonese is closely related to their *hijrah* (migration) propaganda. This concept is closely related to the Islamist discourse. *Hijrah*, for them, is understood as not simply being Muslim, one is required to *hijrah* to become a devout and comprehensive Muslim (*kaffah*). Muslims who move and commit to the bonds of *ukhuwah Islāmiyah* or Muslims who dare to abandon un-Islamic identities, cultures, and values. The doctrine of *hijrah* promises its practitioners a meaningful, useful, rewarding life and heaven. While in the context of Solo, Aula and Abas said that the *hijrah* movement emerged due to the extensive delinquency and immorality prevalent among Youth. It becomes the main reason why the *hijrah* movement is growing rapidly in Solo. Unsurprisingly, the *hijrah* movement has become the mainstream renewal of Islam in contemporary era.¹¹²

3.2 The Emergence of Bikers Subuhan Movement

Bikers Subuhan is a community of motorcycle enthusiasts who encourage the spirit to perform Dawn (hereafter Subuh) congregational prayers at the mosque. The movement was first formed by three motorcycle clubs, MACI (Montor Antik Club Indonesia, Indonesian Antique Motorcycle Club), Rider Lampung, and Mad Elephant Motor Club in Lampung. Their anxiety towards bad habitual activities such as drinking, drugs, and hanging out aimlessly on the streets until the early morning made them aware of the need to improve their activities. Eventually, they wanted to perform *hijrah* (becoming devout Muslims) and change their activities to more beneficial ones following religious teachings. In this situation, the BS movement attempts to change the negative image of bikers that has long been attached before towards a positive (Islamic) one. They choose the morning time before Subuh as the beginning of the meeting or Kopdar (hanging out together), replacing the nighttime that they usually do. They assume that the Subuh prayer has various virtues that are believed to be able to change or improve their bad behaviors.

¹¹¹ Hasan, Literature Keislaman Generasi Milenial: Transmisi, Apropriasi, Dan Kontestasi, 268.

¹¹² Latif Ghufron Aula and Zainul Abas, "Metode Dakwah Penceramah Di Komunitas 'Yuk Ngaji' Solo," Academic Journal of Da'wa and Communication 1, no. 2 (2020): 464–67, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajdc.v1i2.2729>; Mohammad T. Rahman and Muslim Mufti, "Massification of Youth Religious Studies to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency in Bandung," Theological Studies 77, no. 4 (2021): 2, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.7055>.

Farhan said that we did not choose Subuh time not without reason, Subuh prayer is the heaviest prayer for Muslims, so if we habituate ourselves to congregational Subuh prayer, *Insha Allah*, other daily prayers, or worship will be simplified. Arhan also supports a similar opinion as *Awwalun* BS Sukoharjo, he considers that the glories of Islam someday will not be through the weapon (war) or knowledge, but from the establishment of the congregational Subuh prayer (the number of Muslim congregations). We are optimistic that BS can be a means for establishing Islam because we invite the broad congregation to Subuh prayer so it can be as much as the congregational Friday prayer. The same opinion was also emphasized by Warno (*awwalun* BSK) who said that the more youth who congregational Subuh prayer, the faster the glory of Islam will come.¹¹³

The BS encompasses various objectives or missions, including the adherence to Allah's commands, especially congregational Subuh prayer; keeping relationships (*silaturrahmi*) with the local community or congregation; inviting and exemplifying the virtues of being a righteous 'Islamic' biker; connecting friendship between bikers; and making Subuh prayers with congregational attendance as much as Friday prayers.¹¹⁴ BS movement also has the slogan *hijrah tanpa syarat, asal mau shalat* (unconditional *hijrah*, as long as want to pray). This movement does not limit the specific type or brand of motorcycle and the age of its members. At the time of writing, they currently have at least a network of 108 BS communities in Indonesia and outside the country.

BS was founded by motorcycle communities, which originated in Lampung in 2017. The anxiety of the *awwalun* (founders) who have a basic hobby of riding *Qadarullah* (Allah has decreed), they were guided and eventually did *hijrah* to perform the Subuh prayer before returning to their respective houses. *Alhamdulillah* (Thank God), nowadays BS itself has spread in almost all cities or districts in Indonesia, from Aceh to Jayapura, and has expanded to Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore.¹¹⁵

The *hijrah* movement generally gains support through steady resource mobilization and using the Mosque as the center of the movement.¹¹⁶ Similarly, in terms of funding, the BS movement raises funds through various means, such as

¹¹³ Farhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Klaten about the reason for choosing Subuh, March 18, 2023; Arhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo about the beginning of the BSS, February 5, 2023; Warno, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Klaten about the main agenda of BSK, February 25, 2023.

¹¹⁴ Untung, Interview with a member of BS Klaten about the vision and mission of BSK, February 11, 2023.

¹¹⁵ Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo about the beginning of the BSS.

¹¹⁶ Rizabuana Ismail et al., "Indonesian Young Moslems in a New Social Movement in the Post Reformation: Sahabat Hijrahkuu Community," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 13, no. 6 (2020): 491.

Kopling (*Kopyah keliling*, roving prayer cap) during their Safar Ride (congregational almsgiving), managing funds from the public (donors and members), or making t-shirts (merchandise) in certain events. The funds are used for various purposes such as pro-Palestinian efforts, mosque construction, the welfare of suffering local and global Muslims, as well as victims of natural disasters, or to support operationalization during BS activities.¹¹⁷ In terms of programs, they emulate their previous pre-*hijrah* activities and incorporate Islamic values. At this point, they offer a middle way to remain committed to religion (faith) but still be capable of enjoying modern culture (hobbies). Also, they modify various attributes to align with Islamic messages, including using Arabic fonts in the phrase 'Bikers Subuhan', which identifies Islamic values (see Figure 1).¹¹⁸

BS communities across Indonesia typically do not use the leadership system of an organization or community that consists of a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and so forth. They adhere to the principle that 'all members are leaders (*semua anggota adalah ketua*)'. This is inspired by a hadith that said each of you is a leader, and each leader will be asked to be responsible for those they lead. They prefer to call *awwalun* for people who initiate (founder) in a community, although practically there are members who are tasked with taking care of certain activities like a chairman or treasurer in general. This is what distinguishes BS from other *hijrah* communities, while at the same time, making it easier for the movement to establish new BS communities in every city or district across Indonesia. They are fluid and flexible in various matters, including politics, which in turn makes it easy for them to affiliate with other *hijrah* groups in each city. The absence of identity is vulnerable to the agency's exploitation to mobilize its members in uncertain and confusing directions depending on the *awwalun* of each BS community.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, Pious Bikies (Inside Indonesia, issued December 19, 2019),

¹¹⁸ The word Bikers Subuhan is the name of the movement; below is the region where BS comes from; in the middle is a picture of someone wearing Islamic clothing that illustrates their identity; the word 04.00 and fajr are the Subuh time when they will start their activities; the 2.5% is the philosophy of the alms that must be paid as a Muslim. (Personal interview with Wanto, February 5, 2023, in Klaten).

¹¹⁹ I had the opportunity to attend BSK's 5th Milad (anniversary) event on February 18th, 2023, there were members from Medan, and he represented BS Sukoharjo because he was still a student at Pesantren (an Islamic boarding school) in the region. He said that after finishing his studies at the Pesantren, he wanted to return to Medan and establish BS Medan. The easiness of establishing a community in the name of Bikers Subuhan is the reason why the movement has successfully proliferated in various regions in Indonesia.

Bikers Subuhan is not a community or organization with rivalry among members, because in BS all members become leaders, there are no daily administrators or vice-chairpersons, treasurers, and others. All members are leaders because we are responsible for what we do and will be asked responsibility for what we do. No matter the member's age, whether young or old, we are all the same chairpersons. The requirements to join BS itself are unlike other biker communities that must follow the criteria of a certain motorcycle brand, in any BS community, the requirement is only one thing, we should be willing to pray, especially the Subuh prayer.¹²⁰

Generally, Bikers Subuhan throughout Indonesia has the same main agenda, but there are also other activities depending on the potential of the area to maximize the mobilization of members and make each community more varied.¹²¹ Firstly, obligation activities, include Safar Ride, which is carried out at Subuh during the weekend (either Saturday or Sunday), BBM (cleaning Mosques together), and reciting al-Qur'an, normally in Café, which is given various names, for example, Ngelupis (*Ngaji kuliner tipis-tipis*, reciting Qur'an and culinary, Jogja); Jumanji (*Jumat malam mengaji*, reciting Qur'an on Friday Night, Bandung); Makar (*Majelis kajian rutin*, regularly Islamic religious teaching, Manado); Dugeman (*Duduk gembreneng maos Qur'an*, Sitting together and reciting Quran, Sukoharjo); Ngamalke (*Ngaji Malam Kamis*, reciting on Thursday night, Klaten); and so forth.¹²² While extra-activities include archery, swimming, and climbing (BS Klaten), camping (Bandung and Sukoharjo), horse riding (Karangnyar), and others.

In Solo itself, which consists of seven districts/cities, there are seven BS communities in each region, but during my fieldwork for approximately six months (February-July), only four districts (Klaten, Sukoharjo, Karanganyar, and Boyolali) are still actively carrying out various activities, the rest (Surakarta, Wonogiri, and Sragen) have not been revived after the Covid-19. I focus on BSK and BSS for at least several reasons, firstly, the two communities have more members compared to other areas in Solo. Secondly, BSK is dominated by older people while young people dominate BSS. Thirdly, both BSK and BSS are more advanced than other communities in Solo regarding the utilization of social media platforms. Fourthly,

¹²⁰ Farhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Klaten about the strategy of BSK, March 18, 2023.

¹²¹ Based on the results of interviews and observations both online and offline, I divide BS activities into two, namely obligation activities and extra-activities.

¹²² Mujaahidah and Hadziq, "Bikers Subuhan Karanganyar: Dakwah Komunitas Dalam Kegiatan Keagamaan," 23.

both districts have the highest Human Development Index after Surakarta, which certainly affects the area's level of Islamic development and configuration.¹²³ Thus, both are representative of other BS communities in Solo.

a. Bikers Subuhan Klaten (Abbreviated as BSK)

Klaten is a district in the ex-residence of Surakarta that borders Yogyakarta province. It has an area of 65,556 ha consisting of 26 sub-districts and 401 villages. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2023, Klaten has a Muslim population of around 1.2 million (93.5%) and approximately 5,000 mosques in the region.¹²⁴ Hundreds of villages and thousands of mosques are the targets of a motorcycle community that calls itself BSK. The community was established precisely a year after the establishment of BS Lampung in January 2018. At the time of writing, they held 240 congregational prayers (the Safar Ride) and claimed to have more than 300 members (dominated by adults) expected to continue to grow. The following is a series of BSK activities:

Days	Agendas	Descriptions
Sunday	BSG (<i>Bar Subuhan Gowes</i> , riding bicycle after Subuh prayer)	This activity is carried out on Sunday mornings, they ride bicycles around the local area using attributes or flyers from BSK. Normally, only certain members participate in the activity.
Monday	Ngajimas (<i>Ngaji Malam Selasa</i> , religious teaching on Sunday night)	This activity is carried out every week, and is taught by the BSK advisor, discussing the <i>Kitab</i> of <i>fiqh Muyassar</i> , the activity is carried out in the house of BSK members in shifts from door-to-door of each member.
Tuesday	Senang (<i>Selasa Berenang</i> , swimming on Tuesday)	This activity is practiced weekly in different places, attended by certain BSK members (normally 8-20 members).
Wednesday	Ranah (<i>Rabu Memanah</i> , Archery on Wednesday)	This activity is practiced weekly at a stable or basecamp called Sasana BSK Archery, attended by certain BSK members (normally four to dozens of people).
Thursday	Ngamalke (<i>Ngaji Malam Kamis</i> , reciting on Thursday night)	This activity is conducted monthly, in the middle of the month. It is attended by tens to hundreds of members. They also distribute door prizes to enliven the event.

¹²³ BPS, "Indeks Pembangunan Manusia Eks- Karesidenan Surakarta 2020-2022," Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Boyolali, 2023, <https://boyolalikab.bps.go.id/indicator/26/400/1/-metode-baru-indeks-pembangunan-manusia-eks--karesidenan-surakarta.html>.

¹²⁴ Kemendikbud, Profil Budaya Dan Bahasa Kab. Klaten Provinsi Jawa Tengah, ed. Widhi Permanawiyat (Tangerang Selatan: Pusat Data dan Teknologi Informasi Kemendikbud, 2020), 3; Alfiah Yuni Astuti, ed., Klaten Regency in Figures 2023 (Klaten: BPS Statistics of Klaten Regency, 2023), 122–23.

	Sobat Tahsin (improving the correct recitation of the Quran)	This activity is a learning on how to improve the reading of the Quran which is held in the homes of BSK members in shifts, which aims to increase friendship and strengthen their brotherhood.
Friday	Jumber (Jumat Berkah, blessing Friday) and BBM (Bersih-bersih Masjid, cleaning mosque together)	This activity is carried out weekly in different Mosques, they collaborate with other mosques in the Klaten area, and they hope that one-day BSK can visit all mosques in the city. The activity begins with cleaning the mosque, putting banners in the surrounding area, and distributing packaged rice after Friday prayers, and they will announce that the mosque will hold a BSK agenda on the following day (Saturday) as well as invite worshipers to join the event or even the movement.
Saturday	Safar Ride	This activity is the main agenda of BSK which is carried out weekly. The activity started at 3 am (early morning) gathered at the <i>tikum</i> (meeting point) which is al-Aqsa Mosque (the Great Mosque). They distributed prizes for those who came the earliest. At 3:30 am they rode around the countryside to the mosque that had previously received permission to be used as a BSK event. After arriving at the allocated mosque, some of them performed <i>tahajud</i> (night prayer) until the Subuh time. Furthermore, they invited the <i>takmir</i> (manager of the mosque) to deliver a welcoming speech, followed by an introduction to BSK by a representative of the members, and continued with preaching given by different <i>ustadz</i> for approximately one hour. Then they donated money to orphans and the elderly, which they got from the alms of the members or donors. The activity ended with a <i>Shuruq (Ishraq)</i> prayer and continued with a dinner with all BSK members
Incidental activities	SilatuRide (riding and keeping in touch) Biskapal (<i>Bikers Subuhan Menjelajah Alam</i> , Bikers Subuhan Explore the Nature)	Attending <i>milad</i> (anniversary) of other Bikers Subuhan communities, usually only representatives; Attending invitations from other Hijrah communities in the Soloraya region; Visiting other members suffering from disasters (illness, death, etc.). This activity is a vehicle for BSK members who have a hobby of climbing mountains, in these activities, they usually collaborate with other <i>hijrah</i> communities.

Table 3.1: *BS Klaten's activities*

The presence of BS in Klaten received a positive response in the local community. Various activities also received enthusiastic Muslims because they were considered capable of filling the absence of Islamic teaching in a

society dominated by *abangan*. For instance, during the 226th Safar Ride at the al-Huda Mosque in Gantiwarno Klaten, a house of the mosque, Yono, expressed his impression for the BSK, -even though he was previously afraid of the motorcycle gang community- he conveyed his appreciation for mobilizing BSK members to visit his mosque. He hoped to collaborate in the future and welcomed the mosque to be used again for Bikers Subuhan activities. He also stated his willingness to join the community one day.

At first, I was afraid because I didn't know about the Bikers Subuhan community. When I hear about a motorcycle gang, I feel anxious or worried. If I met gang bikers on the street, I would step aside, because in my mind they are synonymous with recklessness. When I was briefed about BSK, I realized their movement differed from other communities. Many positive activities are carried out, and I am happy to get to know and work with this community. Hopefully, this agenda will not be the last activity for BSK here (his mosque), we welcome to reschedule this mosque in future meetings.¹²⁵

BSK, like the BS movement in general, does not put any conditions on participants who want to join the community. Their main strategy is an emotional, spiritual approach and a sense of community. Whenever a member is sick, they immediately flock to visit, pray for, and often provide financial assistance. In addition, BSK is dominated by the middle and lower middle class, so it is not surprising that all activities will be provided with food to support the event's success and aim to mobilize more followers.

We approach Muslims through their hobbies (riding), then invite them to eat and do various kindness activities such as distributing donations to orphans, free haircuts, cleaning mosques, etc. Afterward, we started inviting them to join the BS Klaten. In principle, we invite them to do congregational Subuh prayer, because if we can habituate it in the mosque, confidently other daily prayers will be easy. I think the biggest strength of the BS lies in the power of *tho'am* (eating).¹²⁶

The incorporation of fun activities appears to hold a distinctive allure for prospective members seeking to join the BSK community. The *awwalun* have recognized this aspect, as a result, to gain attention and expand their congregation for their primary agenda, the Safar Ride, they have acted to

¹²⁵ Yono, Interview with a mosque management of BS Klaten, February 4, 2023. Similarly, Harno (one of the mosques *takmir* in Sukoharjo) also welcomed BSS to re-organize the Safar Ride activity in his mosque. Harno, Interview with a mosque management of BSS, February 5, 2023.

¹²⁶ Abdullah, Interview with a member of BS Klaten, February 4, 2023.

distribute diverse door prizes, ranging from helmets, stoves, and various prayer-related items. This strategy has proven successful, as evidenced by the enthusiastic participation of Muslims in the main event. So, the utilization of fun-oriented approaches has enabled the *hijrah* movement, including the Bikers Subuhan, to attract a substantial following. Simultaneously, the propagation of invisible doctrines is also disseminated through this process.

In mobilizing the masses, they take advantage of each member's network to invite other Muslims to become BSK members. They also coordinate with other mosques in the local area and collaborate with other *hijrah* communities to gain more followers. In addition, they also utilize social media to promote activities to attract people outside the city to join the community. One of the interviewees, Wartyo, said that he got information about the BSK activity from a WA group and immediately sought further information through Instagram. He is a member of the farthest house from *Tikum*; Wartyo must spend more than 50km to the location before 03.00 WIB. Regarding how to mobilize Muslims, Farhan said:

We do not specify special requirements to join this movement, the important thing is that you want to pray and participate in other BSK activities, not necessarily all activities, because every day we (have) full activities. Presently we have more than 300 members, which continues to grow every week because currently, we are also (starting to) actively use social media such as IG (Instagram), FB (Facebook), and WhatsApp. In addition, we also organize social activities such as charity for orphans and the elderly, free haircuts, free circumcision, and other agendas to attract people to join our movement.¹²⁷



Figure 3.1: *Safar Ride #226*



Figure 3.2: *Safar Ride #232*

¹²⁷ Farhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Klaten about strategy of BSK, February 4, 2023.

b. Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo (Abbreviated as BSS)

Sukoharjo is a regency located in the ex-Karisidenan Surakarta region, directly bordering the heart of Solo. It has an area of 46,666 ha divided into 12 sub-districts and 167 villages. Based on BPS data in 2023, Sukoharjo has more than 800 thousand Muslims, or about 95.5% of the population, and more than 2000 mosques in the region.¹²⁸ Like the BS movement in general, BS Sukoharjo aims to organize its events in all mosques located in the district. The community was established on October 28, 2018, and has hundreds of members, mostly youth generation, and is expected to continue to grow.¹²⁹ As for activities, BSS has few activities compared to BSK (almost daily activities), it is easily understood because they were dominated by young people who have other activities beyond and low income. The following is a series of BSS activities:

Days	Agendas	Descriptions
Tuesday	Dugeman (<i>Duduk Gembreneng Bareng Maos Qur'an</i> , sitting silently and reciting Qur'an)	This activity beginnings after the <i>Isha'</i> prayer in certain crowded places, usually in a cafe, <i>warung</i> (local store), or <i>alun-alun</i> (public square). They recite the Quran simultaneously and take turns until they reach the target of one <i>juz</i> (part of the Quran) per meeting. Then, one of the <i>awwalun</i> preaches on certain themes, including how to be a good Muslim, and BSS agenda meetings. The activity was only attended by dozens of young people.
Saturday	<i>Mabit</i> (<i>malam bina taqwa</i> , passing the night at Mosque)	The program begins at 9 pm in a mosque serving as the BSS base camp. They hold a <i>halaqah</i> , ask questions about religious affairs, learn about Islam, discussing contemporary problems faced by Muslims and others.
Sunday	Safar Ride and Sedekah Kopi (coffee charity)	After doing <i>Mabit</i> , they will wake up at 3 am heading to the <i>tikum</i> (meeting point) in the center of Sukoharjo, initially, they chose the Great Mosque as a gathering place for other bikers, but because they did not get permission and internal conflicts with the management of the Great Mosque, they changed <i>tikum</i> in the city center. Just like other BS

¹²⁸ M. Khusni Fajar, ed., Sukoharjo Regency in Figure 2023 (Sukoharjo: BPS-Statistics of Sukoharjo, 2023), 116–17.

¹²⁹ Although they claim to have hundreds of members and thousands of followers on social media, during the research in that area, participants who attended various BSS activities, especially Safar Ride as the main agenda, were only dozens of members. However, it is important to note in this research that they are able to take advantage of certain moments, for instance, on the 100th Safar Ride agenda, BSS collaborated with other hijrah communities to hold a huge preaching attended by 700 worshipers in 2020, which is where this movement began to be widely known by Muslim. Arhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo about main purpose of the forming BSS, May 13, 2023.

		communities, this activity is the main agenda of BSS, at the <i>tikum</i> they conduct briefings, encourage each other, and advise on religious matters, followed by touring mosques that have previously received permission for BSS activities to be held. After the Subuh prayer, there is preaching delivered by different <i>ustadz</i> (religious teachers) with a duration of about one hour.
Incidental activities	Touring Sedekah Sayur (vegetable charity)	Attending <i>Milad</i> of other Bikers Subuhan communities, usually only representatives; Attending invitations from other <i>hijrah</i> communities in the Sukoharjo, Wonogiri, and Surakarta areas; Touring the beach to celebrate the 100 th or 200 th mosque that BSS has visited for their weekly activities. In the future, they hope to visit all mosques in Sukoharjo. Distributing free vegetables to mosque congregations who want to affiliate with BSS, they only need to pay an <i>infaq</i> and can take as many vegetables as they want.

Table 3.2: *BS Sukoharjo's activities*

BSS often collaborates with other *hijrah* communities to organize preaching to promote their activities through coffee alms (*sedekah kopi*) activity. BSS 'troops' are often employed to handle the consumption, given most of its members are young people who are considered to have a strong motivation to become obedient Muslims.¹³⁰ They collaborate with *hijrah* groups beyond the region, providing free coffee for Muslims who attend certain events in collaboration with them. In May 2023, BSS declared together with 21 other *hijrah* communities in the Lingkar Kebajikan forum in Sukoharjo to eliminate differences in political views and Islamic teachings (if it is Sunni, not Shi'i) and focus on the unity of the *ummah*.

In other bikers' communities, they have the term Pangci (Paguyuban Ngombe Ciu, alcohol drinking association), but *alḥamdulillāh*, in BS we do not bring alcohol because we are replacing it with coffee alms. We are open to residents or mosque congregants who want to join. Please go ahead, as long as you are willing to pray and be *istiqāmah* (consistent). BS realizes that Islam is present for *raḥmatan lil ālamin*, so we do not see the origin or background and so on, whether from any political party, whether from any *mazhab*, the most important thing is you want to perform Subuh prayer in 2 *rak'at*.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Sahran Saputra and Nirwansyah Putra, "Religious Voluntarism in The Youth Muslim Philanthropy Movement in Medan," WELFARE: Jurnal Ilmu Kesejahteraan Sosial 10, no. 2 (December 11, 2021): 171, <https://doi.org/10.14421/welfare.2021.102-05>.

¹³¹ Arhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo, February 5, 2023.



Figure 3.3: *Safar Ride #190*



Figure 3.4: *Supporting other hijrah communities.*

3.3 Marketizing Rewards and Islamizing Activities of BS in Solo

Bikers Subuhan is part of the *hijrah* movement that encourages its members to leave bad behavior towards Islamic ones. They change their appearance, lifestyle, and various activities becoming a scent of Islam or based on the Islamic way of life.¹³² Rizani as the main founder (*awwalun*) of Bikers Subuhan explained that they carry out riding activities by packaging it in an Islamic way, full of polite manners following what Islam has been taught. The riding participants recite driving prayers, recite *dhikr* (remembering God), and take the time to do congregational prayers during the trip. Reciting *takbir* (the greatness of Allah) when facing an extreme road, saying *istighfar* (seeking forgiveness from Allah) when racing or passing other drivers, and reading *tahmid* (praising Allah) when on a straight track.¹³³

In addition to the main slogan of the BS movement, *hijrah tanpa syarat, asal mau shalat*, they also have another jargon, born to ride, ride to Jannah, which is used for Bikers Subuhan's main agenda, the Safar Ride. Moreover, they also have a march (typical music) to encourage their members. The following are the lyrics of the Bikers Subuhan song: “*We are just a group of human beings, who are full of sins; Strengthen the determination of hijrah; pursue the path that is pleased by Allah; In turning the wheel of life, step on the accelerator to leave the disobedience; Defense of religion and nation is ready; defend the Rasulullah we put up the body;*”

¹³² Trie Yunita Sari, Fatimah Husein, and Ratna Noviani, “Hijrah and Islamic Movement in Social Media: A Social Movement Study of Anti-Dating Movement #IndonesiaTanpaPacaran,” *Dinika: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2020): 2, <https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v5i1.1673>.

¹³³ Heru Prasetyo, “Bikers Subuhan Turing Ke Banten,” *TribunLampung.co.id*, August 9, 2017, <https://lampung.tribunnews.com/2017/08/09/video-bikers-subuhan-turing-ke-banten>.

From the mosque, we guard NKRI; martyrdom we prepare ourselves (2x); Born to ride, ride to Jannah, Bikers Subuhan Indonesia (2x).”

In 2023, commemorating the 6th BS anniversary, Rizani admitted that when he initially founded the BS, he did not understand religion properly. He even pretended to understand religion (*alim*) by quoting false hadiths to convince 'victims' to join the community. He changed his Islamic way of dressing by wearing a *gamis* (robe) and *peci* (cap) to make it look like he had migrated (*hijrah*) and repented. The founder of BS also began to invite fellow motorcycle communities and expand to various other areas to mobilize more followers. The forum, he continued, is an effort to invite bikers to improve the quality of the faith of a Muslim.¹³⁴

In the mobilization process, Bikers Subuhan is seen to advertise rewarding life and frequently promote their movement. In addition, they reinforce with quotations of Qur'anic verses or hadith to legitimize the transformation of their activities that have been wrapped in Islamic values. In various things or activities such as during the Safar Ride using a motorcycle, one of the *murabbis* (BSS mentor) emphasized that every gasoline, money, energy, and time used by members will be replaced with rewards later in the afterlife. Ridho said that *no matter how far the distance between mosques, every drop of gasoline we use for riding and the money we spend on gasoline, will be rewarded by Allah with a great reward.*¹³⁵ Similarly, in promoting swimming and archery activities, one of BSK's *awwalun* mentioned that both sporting activities can lead to Jannah.

After working all day or for a week, people will usually release their fatigue by seeking entertainment by going to recreation centers, playing games, and other entertainment. They do not realize that all their entertainment is futile and not worth the reward, even though it is fun and can release fatigue, unlike the entertainment of archery and swimming. Both are fun sports and exciting games; both are not considered *laghwun* (vain). There are many motivations of the Prophet Muhammad to his *ummah*, especially to learn archery. Allah will admit three people into Jannah because of one arrow, the one who makes it with a good purpose, the one who throws it, and the one who prepares it. It would be best if you did archery and horse riding, and I prefer doing archery rather than horse riding (HR Tirmidhi).

¹³⁴ Heru Prasetyo, “Bikers Subuhan, Gabungan Hobi Berkendara Dan Kewajiban Salat,” *TribunLampung.co.id*, April 24, 2017, <https://lampung.tribunnews.com/2017/04/24/video-bikers-subuhan-gabungan-hobi-berkendara-dan-kewajiban-salat>.

¹³⁵ Ridho, Interview with adviser of BS Sukoharjo, February 5, 2023.

There is even a reward for the one who makes the arrows, a reward for the one who throws the arrows, and a promise of Jannah for the one who prepares the arrows for the one who is going to archery. Unfortunately, few Muslims have paid attention to this fun and rewarding game, and few preachers or writers have paid attention to this issue. Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah is one of the scholars concerned about it. In his book entitled al-Furusiyyah. He not only provides motivation but also discusses the principles related to it, even the technical matter of how to sit, hold the bow, pull the string, and release the arrow from the bow. Therefore, it is time for us as Muslims to look for entertainment that brings rewards and practices skills. Instead of looking for entertainment that is futile and does not bring rewards. Because the best games are riding, swimming, and archery.¹³⁶

Similarly, in helping with the financial issues of the Bikers Subuhan movement, they often marketize the rewards (*pahala*) to get surplus funds from donors or members. One member who was handed the task of collecting donations for an activity said:

Every Friday, we have a food-sharing program called Jumber (Jumat Berkah, Friday Blessing) Bikers Subuhan Klaten. We will distribute mainly to the congregational Friday prayer at the mosque that will be used for the main BSK activity the day after. If you are interested in donating only Rp. 10,000 / portion, you can already contribute to satisfying the hearts of others and filling the stomachs of other brothers and sisters in faith. According to the Prophet, this is a major deed it is one of the four keys to getting Jannah apart from spreading greetings, establishing friendship, and praying at night. Please feel free to join us in sharing food at the Jumber BSK event; it can be any amount as long as it is sincere.¹³⁷



Figure 3.5: Fundraising of BSS



Figure 3.6: Fundraising of BSK

¹³⁶ Farhan, Online interview with Awwalun of BS Klaten about archery, May 28, 2023.

¹³⁷ Kamal, Online interview with a treasurer of BS Klaten about fundraising, May 22, 2023.

BS advertises rewards and paradise, which is an attraction for Muslims to join the movement. Various supporting activities such as gathering at *tikum* on time, collecting financial resources, and a series of preparations for the smooth running of the Safar Ride (cleaning, putting up banners, and so on) use the motivation of reward from Allah. In short, the Islamic label is used as a promotional instrument for the Bikers Subuhan agency to attract sympathizers on a massive scale. They promise their members a meaningful, useful, and rewarding life like the general *hijrah* movement in Indonesia.

The BS community, on the one hand, needs to be appreciated within the limits of certain situations and conditions, their presence provides a positive offer, particularly for youth, who like wild racing, anarchy, gang brawls, and recklessness on the streets as an outlet for channeling hobbies. Indirectly, by providing a forum for the motorcycle community, the community can reduce juvenile delinquency or other moral problems that are often faced by youth.¹³⁸ Likewise, religious values that prioritize the unity of Muslims, concern for fellow human beings, social assistance to people in need, and other activities positively impact the behavior of Bikers Subuhan members. Nanang one of the BSS members who joined in 2019, said that after joining the community, he admitted that he could be more sensitive to helping Muslims who were affected by the disaster.

Yet, on the other hand, research shows that overemphasizing religious teachings without being accompanied by social harmony and the importance of peace values (respect) can reduce tolerance and be permissive towards extremism.¹³⁹ As a result, they will be exclusive towards other groups, conduct demonstrations on certain public policies, support the implementation of Islamic law, and have intolerant attitudes outside their group and other religions. This, in turn, is vulnerable to exclusivism, which is feared to move towards radicalism. Therefore, the BS movement - especially those in Solo, which is an area that has been or still is a center of radical movements - needs to be monitored and managed properly so that it becomes a positive force in building peace in Indonesia.

¹³⁸ Rahman and Mufti, "Massification of Youth Religious Studies to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency in Bandung," 6.

¹³⁹ Rached Ghannouchi, "Deradicalization through Religious Education," in Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement (Routledge, 2020), 156.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the emergence of one of the communities affiliated with the *hijrah* movement, Bikers Subuhan (BS). It is a *hijrah* community that utilizes popular culture (specifically motorcycle hobbies) as a means to attract more participants. This community emerged in 2017, coinciding with the revocation of the legal status of the Islamic organization Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and the proliferation of *hijrah* communities in Indonesia. BS is a community that does not employ a hierarchical leadership system; instead, leadership is held by the *awwalun* (founders), who are usually more than three people. Consequently, all decisions are not made by individuals but through discussion (*shura*) with other *awwalun* of BS.

This community has spread to over 100 cities in Indonesia and does not impose specific requirements for prospective members to join BS. This main factor has enabled BS to grow rapidly and establish affiliations outside the country. Most recruitment occurs through interpersonal relations among BS members, the Safar Ride event, and the utilization of social media. The community is highly flexible in terms of affiliations with other *hijrah* communities, which, in turn, makes BS vulnerable to exploitation by Islamist groups in their respective regions. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether BS communities scattered in Indonesian cities have moderate or conservative understandings. Moreover, with many of its members being *abangan* Muslims (possessing limited religious understanding), they become susceptible to being used by Islamist agencies, who seek to lend support to their advocated ideas or notions, particularly within the context of Solo.

In addition, despite BS's perception of lacking a formal leadership structure, the reality unveils that this movement is guided or operated by *awwalun* (founders) who perform roles similar to conventional leaders. The distinction lies in the fact that BS typically comprises more than three *awwalun*, thereby occasionally leading to disparities in decision-making or actions. Consequently, this results in a lack of uniformity or diversity concerning religious understanding among both the *awwalun* and the members of BS itself. The following chapter demonstrated that members had been mobilized to attend and support discussions or Islamic religious preaching led by several preachers affiliated with the radical movement such as Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Abu Fatiah al-Adnani, Abdullah Manaf, and so forth.

CHAPTER IV

BIKERS SUBUHAN MOVEMENT: NEGOTIATING BETWEEN HOBBY AND ISLAMIC POLITICAL IDENTITY

As described in the previous chapter, Bikers Subuhan has hundreds of affiliates in almost all regions in Indonesia, this number will undoubtedly continue to grow due to its fluid and approachable attitude towards other *hijrah* communities. Furthermore, based on the observation during my fieldwork, there was also an increase in members within each BS community, especially in the Solo city, which may also occur in other cities. This serves as strong evidence that this movement will continue to thrive and shape the landscape of Islam in Indonesia. Additionally, Bikers Subuhan does not impose any requirements on Muslims who wish to join the movement, further facilitating their resource mobilization and expansion. Unlike MBI (Indonesian Muslim Bikers) formed by Subhan Bawazier, the community only encourages Muslims who have a hobby of motorizing (basically become bikers). He prohibits his members from inviting random people to join the community because the community is a forum for da'wah with the language (through) bikers which will be easily accepted if someone becomes a biker.¹⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the negative impact of the absence of entry prerequisites within the BS community is its vulnerability to internal divisions. During my fieldwork, there appeared to be competition among BS communities in Solo due to efforts to maintain the community's existence in other areas. This was evident in the BS Surakarta community, which is currently inactive in conducting various programs, as acknowledged by Farhan, who was initially entrusted with establishing BS Surakarta as the central city in Solo. Due to internal conflicts within the movement, he and his other companions established a similar community in a different region. The enthusiasm for recruiting new members, the motivations behind it, the differences in Islamic background knowledge among the members, and inter-community competition create a distinct dynamic within the Bikers Subuhan movement in Solo.

¹⁴⁰ “MBI Chapter Padang on Instagram: ‘Yang Paham Biker Ya Biker Itu Sendiri Video Full <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nr4CZN1eNPI> 3 - 4 Juni 2023” Instagram, June 8, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CtNt1nFgRFd/>.

Nevertheless, this research found that both BSK and BSS have experienced a continuous increase in the number of members. Generally, the growth of members is through their main activity, the Safar Ride (traveling from one mosque to another). In other words, mosques are used as spiritual places and as centers for mass mobilization and collection of financial resources to support the movement. It is important to note that most mosques in Indonesia are managed by individuals or the surrounding community, making it more democratic than the management of mosques in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran, centered on one government.¹⁴¹ The Indonesian government does not have full power or control over activities inside and outside the mosque. This is what the *hijrah* movement is trying to exploit; they use mosques as the center of their movement.

Nevertheless, Indonesia's two mainstream Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, have long responded by trying to infiltrate hardline Islam into the mosques under their management. In 2006, Muhammadiyah issued SKPP (Central Leadership Decree) No. 149, which sought to protect the assets of the Association from being taken over and infiltrated by political parties labeled as da'wah movements. One year later, NU, for the same purpose, issued a fatwa cautioning the Indonesian Muslims about the dangers posed by transnational Islamic organizations, such as the implementation of Islamic law to the enforcement of an Islamic state that has no theological reference. These organizations engage in religious activism based in mosques.¹⁴²

The da'wah activities carried out by the mosque-based *hijrah* community undeniably offer positive things as an effort to achieve a better life following the Islamic way of life. However, the spirit of preaching that is not directly proportional to adequate religious understanding, followed by a high spirit of *hijrah* (migration from un-Islamic to Islamic norms), instead shifts towards conservatism and exclusivism. Embracing faith and hobbies simultaneously among Muslim youth is

¹⁴¹ Nur Indah Riwayatanti, Muhammad Muwidha, and Triesti Candrawati, "Mosque and Economic Development," in Proceeding Annual International Conference on Islam and Civilization, vol. 1, 2018, 124.

¹⁴² Abdurrahman Wahid, *Ilusi Negara Islam: Ekspansi Gerakan Islam Transnasional di Indonesia* (Wahid Institute, 2009), 26–30; Syaifudin Zuhri, "The Mosque as Religious Sphere: Looking at the Conflict over al-Muttaqun Mosque," *Regime Change, Democracy and Islam: The Case of Indonesia*, Islam Research Programme, Jakarta, 2013, 303.

a new strategy for the *hijrah* movement amid the threat of modernity that offers freedom of expression. The strategy of Islamization or Islamic labeling of pop-culture is an alternative way to overcome the dilemma of global culture that is increasingly popular among Muslim youth. Religious traditions that were once understood to be rigid, lately faced with the threat of waves of urbanism and globalism, must be flexible to compete with modern trends. The same pattern applies to the Bikers Subuhan movement; in attracting Muslims, the actors make pop-culture (read: motorcycle riding hobby) as a forum for Islamizing activities, members, and society as a long-term goal. Through mosques and preaching, the process of indoctrination towards certain religious understandings continues, followed by the spread of increasingly exclusive narratives in their respective private groups, such as support for the implementation of Islamic law, criticism and contempt for state authority policies, and the unity of the *ummah* to prepare for an Islamic revival, becoming a strong signal that BS in Solo has a vulnerability to move towards a conservative movement.

4.1 From Mosque, We Guard NKRI or *Ummah*?

Bikers Subuhan movement's main activity, Safar Ride, has the slogan Dari Masjid Kami Jaga NKRI (From Mosque, We Guard NKRI). The movement, which has been rolling since 3 am and is committed to eliminating the negative image of the motorcycle community in society, has a target to tour (Safar, literally meaning traveling) all mosques in each city. The word *masjid* or mosque comes from the Arabic root *sajada* meaning to prostrate, which refers to any place or building used for prostration (prayer).¹⁴³ In the history of Islamic development, the mosque is a center of civilization for Muslims that has multi-functions. Ranging from religious functions, such as a place of worship or Islamic religious teachings, to socio-economic functions, such as education, central government administration, managed *zakat* (almsgiving), and *sedekah* (voluntarily giving).

Throughout the history of Islam, mosques usually have more functions than just a place to worship. It was a space for discussion and debate, problem-solving, performing marriage rituals, social welfare, studying, etc. These various functions

¹⁴³ C. Richard Martin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (USA: Macmillan Reference USA, 2016), 71, <https://doi.org/10.12987/yale/9780300211863.001.0001>.

reflect Islam's importance of integrating the mosque's main function (prayer) with other activities, which is the main reason why mosques can be at the heart of Muslim communities.¹⁴⁴ However, mosques are sometimes used as a gathering place for certain communities or sects with political elements. They conducted cadre, coaching, training, and politicization of mosques to support strength in certain movements. For instance, some mosques in Madura, in the 2010s, were used to spread hatred and boycott, known as Sibili (Shia, Wahabi, and Liberalism).¹⁴⁵

For Muslims, the mosque is a central institution that has a major role in building the progress of the surrounding Muslim community. The mosque functions as not only a place of religion but also Muslim activism that also colors the movement in a mosque. The centrality of the mosque lies in its diverse functions, which are a way for Islam to leave the private space and officially relate to the public space associated with the dynamics of Muslim life and its various aspects, ranging from social, cultural, to political. In the political sphere, for instance, mosques in Germany are often the main form of inter-ethnic association in a certain area created from self-financed. Muslims in the country experience various discrimination (which requires them to hide) and have the largest number of immigrants compared to other European countries. At the same time, the mosque is used as a vehicle to support certain political views in mobilizing collective action, as well as an arena to control the spread of Islamic teachings that proliferate in a particular society.¹⁴⁶ Toorn (2009), cited by Aljumaid, conducted a study in Europa mosques; he found that the mosque is not just a place to honor God, but also a place to gather to form a collective space for the community. In this case, the mosque can be a balance between sacred and profane affairs, a space for individual spiritual improvement, and a space for establishing substantial social relations. In sum, the

¹⁴⁴ Badrudin Badrudin, "The Management of Strengthening the Mosque-Based Religious Character Education," *Nadwa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 2 (March 1, 2020): 179–204, <https://doi.org/10.21580/nw.2019.13.2.4106>; Sophie Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction*, *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 182–84, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511780233>.

¹⁴⁵ Muhammad Afdillah, *Dari masjid ke Panggung Politik: Melacak Akar-Akar Kekerasan Agama antara Komunitas Sunni dan Syiah di Sampang, Jawa Timur* (Yogyakarta: CRCS (Center for Religious & Cross-cultural Studies), 2016), 75–78.

¹⁴⁶ Gerdien Jonker, "The Mevlana Mosque in Berlin-Kreuzberg: An Unsolved Conflict," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (November 2005): 1078–79, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830500282683>; Stefano Allievi, ed., *Mosques in Europe: Why a Solution Has Become a Problem* (United Kingdom: Alliance Publishing, 2010), 18–25.

mosque has represented an evolution of Muslims from a private and sacred space to a public and profane space.¹⁴⁷

While in the UK, the role of the mosque has changed slowly over time, following the changing demands and needs of the Muslim community. During the 1960s-70s, the mosque was solely a place for daily prayers, Friday prayers, and other religious festivals. In the 1990s, the mosque functioned as a shelter to create a sense of community, belonging, and identity, to resist the repressive actions of the local community. Furthermore, in the early 21st century, the role and function of the mosque have further expanded as the capacity, size, and number of mosques have gradually increased. Rather than simply providing space for prayers and other religious gatherings, some mosques have become centers of transnational networks, hosting visits by international ulama and scholars, accommodating Islamic religious teachings, social functions (weddings), training, missionary, and others, which play a central role in the maintenance of order within the Muslim community in Britain.¹⁴⁸

The BS movement, as described in this previous chapter, also uses mosques in their respective regions as the center of their movement. The centralization of mosques as the power base of a movement is not new to Indonesia; the strategy has long been used as a center of opposition for Masyumi veterans to criticize the government regime. The same strategy was continued by student activists (KAMMI, Muslim Student Action Union), who are known to have close ties with PKS, initiated by Andi Rahmat with a book entitled *Resistance from Campus Mosque* (*Perlawanan dari Masjid Kampus*). The use of mosques as the center of the movement is a result of the New Order government's repressive attitude towards taking over control of all mosques and censoring the content of preachings. In 2011, it was PKS's turn to emphasize the call for a Back to the Mosque Movement (*Gerakan Kembali ke Masjid*) as part of their program for the regeneration of

¹⁴⁷ Khairudin Aljunied, ““Not Just a House to Honour God’: Mosques in the Malay World as Cosmopolitan Spaces,” *GJAT* 8, no. 1 (2018): 43; Jocelyne Cesari, “Mosque Conflicts in European Cities: Introduction,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (November 2005): 1018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830500282626>.

¹⁴⁸ Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction*, 194–95; Ali Wardak, “The Mosque and Social Control in Edinburgh’s Muslim Community,” *Culture and Religion* 3, no. 2 (November 2002): 201, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01438300208567192>.

Muslim youth. So, this program is not only religious in nature but has a close relationship with mobilization support for PKS through the mosque.¹⁴⁹

As happened in Solo, mosques which are usually places of worship, are also used as the most effective means to spread radicalism. The process of spreading Islamic teachings in Solo - which also happens in other cities - takes place through recitation activities and organizing Islamic religious events which are usually held in mosques.¹⁵⁰ In this sense, mosques have a central role in shaping local communities to have moderate or radical religious understanding. In 2018, P3M (Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat, Association for Islamic Boarding School and Community Development) in collaboration with Rumah Kebangsaan (the National House) conducted research on 100 mosques in Indonesia. The findings showed that 41% of the mosques were exposed to radicalism, as evidenced by hate speech against other religions, permissiveness towards the caliphate system, and hatred towards the state ideology.¹⁵¹

The government has made various efforts to contain radicalism through mosque-based initiatives. NU and Muhammadiyah, the largest organizations in Indonesia, have contributed to these efforts. The security agency BIN (State Intelligence Agency) has also cautioned to strengthen the role and function of mosques to the maximum extent to suppress radical movements.¹⁵² It should be noted that there is a distinction between official and private mosques in Indonesia. The former refers to mosques that are established and regulated in all religious activities by the state. In contrast, private mosques are built through self-funding via personal donations, providing a free space for disseminating Islamic discourse that is not controlled by the state. These private mosques are usually associated with

¹⁴⁹ Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesian: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*, 8.

¹⁵⁰ Adif Fahrizal, "Islamisasi Di Kota Surakarta Dan Sekitarnya Masa Orde Baru: Sebuah Tinjauan Awal," *Lembaran Sejarah* 16, no. 1 (2020): 62, <https://doi.org/10.22146/lembaran-sejarah.59913>.

¹⁵¹ Sukron Kamil and Zakiya Darojat, "Mosques and Muslim Social Integration: Study of External Integration of the Muslims," *Insaniyat: Journal of Islam and Humanities* 4, no. 1 (November 29, 2019): 37–38, <https://doi.org/10.15408/insaniyat.v4i1.12119>.

¹⁵² Kompas Cyber Media, "BIN Ingin Masjid Jadi Pusat Peredam Radikalisme dan Intoleransi," *KOMPAS.com*, April 28, 2018, <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2018/04/28/19114561/bin-ingin-masjid-jadi-pusat-peredam-radikalisme-dan-intoleransi>.

Islamic organizations, transnational movements, or local communities that have stable funding.

Another effort to minimize the misuse of mosque functions is exemplified by the role of the Indonesian Mosques Board (DMI). This national-level organization strives to actualize the mosque's functions as the center of worship, community development, and unity among believers. DMI emphasizes that mosques should be independent and have multiple functions that enrich the surrounding community (including non-Muslims) by engaging in business activities based on local potential. This way, mosques can become centers of community strength, fostering peace, and acting as economic fortresses amidst modernization.¹⁵³ Like in the Malay Muslim world, Aljunied argues that mosques in that region serve as spaces for expressing the spirit of tolerance and cooperation with followers of other religions. They become places enabling interaction, collaboration, and appreciation with the wider society, creating a comfortable, peaceful, and dynamic environment. This is why the multicultural Malay Muslim community can coexist with followers of other religions, and even non-Muslims can benefit from and access the services offered by mosques to the public.¹⁵⁴

Finally, mosque-based movements need attention and supervision from the government and civil society. Bikers Subuhan typically utilize the official mosque (the local Grand Mosque) as a meeting point before embarking on their agenda, which involves visiting 'private' mosques that are supposedly free from stakeholder oversight. The initial goal of this movement seemed to be merely persuading and motivating its members and other Muslims to go to the mosque and attend Islamic religious studies. Over time, with increasing participation and supporters, the emphasis on personal piety, which was the initial focus of the *hijrah* movement in general, including Bikers Subuhan in Solo, shifted towards a collective action that tended towards exclusivism. This is evident in the case of Bikers Subuhan in Sumedang, which requires specific criteria for selecting a preacher (*ustadz*) to deliver preaching to align with the expected vision and mission, or BS Lampung that forbids the celebration of New Year's Eve, or BS Tasikmalaya, where members

¹⁵³ Riwayatanti, Muwidha, and Candrawati, "Mosque and Economic Development," 124–25.

¹⁵⁴ Aljunied, "'Not Just a House to Honour God': Mosques in the Malay World as Cosmopolitan Spaces," 43–52.

are utilized to support a specific Islamic political party.¹⁵⁵ In sum, for Bikers Subuhan, mosques play a crucial role in uniting forces, establishing specific religious understandings, serving as recruitment sites, and mobilizing the movement. Based on the facts, I believe the slogan that truly suits Bikers Subuhan is "From Mosque, We Guard the *Ummah*".

4.2 More Than a *Hijrah*: From Personal Piety to Exclusivity

On Tuesday night, May 16, 2023, I attended the third section of the Dugeman (literally, clubbing) event. BS Sukoharjo organizes this agenda weekly at a café or other public venues. Dugeman is a learning activity or Quran reading session that serves as the main activity for Bikers Subuhan (BS) throughout Indonesia, alongside the Safar Ride (although using various names). It is important to note that the cultivation of moral values and personal piety among the members is the main concern of the conventional *hijrah* movement including Bikers Subuhan. Dugeman is quite similar to a *halaqah* (literally, Islamic study circle) where BSS members form a circle, and each person takes turns reciting the Qur'an in a deliberately loud voice to compete with the non-Islamic gatherings (*suara tongkrongan*), as perceived by Zaenal. After completing a whole *juz* (sometimes half), religious doctrines emphasizing the concept of an Islamic way of life (based on their version) are propagated. They insist on the necessity of a moral revolution to address the decline in morality, particularly among young Muslims, like what commonly practiced in *halaqah* groups is.¹⁵⁶

Approximately 20 young people attended the event, arriving on various types of motorcycles, including Automatic bikes, Scooters, Vespas, Sportbikes, and others. This also indicates that BS is not merely a motorcycle enthusiasts' community but a religious movement unified under the umbrella of a shared hobby (read: motorcycles) to facilitate mobilization.¹⁵⁷ Coincidentally, that day was the

¹⁵⁵ Rama Addit Tya, "Persepsi Politik Komunitas Bikers Subuhan Tasikmalaya Terhadap Kekuatan Politik Islam Dalam Pilpres 2019" (Thesis Bachelor, Tasikmalaya, Universitas Siliwangi, 2020); Wildan Fadlila Mutaqin, "Pola Tabligh Komunitas Bikers Subuhan: Studi Deskriptif Komunitas Bikers Subuhan Di Kecamatan Sumedang Utara Kabupaten Sumedang" (PhD Thesis, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2020).

¹⁵⁶ Hasan, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia," 156.

¹⁵⁷ Based on the results of interviews conducted with members of the BSS, it was found that only 20% of individuals joined the community due to their interest in motorcycling as a hobby. The majority of individuals joined the community due to its unique and engaging da'wah activities,

final match of the SEA Games between Indonesia and Thailand. Zaenal, as the event coordinator, promoted Dugeman by organizing and watching together (*nobar*) the match. This demonstrates the religious movement's hybridization of faith and fun. At 9:30 pm, the match was not over yet and required additional time (which took more than 30 minutes). Ultimately, they left the *nobar* (watch parties) and sought a more spacious place to commence the *halaqah* which is close to the *nobar* place.

One by one, the members started reciting the Qur'an loudly, as if competing with the noisy crowd of the *nobar* spectators. Half an hour passed, and amid our recitation of the Qur'an, shouts were heard from the spectators. Zaenal, who initially organized the Dugeman event combined with the *nobar* to attract wider interest from BSS members, repeatedly referred to them as devils because he believed they were disrupting the recitation of the Qur'an. He said, "Let's continue the recitation, do not let the voices of those devils beat us". This portrayal indicates that they only use certain events (read: fun) to mobilize and promote their agendas. In my opinion, The statement of devils can indicate that someone is intolerant and even tends towards conservatism. Because they deliberately chose to hold Dugeman in a café that hosts a *nobar*, which is a public area.

One of the BSS members, Roni, also demonstrated intolerance during the second Dugeman event that I attended. After we finished reciting the Qur'an, Zaenal, an event coordinator, began giving preaching on the challenges of being a young Muslim. In the middle of the preaching, a couple of young people came in holding hands, Roni, a BSS member who is still in high school, shouted at the couple, calling them *haram* (forbidden), devils, and hell bound. He even challenged me and the other attendees to say the same things to the couple in front of them, offering to give Rp. 100,000 (US \$6.65) to anyone brave enough. Regardless of whether the challenge was meant as a joke or not, the lack of tolerance and the ease of justifying or blaming those who do not conform to their understanding is highly susceptible to engaging in violent actions. This supports Ghannouchi's argument

as well as the strong sense of belonging it provided. Interestingly, one of the interviewees, Ali, mentioned that he joined the community because breakfast was provided after the Subuh prayer.

that every individual has the potential for violence, which can be reinforced through religious doctrines.¹⁵⁸

The concept of *hijrah* that they generally interpret as a personal shift from engaging in futile activities to engaging in Islamic activities (personal changes in behavior), has shifted towards blaming human actions that do not align with their behavior. As a result, faith that should be expressed individually is brought into the public space, while at the same time, the behaviors commonly practiced by the surrounding society are blamed and considered incorrect by their group. This kind of case occurred in Klaten, during preaching delivered by Hanan, the advisor of BSK, on February 4th, 2023. He stated that:

In Klaten, it is no longer a secret that the practice of expressing *sukuran* (gratitude) is done in inappropriate ways. Gratitude is manifested through forms such as *dangdutan* (a musical style), *joget-jogetan* (dancing), wasting food (he alluded to the *sedekah gunung* (mountain alms) tradition, a customary practice among the Klaten community, especially those who are considered *abangan*), and others. If gratitude is manifested through such practices, it means that the person does not understand the true meaning of gratitude, as gratitude should be expressed through obedience to Allah.

Indeed, Klaten is home to the *abangan* community, so it is common for the people to practice Islamic values while still adhering to animistic practices such as *sedekah bumi* (giving alms to the earth) or engaging in common activities for the *abangan* community like *dangdutan*¹⁵⁹ and dancing.¹⁶⁰ However, once again, faith, which is supposed to be an individual's responsibility or personal matter with God, has become a serious issue that they had to solve immediately, namely transforming everything into an Islamic version according to their understanding. In this sense, Bikers Subuhan express their *hijrah* not through a transformation of attire as demonstrated by the Salafi migration¹⁶¹ or relocating to a Muslim-majority country

¹⁵⁸ Ghannouchi, "Deradicalization through Religious Education," 156.

¹⁵⁹ Dangdut, also known as Orkes Melayu (musical style), become popular in the early 1970s. In every region including Solo, dangdut became part of the life of the villagers, they like to listen to dangdut music. See James T. Siegel, *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 215.

¹⁶⁰ Zuhri, "The Mosque as Religious Sphere," 300.

¹⁶¹ Sunesti, Hasan, and Azca, "Young Salafi-Niqabi and Hijrah: Agency and Identity Negotiation," 174–76; Syamsul Rijal and Ade Masturi, "Hijrah ke Manhaj Salaf: Ekspresi dan

as practiced by Muslim women in the Netherlands, but rather in the form of Islamizing every individual, group, community, and the state system as their ultimate goal.¹⁶²

Regarding the motives, the reasons for BS members joining the movement vary considerably. Data shows that only a few members join due to their interest in motorcycle riding, even though BS presents itself as a forum based on the motorcycle community. While religious factors become the dominant reason for members joining the Bikers Subuhan. For instance, Juan, Roni, and Beni state that their main reason for joining BSS is to meet pious friends, receive reminders about goodness, and gain religious knowledge. Supporting the argument, Nanang states that “BSS is an open community, making it easy to collaborate with other *hijrah* communities”. As for the meaning of *hijrah*, BSS members have diverse opinions. The following table presents their perspectives on the meaning of *hijrah*:

Name	Status / Age	Definition of <i>Hijrah</i>
Nanang	Worker (22 years old)	Changing from a misguided or aimless state towards a more purposeful person based on <i>Sharia</i> .
Roni	Student (16 years old)	Leaving a sin/disobedience, filling the previously un-Islamic time with better activity (Islamic one).
Beni	Worker (28 years old)	<i>Hijrah</i> is a transformation from negativity to positivity state, and at BS Sukoharjo, I strive to become a better individual. I acquire the ability to read the Qur'an, do charity with fellow Muslims in need, and engage in other beneficial activities.
Juan	Student (19 years old)	Transforming ourselves into better individuals than in the past.
Isa	Worker (27 years old)	Modifying our behavior, manners, and perspective by adhering to the Prophet's path.
Hani	Worker (40 years old)	Moving from situations that are not pleasing to Allah to pleasing situations.
Ali	Worker (27 years old)	Changing habits for the better.
Hamdan	Worker (35 years old)	Shifting from bad behavior to good (Islamic) one.
Surya	Worker (29 years old)	Aspiring to become better individuals than the recent past
Kamil	Student (26 years old)	Accomplishing better human beings by obeying Allah and His Messenger.
Irwan	Worker (33 years old)	Embracing Islam holistically involves abandoning sinful acts and promoting virtue and righteousness.

Negoisasi Kesalehan Kaum Muda Urban,” Al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-Hasil Penelitian, July 4, 2022, 7–8, <https://doi.org/10.31332/ai.v0i0.3569>.

¹⁶² Vroon-Najem and Moors, “Making Hijra.”

Arhan	Worker (39 years old)	<i>Hijrah</i> is not a difficult process, it simply requires the willingness to pray, the desire to transform from being misguided to being devout, and the commitment to avoid repeating past misconduct.
Zaenal	Teacher (23 years old)	<i>Hijrah</i> means <i>intiqāl min asyā'i al-sūi ilā asyāil al-ḥasani</i> (transition from something negative to something positive).
Ridho	Ustadz (37 years old)	It is a transformation from a state of ignorance to the enlightened path of Islam, following the example of the Prophet within the framework of Islamic law.

Table 4.1: *Defining hijrah according to BS members.*

Based on the interview results, it can be observed that *hijrah*, as interpreted by members of BS, refers to a transformation of all things or futile actions to activities that are beneficial to religion or Muslims (has a religious-oriented). Consequently, activities such as riding, climbing, swimming, and so on, are attempted to be Islamized by incorporating specific rituals (read: *doa*) or other positive activities (such as charity and fostering social ties among fellow Muslims) to facilitate the movement's mobilization. Once piety is embedded in each member of BS, the next step involves attempting to Islamize the surrounding community through preaching and activities that combine with fun (read: hobbies) to support the movement. Ultimately, the call for the Islamization of the state will continue to be voiced in the public sphere.

The pattern described above is analogous to the approach adopted by the Tarbiyah movement, which employs a bottom-up strategy involving the development of individuals within the Islamic community. This process entails nurturing individuals who, in turn, form Islamic households, thereby preparing a future generation of devout Muslims. The establishment of model families aims to shape an Islamic society wherein the Islamic principles serve as the accepted norms that must adhere to. Thus, if the community does not practice according to their religious beliefs, they will likely voice their dissent or engage in demonstrations. At this point, the demand for implementing an Islamic government, along with Islamic public policies, merely awaits the opportune moment.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Permata and Kailani, "Islam and the 2009 Indonesia Elections, Political and Cultural Issue; The Case of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)," 13.

4.3 From Hobby to Public Policy: Indoctrination of Bikers Subuhan in Solo

Bikers Subuhan considers the community a motor club, while in their private group, the members do not share or provide information linked to spare parts or things related to motorcycles. Instead, they share information about religious teaching, living the Islamic way, moral guidance, and other doctrines that teach how to be a devout Muslim. It is enough to prove that the BS movement is not just a community of like-minded enthusiasts' motorcycles but a religious movement that employs a fun-oriented approach through pop-culture. Embracing fun and faith simultaneously can be said to be another alternative way for the Tarbiyah movement, Ex-HTI, or other Islamist movements that have received less attention from Indonesian Muslims to continue to flourish. Because this strategy can attract followers widely, starting from hobbies, they will gather to form a community that has a high sense of togetherness and belonging. In turn, these communities will be directed to achieve certain goals depending on the community leader.

Since the BS movement in Indonesia does not have a leader, - they tend to use the term *awwalun*, which has a similar role to the leader, usually each community has more than three *awwalun*, thereby all kinds of decisions are made in a participatory manner (*musyawarah*) - so it is quite difficult to ascertain the direction and affiliation of the movement, especially since the movement has spread in hundreds of cities throughout Indonesia. Based on observations and in-depth interviews with BS Solo, some of the *awwalun* and their followers are members of Muhammadiyah, Farhan, Warno (as *awwalun* BSK) and other members of BSK and BSS are KOKAM members (the Muhammadiyah's paramilitary group). In contrast, one of the *awwalun* BSS (Arhan) is an ex-HTI member.¹⁶⁴

Furthermore, this finding is supported by many discussions within private WA and Telegram groups. BSKs tend to be involved in the political arena, as they are frequently seen criticizing and challenging public policies. In contrast, BSS tends to adopt an apathetic and apolitical stance, similar to HTI, which regards

¹⁶⁴ In a discussion during my attendance at a BSS gathering (*silaturahmi*) in Wonogiri, Arhan said that he was an HTI sympathizer, saying that members of BS Solo, especially Boyolali, Sukoharjo, and Karanganyar, were mostly HTI cadres. Furthermore, he confirmed that some *Awwalun* and BS members in the West Java region, especially Tasikmalaya, were HTI sympathizers as well. Arhan, Interview with *Awwalun* of BS Sukoharjo in Wonogiri, March 26, 2023.

democracy as a satanic system of government (*thagut*).¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, both BSS and BSK have the same advisor (*murabbi*), who are members of the PKS cadre.¹⁶⁶ In summary, the members of BS Solo, and possibly throughout Indonesia, represent a combination of HTI sympathizers, Muhammadiyah members, Tarbiyah movement followers, and other non-affiliated Muslims who are united in their main objective of unity among the *ummah*. The dissemination of narratives through private groups, preaching content, and discussions during activities, which I refer to as ‘invisible doctrines,’ are divided into three categories: messages of awakening the *ummah*, support for Islamic political parties, and advocating the implementation of Islamic law.

a. Awakening of Muslim *Ummah*

The unity of the *ummah* is the primary concern for the Bikers Subuhan movement.¹⁶⁷ They frequently organize or at least support religious teachings (*pengajian*) with themes emphasizing the importance of maintaining Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyyah*). Their flexible attitude towards various *hijrah* communities serves as the main strength for BS to collaborate, exist, and continually gain more followers (congregations). During my research, it was noted that BS members were directed to attend and support various *pengajian* sessions on the topic of *ummah* unity (see the Table 2), or even *pengajian* conducted by religious leaders affiliated with Islamist movements, such as KH. Abdullah Manaf Amin (a senior figure in JJ), Ust. Tengku Azhar and Ust. Hasan Agha (ANNAS, National Anti-Shia Alliance), Ust. Abu Fatiah al-Adnani (an influential JJ figure),¹⁶⁸ and other preachers.

¹⁶⁵ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, “The Quest for Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia,” *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37, no. 4 (2009): 623–45.

¹⁶⁶ Advisors from BS Sukoharjo (Ridho), BS Klaten (Hanan and Ahsan), BS Karanganyar (Muhsin), and BS Surakarta (Ridwan, although no longer active) are each PKS cadres in their respective regions. I got this information from a direct conversation with DPRD Sukoharjo staff of the PKS faction. Faiz, Interview with Staff DPRD Sukoharjo, March 26, 2023.

¹⁶⁷ Tibi argued that Islamists claim to represent the united *ummah*, but in practice, they create profound divisions and inflame dangerous passions. Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*.

¹⁶⁸ Greg Fealy, “Apocalyptic Thought, Conspiracism and Jihad in Indonesia,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 73, <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs41-1d>; Ismail. Hasani, Bonar Tigor. Naipospos, and Setara Institut (Jakarta)., *Dari Radikalisme Menuju Terorisme: Studi Relasi Dan Transformasi Organisasi Islam Radikal Di Jawa Tengah & D.I. Yogyakarta* (Pustaka Masyarakat Setara, 2012), 93; Bruinessen, *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the “Conservative Turn,”* 200.

During the attendance of the 5th Milad event of BSK, one of the congregations ask a question about the legality of music. He believed that music is forbidden (*haram*) and desired to move away from an environment where music is frequently played during certain events (weddings, celebrations, and so on). Hanan (an advisor of BSK) responded to the question by urging them not to focus on the debate about music. Instead, he emphasized the importance of uniting the strength of the Muslim community and eliminating forms of differences. The message of unity among BS was strongly felt, as numerous other communities from outside the region attended the annual BS Solo Milad agenda.¹⁶⁹ They seek to build solidarity and brotherhood among fellow Muslims through the BS network in Indonesia.

b. Supporting Islamic Political Party

Although Bikers Subuhan declared that their movement is neutral, with no religious affiliation and support for any specific political party, their actors (*awwalun* and *murabbi*) are sympathizers of transnational movements such as HTI and Tarbiyah. Various narratives disseminated through preaching frequently criticize the regime, for instance, the long hajj queue policy and corruption in hajj funds (conveyed during the Safar Ride BSK #227 event; see Figure 2), the notion that the current presidency is equivalent to the era of Fir'aun (Safar Ride BSK #228; see Figure 3), criticism of the democratic system (Safar Ride BSK #190; see Figure 4), proselytizing by choosing Islamic parties (Safar Ride BSK #195; see Figure 5), and others. Meanwhile, narratives of hate speech against the regime, public policies, and non-Islamic presidential candidates are continuously voiced through their private groups.

Support for Islamic parties and leaders, particularly PKS and one of the presidential candidates, is openly propagated through their private group, BSK. They intentionally participate in the democratic process intending to criticize the government and public policies through various media, both

¹⁶⁹ The Milad of BS Solo agenda is usually attended by BS representatives from Klaten, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, Karanganyar, Purwodadi, Jogja, Demak, Wonosobo, Jakarta, Depok, and other communities.

offline and online activity. Although they do not explicitly endorse specific Islamic political parties in their various preaching, considering that they use random mosques, they must be cautious when spreading sensitive doctrines. Nevertheless, the dissemination of information regarding Islamic political parties is easily found in the narratives through their private group.

c. Advocating the Implementation of *Shariah*

Like disseminating information regarding support for a specific Islamic political party, the demand for implementing Islamic norms in the public sphere is not widely spread through preaching. During a *Safar Ride #227* event, Hanan emphasized that Yoga - it should be noted that at that time, Yoga practices were gaining popularity among the Solonese - is considered a forbidden form of meditation as it does not align with Islamic norms. He stated, "In Klaten, nowadays, there are many Yoga clubs spreading meditation practices that do not conform to Islamic methods, despite Yoga being declared forbidden by scholars, including Sheikh Uthaimin. In Malaysia and the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), Yoga has also been deemed forbidden."

They advocate for implementing Islamic norms that should be institutionalized and practiced among Indonesian Muslims. Furthermore, they express support for establishing a caliphate, albeit internally, through private groups. They often disseminate information related to the past glory of Islam, the implementation of Islamic law, and even dreams of establishing an Islamic-based state. These utopian narratives are derived from the writings of former HTI members, *Kaffah*, which still exist on social media.¹⁷⁰ Thus, based on empirical findings regarding the activities and dissemination of Bikers Subuhan's doctrines indicate that support for establishing an Islamic state is still voiced, albeit within small groups in Solo region.

¹⁷⁰ Muhammad Rosyid and Ramita Paraswati, "From Pamphlet to Utopian Caliphate: Utilization of Mass Media and Promotion of the Caliphate Ideology among Muslim Youth in Solo," *Dialog* 46, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 33, <https://doi.org/10.47655/dialog.v46i1.777>.

4.4 Conclusion

Taking a case study in Solo, a city that remains fertile ground for the emergence of the radicalism movement in Indonesia, this chapter has shown that Bikers Subuhan initially focused on personal piety, has transformed into public piety. As a result, they are quick to blame and condemn the actions of society that do not align with the self-created 'Islamic' norms they adhere to. With an exclusive, conservative attitude, supported by Solo's landscape known for the emergence of vigilante groups, this community can exhibit permissiveness towards violence.

This chapter argues that the proliferation of various narratives leading to the rise of Islamism, particularly in the Solo practiced by the Bikers Subuhan, this finding supports the theory of pop-Islamism popularized by Muller. The failure of Islamist actors to institutionalize Islamic laws or norms within the state does not eliminate their main objective, which is to create Islam as a system that encompasses various dimensions of life. These agencies continue to voice Islamist demands, albeit compromising with pop culture. For instance, the PAS Youth Wing utilizes pop-culture channels such as short movies, music (*nasyid*), Islamic entertainment, and others to support Islamism openly. They strive to develop a more inclusive profile of the Islamic party by endorsing popular forms of Islamism that are more attractive. In line with this phenomenon, the Bikers Subuhan employ a fun-oriented (read: hobby) approach as part of their mobilization process, successfully packaging Islamic doctrine and propagating it among their members, leading to narratives of Islamism.

The transformation of religious movements through embracing hobbies cannot be interpreted as an ideological change because they have abandoned Islamism. Instead, for the Bikers Subuhan, this strategy represents a step towards realizing their main agendas, which are currently less openly advocated. The dissemination of religious content internally continues to be voiced as part of unifying Islamic ideas and concepts. They continuously emphasize the importance of unity among the Muslim community, criticize the government, support the implementation of Islamic norms in public, and, at certain points, realize an Islamic state is only a matter of time for them.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The defeat of Islamist groups in gaining a prominent position among Indonesian Muslims has led them to maneuver by building affiliations with other Islamic groups, including the *hijrah* movement. One of the *hijrah* movements that has grown rapidly in the past six years is Bikers Subuhan (BS). The movement has affiliated with Bikers Subuhan Lampung, which began in 2017 and has more than 100 communities across cities in Indonesia. BS is a group of bikers who created a ritual that simultaneously associates the expression of their faith and passion through riding. They strive to Islamize various activities, starting with emphasizing personal piety. At the same time, the indoctrination process, including Islamist narratives, continues to be carried out by agencies through various activities, preachings, and private groups. In other words, fun or pleasure (read: hobby) has been utilized by some Muslims to facilitate the mobilization process of a movement directed towards supporting Islamism.

The emergence of the post-Islamism narrative does not indicate the end of Islamism but rather signifies the (re)emergence of new trends, discourses, and practices of political Islam. It represents a process in which global popular trends, tendencies, and values assimilate and penetrate the domain of traditionalists (read: Islamic practices). This intersection of popular culture originating from non-Islamic culture led to the beginning of *hijrah* propaganda. This concept attempts to incorporate Islamic values into pop-culture; they no longer prohibit it but utilize it for their interests and goals. The *hijrah* movement offers a way to remain committed to religion (faith) while simultaneously enjoying aspects of modern culture (fun) within certain predefined boundaries (chapter 2). This idea is employed by the Bikers Subuhan movement, which establishes an affinity that allows them to be flexible and form a new religious authority enclave alongside other communities under the umbrella of the *hijrah* movement.

Bikers Subuhan may appear as a typical motorcycle community incorporating Islamic labels into its activities. However, - according to the findings about BS in Solo – this research argues that the community tends to lean more toward a religious movement rather than a motorcycle enthusiast community

(chapter 3). In short, this religious movement utilizes the motorcycle community as a camouflage to attract participants and supporters toward their envisioned goals. This phenomenon may also occur within communities formed around similar hobbies such as football, skateboarding, horseback riding, archery, and other entertaining activities. The popularity of these leisure activities not only serves as a gathering space for like-minded hobbyists and a platform for fostering a shared religious understanding. Hobbies or passions thus become a new realm for religious movements to expand their influence, given the large number of followers and loyal supporters in their respective communities. The *hijrah* movement may seek to utilize this to promote their ideas, notions, and goals to the public by employing fun-oriented approaches to package their invisible Islamic doctrines.

The divergence between BS Sukoharjo and Klaten suggests that similar differences could also occur within BS communities throughout Indonesia. Based on the research findings, BSS tends to adopt an apolitical stance and offers Islamic solutions to all complex problems (Islam as the way of life), while BSK tends to be more politically aware and advocates for the support of Islamic parties. However, both groups – or perhaps the Bikers Subuhan movement – are united in their goal of eliminating differences and focusing on the unity of the *ummah*. This research supports the theory of pop-Islamism, which suggests that the narrative or support for the implementation of Islamic norms, and even the establishment of an Islamic state, still exists and is voiced by the Bikers Subuhan movement, albeit at an internal stage.

In analyzing Bikers Subuhan activities both offline and online observation, I found three invisible doctrines that they propagate (chapter 4). First, the message of awakening the *ummah*. This means that the unity of the *ummah* is the main concern of their movement, they attempt to eliminate differences that lead to division and focus on the unity of the *ummah*. Second, supporting Islamic political parties. Although Bikers Subuhan declared that their movement is neutral, with no religious affiliation and support for any specific political party, their actors (*awwalun* and *murabbi*) are sympathizers of transnational movements such as HTI and Tarbiyah. Various narratives disseminated through preaching frequently criticize the regime, condemnation of the democratic system, proselytizing by

choosing Islamic parties, and others. Meanwhile, narratives of hate speech against the regime, public policies, and non-Islamic presidential candidates are continuously voiced through their private groups.

Third, advocating the implementation of Islamic law. They advocate for implementing Islamic norms that should be institutionalized and practiced among Indonesian Muslims. They often disseminate information related to the past glory of Islam, the implementation of Islamic law, and even dreams of establishing an Islamic-based state. They continuously emphasize the importance of unity among the Muslim community, criticize the government, support the implementation of Islamic norms in public, and, at certain points, realize an Islamic state is only a matter of time for them.

This thesis contributes to a better understanding of how Muslims increasingly recognize the importance of engagement in popular culture. Muslims' dynamic interaction and fluid attitude towards fun have shifted from hostility to compatibility. This research is expected to contribute to the literature on Islamic activism that utilizes fun as part of movement mobilization in Indonesia, concentrating on Solo. Considering that this study is limited to the BS movement in Solo, the conclusions and analysis of this thesis do not generalize the direction of the Bikers Subuhan movement in Indonesia, which may give an orientation towards supporting Islamism.

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ATTACHMENTS

Table 1: List of Interviewees

No	Name	Time and Place	Position
1	Abdullah	4 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
2	Ahmad	18 February 2023, Klaten	<i>Murabbi</i> (adviser) of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
3	Ali	22 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
4	Arhan	5 February 2023, Sukoharjo 13 March 2023, Wonogiri	<i>Awwalun</i> of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
5	Azhar	18 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
6	Beni	21 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
7	Faiz	25 March 2023, Klaten	Staff of the PKS faction (Sukoharjo District)
8	Farhan	4 February 2023, Klaten 18 March 2023, Klaten 28 May 2023, Klaten	<i>Awwalun</i> of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
9	Hamdan	24 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
10	Hanan	4 February 2023, Klaten 11 February 2023, Klaten	<i>Murabbi</i> (adviser) of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
11	Hani	22 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
12	Harno	5 February 2023, Sukoharjo	Al-Ikhlas Mosque Management
13	Irwan	18 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
14	Isa	22 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
15	Joko	18 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
16	Juan	21 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
17	Kamil	24 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
18	Nanang	21 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
19	Ridho	5 February 2023, Sukoharjo	<i>Murabbi</i> (adviser) of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
20	Roni	21 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
21	Surya	24 May 2023, Online Interview	Member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo
22	Untung	11 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten

23	Warno	25 February 2023, Klaten 4 February 2023, Klaten	<i>Awwalun</i> of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
24	Warto	11 February 2023, Klaten	Member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten
25	Yono	4 February 2023, Klaten	Al-Huda Mosque Management
26	Zaenal	19 March 2023, Sukoharjo	<i>Awwalun</i> of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo

Table 2: List of Preachings in Cooperation with Bikers Subuhan in Solo

No	The theme of the Islamic Preaching	Time and Place	Speaker / Host
1	Sucikan Ramadhanmu dari Fitnah Akhir Zaman (purify your Ramadan from the slander of the end of time).	Sukoharjo, 11 March 2023	Ust. Mas'ud Izzul Mujahid Ust. Tengku Azhar
2	Jihadul Kalimah Bela Palestina (let's do Jihad in defense of Palestine).	Surakarta, 17 March 2023	Ansor (Aliansi Soloraya, the Soloraya Alliance)
3	Kirab Budaya Islam (an Islamic cultural carnival).	Surakarta, 19 March 2023	DSKS Surakarta (the Shariah Council of Solo City)
4	Safari Ramadhan 1 (1st Ramadan journey).	Sukoharjo, 20 March 2023	Ust. Hasan Agha
5	Ramadhan Penuh Cinta (Ramadan is full of love).	Sukoharjo, 25 March 2023	Ust. Handy Bonny
6	Safari Ramadhan 2 (2nd Ramadan journey).	Sukoharjo, 26 March	Ust. Tengku Azhar
7	Awalnya Terpaksa, Akhirnya Jatuh Cinta (initially forced, eventually fell in love).	Sukoharjo, 26 March 2023	Ust. Burhan Shodiq
8	Safari Ramadhan 3 (3rd Ramadan journey).	Sukoharjo, 4 April 2023	KH. Abdullah Manaf Amin
9	Kampung Bervisi Surga (Paradise-vision village).	Sukoharjo, 6 April 2023	Ust. Abu Fatiah al-Adnani
10	Guyub Rukun, Silaturahmi Komunitas Dakwah Sukoharjo (peace and unity, gathering of Sukoharjo da'wah community).	Sukoharjo, 13 May 2023	Lingkar Kebaikan
11	Ngumpulke Balung Pisah til Jannah (gather the separated bones to heaven).	Pacitan, 27 May 2023	Ride and Camp, BS Sukoharjo
12	Membangun Keluarga Bervisi Surga di Akhir Zaman (building family paradise-vision in the end of time).	Klaten, 29 May 2023	Ust. Abu Fatiah al-Adnani
13	Lelah Terpecah Belah, Saatnya Membangun Ukhuwah (tired of being divided, it's time to build brotherhood).	Klaten, 3 June 2023	Ust. Ja'far al-Jufri
14	Jihadul Kalimah Aksi Bela al-Qur'an	Surakarta, 14 July 2023	Ansor (Aliansi Soloraya, the Soloraya Alliance)
15	Tahun Baru 1445 Hijriah, Momentum Penyatuan Umat	Karanganyar, 19 July 2023	Isy Karima Islamic Boarding School

16	Syuruq Berkah	Sukoharjo, 21 July 2023	Ust. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir
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Diagram 1: Typology of the *Hijrah* movement in Indonesia

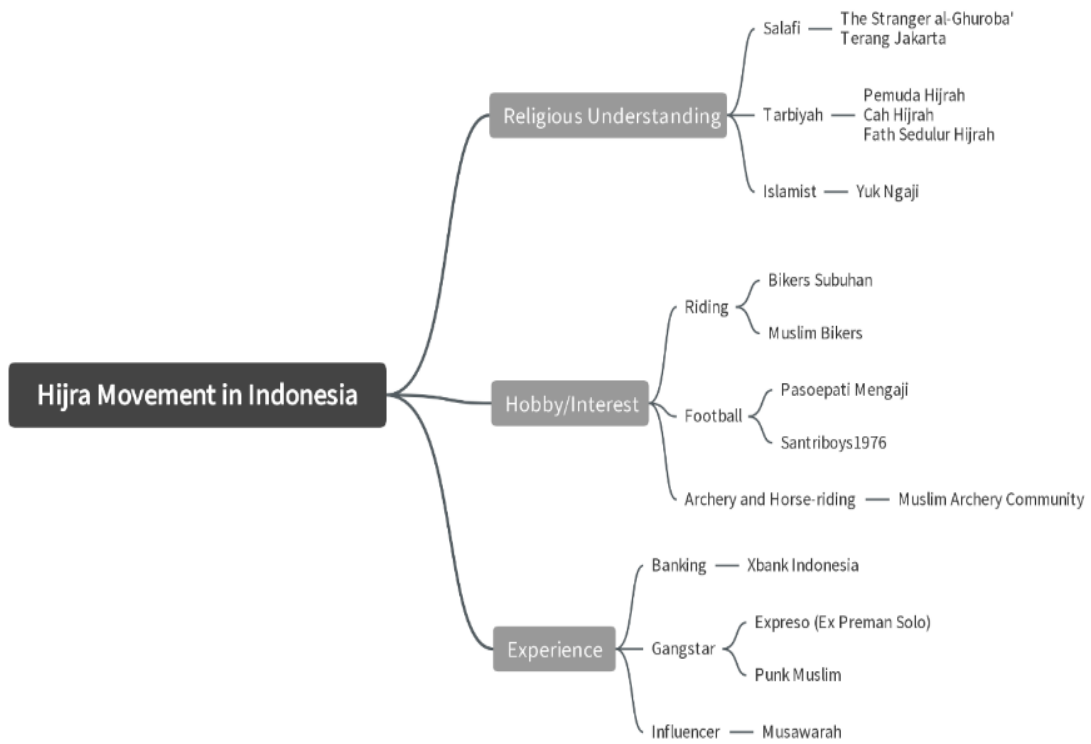


Figure 1: The logo of Bikers Subuhan



Figure 2: the Safar Ride #227 (Klaten)



Figure 1: the Safar Ride #228 (Klaten)



Figure 2: The Safar Ride 190 (Sukoharjo)



Figure 3: the Safar Ride #195 (Wonogiri)

