

FACTIONALISATION IN THE PROSPEROUS JUSTICE PARTY (PARTAI KEADILAN SEJAHTERA) Underlying Reasons for the Emergence of the New Direction of the Indonesia Movement (Garbi)

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Abstract

This article examines the emergence of the New Direction of Indonesia Movement (Garbi) as a result of factionalisation within the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS). This study argues that a number of interconnected factors contributed to the emergence of Garbi, implying that factionalisation in political parties requires multifactor analysis rather than a single factor. This study employs qualitative data gathered through in-depth interviews with central figures in PKS and Garbi. Secondary data is gathered by analysing and reviewing scholarly sources. The study finds two factors for the emergence of Garbi: disagreements over ideological interpretation and uncompromising leadership practices. However, the findings of this study contradict a third factor, which is the absence of an effective conflict resolution process. PKS, as a cadre party, has a regeneration mechanism for dispute resolution, yet it serves as a conduit for the spread of factionalisation until the emergence of Garbi.

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(Garbi) sebagai akibat dari faksionalisasi di dalam Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS). Penelitian ini berargumen bahwa sejumlah faktor yang saling berhubungan berkontribusi pada kemunculan Garbi, menyiratkan bahwa faksionalisasi dalam partai politik membutuhkan analisis multifaktor daripada faktor tunggal. Penelitian ini menggunakan data kualitatif yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh-tokoh sentral di PKS dan Garbi. Data sekunder dikumpulkan dengan menganalisis dan mengkaji sumber-sumber ilmiah. Studi ini menemukan dua faktor kemunculan Garbi: ketidaksepakatan atas interpretasi ideologis dan praktik kepemimpinan yang tidak kenal kompromi. Namun, temuan penelitian ini bertentangan dengan faktor ketiga, yaitu tidak adanya proses resolusi konflik yang efektif. PKS, sebagai partai kader, memiliki mekanisme kaderisasi untuk penyelesaian konflik, namun mekanisme ini justru menjadi saluran penyebaran faksionalisasi hingga kemunculan Garbi.]

Keywords: political factionalisation, PKS, Garbi, party leadership

A. Introduction

Factionalisation emerges in almost all political parties in Indonesia. In addition to the development of separate camps, which leads to prolonged internal conflict, factionalisation also creates divisions that breed new parties. *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (the Prosperous Justice Party, hereafter PKS), previously *Partai Keadilan* (the Justice Party, hereafter PK), also underwent a process factionalisation.¹ It was apparent when a group called *Forum Kader Peduli* (the Care Cadre Forum, hereafter FKP) emerged in 2005, criticising the attitude of PKS members, who tend to adopt a pragmatic attitude in politics. Moreover, the 2008 PKS National Working Conference (*Mukernas*) in Bali declared PKS as an open party. However, this previous case of factionalisation was remediated through PKS's *halaqah* mechanism for addressing internal conflict management.²

¹ PKS, as an Islamic party, has its roots in the 1980s college Islamic *da'wah* movement. The Justice Party (PK) emerged as part of the 1998 reform and rebranded as the PKS on 20 April 2002. Since 2004, PKS has actively participated in general elections, increasing its vote percentage from 2004 to 2019, and is among the parties represented in the DPR RI. Since the 2014 election, the PKS has steadily maintained its stance as an opposition to the government of President Joko Widodo.

² *Halaqah* is a general term for an Islamic study group. It is a small group inside the PKS that primarily discusses Islamic principles and urges members to take them into practice as individuals, societies, and party members or cadres. The members have very close relationships with one another, almost like a family. As part of the party's

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After the 2014 general election, factionalisation reemerged in PKS. A group called *Gerakan Arab Baru Indonesia* (the New Direction of Indonesia Movement, hereafter Garbi) established its roots in 2015, following a change in management that coincided with the fundamental restructuring of PKS, in which Muhammad Anis Matta, then serving as President of PKS, would no longer be regarded as the Secretary-General. This has recently been attributed to the primary motivation behind Garbi's emergence, thereby leading to the assumption that party restructuring was the driving force behind Garbi's emergence, as declared by Anis Matta and his supporters in October 2018.

PKS members gave various responses to Garbi's emergence, ranging from rejecting to openly supporting or joining Garbi. However, the faction was ultimately unable to remain within PKS. It officially separated from PKS, forming the *Gelombang Rakyat Indonesia (Gelora)* Party as an open party based on the Indonesian state philosophy, *Pancasila*, in 2019. This article explores the factors that contributed to the emergence of Garbi within PKS, which ultimately led to the establishment of the Gelora Party.

Prior studies have discussed factionalisation in PKS. Yon Mahmudi³ divides the party into revivalist, traditionalist, and modernist factions. The revivalist group holds that it is preferable to return to the teachings of the Qur'an through *ijtihad*, which incorporates knowledge-based decisions, understanding, and personal experience governed by Islamic law. The traditionalist faction believes that God's teachings are equal and interfaith communication is necessary, implying the necessity of a discussion space between Islam and the West. Meanwhile, the modernist side believes religion is obsolete and should be replaced as the symbol and rule of the party movement. Ahmad-Norma Permata⁴ argues that there are two factions in PKS: the idealists and realists. Permata characterises the idealist group similarly to Mahmudi's description of the revivalist group, while the realist group, identified with the party's public face,

informal unit, this group also serves as a medium for communication among the party and *halaqah* members. See Firman Noor, *Perpecahan dan Soliditas Partai Islam di Indonesia: Kasus PKB dan PKS di Dekade Awal Reformasi* (Jakarta: LIPI Press, 2015).

³ Yon Mahmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2008).

⁴ Ahmad-Norma Permata, *Islamist Party and Democratic Participation: Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia 1998-2006* (Universität de Münste, 2008).

equates to the modernists. In Arief Munandar's terms,⁵ the idealist group is oriented to the "religious movement," while the realist group is more oriented to the "party movement." Burhanuddin Muhtadi⁶ labelled this dynamic as the *harakah* (party cadre) and *hizb* (party) groups. Muhtadi also employed the terms "justice faction" and "prosperous faction" to indicate further factionalisation within PKS. The justice faction was identified with conservative elders, such as Salim Segaf Al-Jufri and Sohibul Iman. Meanwhile, the prosperous faction consisted of younger members, such as Anis Matta, Fahri Hamzah, and Mahfudz Siddiq.

Previous studies on Garbi have further elucidated the increasing factional infighting in PKS. Ahmad Yusuf⁷ identifies Garbi's emergence as a product of PKS's internal conflicts, which gave rise to two factions: the Justice Faction, which had more idealistic tendencies, and the Prosperous Faction, initiated by Anis Matta, which adopted a more pragmatic outlook. This latter faction became a driving reason for Garbi's emergence due to internal disappointment toward the unfulfilled interests of certain groups. The disappointments accumulated, eventually creating resistance.

Two other studies analyse the emergence of Garbi through the internal dynamics of PKS. Hardianto Widy Priohutomo et al.⁸ demonstrate that there have been multiple stages of factionalisation during which a stronger party doctrine may have prevented the party from developing competitive factionalisation tendencies. Changes in leadership and ideological interpretations primarily drove factionalisation in PKS. Meanwhile, Ridho Al-Hamdi and Arfan Ashari Saputra⁹ identify two phases in Garbi's development: emergence and formation. Garbi's emergence is driven by three political incentives: material, solidarity,

⁵ Arief Munandar, "Antara Jemaah dan Partai Politik: Dinamika Habitus Kader Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) dalam Arena Politik Indonesia Pasca Pemilu 2004", Ph.D. Thesis (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia, 2011).

⁶ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, *Fenomena PKS: Dilemma Suara & Syaria* (Jakarta: Penerbit KGP, 2012).

⁷ Ahmad Yusuf, "Garbi in the Study of Social Movements (New Direction Movement of Indonesia), Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) Conflict Studies in the Analysis of Structural Strain Paradigms", *Proceedings of Socioint 2019-6th International Conference of Education, Social Sciences, and Humanities* (2019).

⁸ Hardianto Widy Priohutomo et al, "The Emergence of Gerakan Arah Baru Indonesia (Garbi) and Factionalism in Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)", *Jurnal Politik*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2019), p. 29.

⁹ Arfan Ashari Saputra & Ridho Al-Hamdi, "Motif Politik dalam Kelahiran dan Pembentukan Gerakan Arah Baru Indonesia (Garbi)", *Politika: Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2020), pp. 163–82.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) and idealism. The solidarity motive takes precedence over the other two objectives. Meanwhile, three structures contributed to Garbi's formation: political opportunity, mobilisation, and framing action. This study suggests that the framing action structure is the most important medium for explaining the emergence of Garbi.

Previous research into the reasons behind factionalisation in PKS typically relies on only one approach or factor. Meanwhile, research on Garbi emphasises that internal tensions within PKS led to the formation of this group. This article will analyse factionalisation by examining three factors that led to the emergence of Garbi within PKS and, ultimately, its transformation into the Gelora Party. The three factors are as follows: first, differences in vision among internal circles of PKS; second, new leadership patterns within the party and weakening communication among warring factions; and third, the failure to build a cadre that might have prevented the escalation of factionalisation.

This study applies a qualitative method with data gathered through document studies and in-depth interviews. To obtain information about the dynamics of factionalisation through the formation of Garbi, we interviewed three authoritative representatives: Garbi founder Anis Matta, PKS leader Sohibul Iman, and the Islamic political academic Yon Mahmudi. We selected these sources with a consideration for a balance between PKS and Garbi perspectives. We regarded information gathered from these interviews as primary source material for analysis. In addition, this study relied on secondary sources in the form of literature derived from research into PKS factionalisation as well as media coverage related to the topic.

B. Driving Factors of Factionalization in the Party

The study of party factionalisation has been widely developed in political science.¹⁰ In general, “faction” has two essential definitions. First, factions are subgroups that are part of a larger group; second,

¹⁰ Raphael Zariski, “Party Factions and Comparative Politics: Some Preliminary Observations”, *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1960), pp. 27–51; R. Rose, “Parties, Factions and Tendencies in Britain”, *Political Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1964), pp. 33–46; Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Frank P. Belloni and Dennis C. Beller, *Faction Politics: Political Parties and Factionalism in Comparative Perspective* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1978); Francise Boucek, “Rethinking Factionalism: Typologies, Intra-party Dynamics and Three Faces of Factionalism”, *Party Politics*, vol. 15, no. 4 (2009), pp. 455–85.

factions are subgroups united by a common identity and purpose.¹¹ In the Indonesian context, several factors can cause factionalisation, including elite leadership patterns, party organisational structures,¹² ideology, the sociological basis,¹³ coalition influences,¹⁴ as well as the electoral system and other political parties.¹⁵

Several studies have shown how ideological understanding can cause division within political parties. Lewis P. Fickett¹⁶ asserts that divisions within the party cannot be resolved if the handling of ideological differences is inappropriate. Thus, differences in interpretation and ideological attitudes cause turmoil and disrupt the solidity of the party. According to Firman Noor,¹⁷ factionalisation and party splits not only arise from disagreements between two or more opposed ideologies but also from differences in understanding and interpretation between similar ideologies. Meanwhile, according to Martin F. Bull,¹⁸ disputes about the party's political orientation and strategy in achieving its goals are regarded as factors causing disagreements and fragmentation.

The second factor involves poor leadership. Paul R. Brass¹⁹ claims that the leader serves as a very important element in creating party solidity,

¹¹ Aisah Putri Budiatri (ed.), *Faksi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik di Indonesia Era Reformasi* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2018).

¹² Sri Nuryanti, "Pola Kepemimpinan Elit, Struktur Organisasi Partai dan Konflik Partai Politik", in *Faksi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik di Indonesia Era Reformasi*, ed. by Aisah Putri Budiatri (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2018), pp. 87–114.

¹³ Ridho Imawan Hanafi, "Ideologi dan Basis Sosiologis dalam Faksionalisasi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik pada Era Reformasi", in *Faksi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik di Indonesia Era Reformasi*, ed. by Aisah Putri Budiatri (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2018), pp. 115–62.

¹⁴ Lili Romli, "Pengaruh Koalisi dalam Faksionalisasi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik Era Reformasi", in *Faksi dan Konflik Internal Partai Politik di Indonesia Era Reformasi*, ed. by Aisah Putri Budiatri (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2018), pp. 163–216.

¹⁵ Budiatri (ed.), *Faksi dan Konflik Internal Partai*.

¹⁶ Lewis P. Fickett, *The Major Socialist Parties of India: A Study in Leftist Fragmentation, Foreign and Comparative Studies* (New York: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs Syracuse University, 1976).

¹⁷ Firman Noor, "PKB, Kegagalan Pelembagaan Shared Values dan Dampaknya", *Jurnal Penelitian Politik*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2015), pp. 1–20.

¹⁸ Martin F. Bull, "Social Democracies' Newest Recruit?: Conflict and Cohesion in the Italian Democratic Party of the Left", in *Conflict and Cohesion in Western European Social Democratic Parties*, ed. by David S. Bell and Eric Shaw Pinter (London & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 31–48.

¹⁹ Paul R. Brass, "Review of Factional Politics in an Indian State, by P. R. Brass", *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 39, no. 1/2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 232–8.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) as the party leader can employ the art of manipulation to resolve conflicts and maintain followers' loyalty. Hence, the leader has an important role in sustaining compromise between disputing factions. Moreover, the leader's tolerant attitude towards the existence of other factions also strengthens party solidity.²⁰ Brass and Myron Weiner's studies show that a leader's failure to reduce conflict and maintain compromise among opposing factions is the fundamental factor contributing to increased factionalisation.

Factionalization also appears due to poor communication among organisational parties, causing incorrect perceptions that can escalate internal disputes or conflicts. These conflicts have the potential to be more intense as the group's interpersonal relationships strengthen, resulting in frequent interactions. Coser developed an analogy for how conflicts in large families arise from the emotional involvement and tight ties between family members. This analogy helps explain the nature of the dispute stemming from the dynamics of factionalisation in PKS, where party members are viewed as siblings in a large family.

The fourth factor is the absence of an effective mechanism for conflict resolution. It is possible to prevent conflicts from festering by intervening at an early stage with effective conflict resolution strategies. This assumption rests on the notion that differences in vision or ideological perceptions, as well as intolerant leadership patterns, do not necessarily lead to a protracted contest if a party prevents those conflicts from happening. Some scholars believe that the existence of conflict prevention becomes an important element in preventing conflict escalation, which, in turn, leads to factionalisation.²¹

C. Dispute on Vision and Strategy

As a party with roots in the *tarbiyah*²² movement, PKS is regarded as a cadre party with a tiered system limited to anyone who wants to become

²⁰ Myron Weiner, *Party Politics in India: The Development of a Multi-Party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 241–2.

²¹ Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); Noor, "PKB, Kegagalan Pelembagaan".

²² *Tarbiyah* in the context of PKS refers to the process of education, coaching, and self-development aimed at developing better individuals morally, spiritually, and socially based on Islamic values. The party believes that developing morally and spiritually strong cadres is critical to attaining party goals throughout politics and communal life.

a cadre member.²³ Another characteristic of a cadre party lies in its main ideology, which is different from common mass parties, whose ideology tends to be fluid and open, encompassing all groups with a less restricted cadre system. In cadre parties, party ideology tends to be rigid and strict.

PKS is also recognised as an ideological party based on Islam. PKS believes that Islamic teachings are complete and comprehensive, covering all elements of life, including political and state issues. For PKS, religion and politics are inextricably linked. As a result, members of the cadre must be Muslim or have a Muslim background. The cadres strictly follow this policy. However, as PKS grew, elites increasingly provided varied interpretations.

Differences in policy interpretation triggered the emergence of factions, a problem that was not easily resolved. Three points of difference distinguished the group vision of Anis Matta, who would go on to establish Garbi, and that of Sohibul Iman: (1) party orientation and behaviour, (2) party openness level, and (3) the vision of nationhood. In this study, I will acknowledge Sohibul Iman as the “mainstream group” due to its majority standing in the party.

1. *Party Orientation and Behavior*

The existence of PKS is based on a doctrine of *al-hizb huwa al-jama'ah wa al-jama'ah hiya al-hizb* (the party is the congregation, and the congregation is the party). This doctrine also emphasises that the *hizb* (party) and *jama'ah* or *da'wah* (congregation) form one inseparable unit.²⁴ Thus, in line with the understanding of most of its cadre members, PKS is not only a party but also a *da'wah* institution whose mission is to proliferate Islamic values in all aspects of social and political life. Therefore, the work of the party is regarded as the work of *da'wah*, and vice versa, where *da'wah* work is also within the framework of party work.

Anis Matta's group considers this perspective no longer relevant. In addition, this group believes that there must be a clear separation between the party and the *da'wah*. Thus, when deciding to form a party, *da'wah* and *tarbiyah* are no longer considered as the work of the party. The task of the party is to participate in elections, win, and gain power in the

²³ Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

²⁴ Anthony Bubalo, Greg Fealy, and Whit Mason, *PKS & Kembarannya: Bergiat Jadi Demokrat di Indonesia, Mesir dan Turki* (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2012); Muhtadi, *Fenomena PKS*.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) political arena. In this context, Anis Matta encouraged PKS to realise its existence as a political party: an organisation that should be dynamic and not run in “black and white.” Believing pragmatism in politics is natural, particularly to win the elections, Anis Matta believes there should be a clear separation between the political party and the *da’wah* party.

To achieve such a belief, the matter of utmost importance lies in meeting the requisite funding and human resources needs to compete with other parties. Furthermore, Anis Matta points out that if PKS adheres to the principle of being a *da’wah* party, the party will continue to be trapped in conducting “stream politics” (*politik aliran*). He sees this as a problem because PKS would continue to create tensions for the Indonesian people, and it would be counterproductive for any attempts at strengthening the nation’s foundations. Therefore, Anis Matta strongly suggests leaving the political stream in politics.²⁵

On the other hand, Sohibul Iman’s group thought that PKS must continually adhere to the doctrine of *al-hizb huna al-jama’ah wa al-jama’ah hiya al-hizb*. According to this group, the dominant teachings and practices in Islamic politics since the time of the Prophet Muhammad have directly linked religious teachings to political life as the fundamental principle distinguishing Islamic from non-Islamic parties. Moreover, since its establishment, PKS’s commitment has been to establish Islam as the basis of its political ideology. Therefore, it is natural that the party would hold to the principle linking Islam and politics in all forms of thought and attitudes. The group believes that the party’s programs, visions, and missions must be in accordance with Islamic values, just as the cadre’s attitudes, actions, and behaviours must be based on Islamic values.

From this perspective, Sohibul Iman’s group perceived Anis Matta’s critiques as potentially eroding the *tarbiyah* spirit that had served as the political basis for PKS. PKS’s *tarbiyah* spirit, which adopts the views of the Muslim Brotherhood, clearly rejects the ideas that separate *da’wah* and politics.²⁶ In the context of PKS, *tarbiyah* values must be applied in the form of *da’wah* during each party activity. Thus, political activity is not merely intended to win the election but also to advance *dakwah* purposes. If the party were to adopt Anis Matta’s ideas, there would be a concern that *tarbiyah* values would fade, endangering the party’s existence.

²⁵ Anis Matta, *Gelombang Ketiga Indonesia* (Jakarta: The Future Institute, 2014).

²⁶ Umma Farida, “Peran Ikhwanul Muslimin dalam Perubahan Sosial Politik di Mesir”, *Jurnal Penelitian*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2014), pp. 45–70.

2. *Party Openness Level*

The next difference in vision lies in whether PKS should be a closed or open party. Anis Matta's group is of the opinion that even though PKS is based on Islamic principles, it should be an open party. Thus, party members need not consist only of Muslims but also non-Muslims. This position would require him to demonstrate that, as an Islamic party, PKS should respect plurality as a manifestation of the inclusive understanding of Islamic teachings. For this reason, Anis Matta went to great lengths to actualise his idea. During the 2008 *Mukernas* in Bali, he unilaterally announced that PKS should become an open party with a more moderate, nationalist platform, shifting from its former identity as a right-wing, Islamic cadre party. Based on this approach, PKS would allow anyone to join the party, reinforcing its identity as a dynamic political organisation. This sort of pragmatism is logical, particularly when it comes to winning elections. After *Mukernas*, PKS officially declared itself an open party, marked by a new willingness to recruit cadres from non-Muslim backgrounds. From the 2009 election results, PKS had 26 non-Muslim legislative members and candidates with a Protestant background.²⁷

In contrast to Anis Matta, Sohibul Iman's group believed that PKS did not need to be an open party. As a party that adheres to Islamic ideology, it is only natural that its cadre members should also be Muslim.²⁸ In addition, if the party were opened, it would potentially erode the uniqueness of PKS as an Islamic party and a *da'wah* party in comparison to other parties. The community might consider such a development inconsistent with the image and Islamic identity attached to PKS, causing a grey area to appear in society, which could inspire people not to vote for PKS in elections.²⁹

Even though PKS prioritises Muslims as the party's cadre, this has not meant that all individuals from non-Muslim backgrounds were excluded from becoming party members or serving in parliament for PKS. The PKS party has included non-Muslim administrators in a number of regions where the majority population is not Muslim. PKS has practised this effectively for a long time. Therefore, according to Sohibul Iman, PKS has already continuously practised Anis Matta's idea

²⁷ Priohutomo, Kamarudin, and Hidayat, "The Emergence of Gerakan".

²⁸ Ahmad Ali Nurdin, "PKS Democratic Experiences in Recruiting Members and Leaders", *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 49, no. 2 (2011), pp. 329–60.

²⁹ Interview with Mohamad Sohibul Iman (Jakarta, 3 November 2021).

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) for PKS to become an open party. In our interview, he said, “We have actually accommodated Mr. Anis Matta’s idea of an open party. Since 2010, we have had representatives in Papua, who are non-Muslim. What more, then, is demanded?”³⁰

Sohibul Iman’s group also believes that PKS should continue to promote pluralism. PKS acknowledges that Indonesia is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-custom, and multi-faith nation-state. Respecting this diversity, the group said that during the leadership of Salim Assegaf and Sohibul Iman, the party’s ideology had, in fact, put forward many projects aimed at restoring the identity of PKS as a cadre party and a *da’wah* party, while maintaining openness and plurality. This commitment to pluralism is reflected in the current leadership, including Evalina Heryanti, a Christian who serves as a member of the PKS Expert Council. Heryanti affirmed that her position on the council demonstrates that PKS is an open party to all citizens of the nation, regardless of their ethnicity or religion.³¹

Furthermore, as of 2023, PKS has shown increased tolerance for traditional Islamic society, particularly *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU). This trend is seen in the party’s active collaboration with NU leaders and figures in many organisational activities and events. PKS has shown a readiness to participate in and promote religious activities traditionally associated with NU, such as the commemoration of Prophet Muhammad’s birthday (*Manlid Nabi*) and reading competitions (*kitab kuning*).³² Notably, PKS publicly admits that many of its officials and members are affiliated with NU, indicating a substantial shift in the party’s stance.

3. *Vision of Nationhood*

Anis Matta’s faction held that nationalist ideas could not be appropriately developed in PKS due to the party’s strong belief in maintaining ideological barriers with non-Islamic parties, meaning that PKS substantially represented Islamic communities rather than the whole

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “Lantik Dewan Pakar Beragama Kristiani, PKS: Kita jaga Kebhinekaan”, *kontenislam.com* (2022), <https://www.kontenislam.com/2022/01/lantik-dewan-pakar-beragama-kristiani.html>; Lanny Octavia, “Islamism and Democracy: A Gender Analysis on PKS’ Application of Democratic Principles Values”, *Al-Jāmi’ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 50, no. 1 (2012), pp. 1–22.

³² Ken Miichi, “Indigenizing Islamism in Indonesia: Prosperous Justice Party’s Approaches Towards Traditionalist Muslims”, *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, vol. 24, no. 1 (2023), pp. 120–33.

of Indonesia's diverse population. According to Anis, ideally, all political parties, including PKS, should be oriented toward representing the entire population, not just specific groups (i.e. the Islamic community). If this idea were not implemented, PKS would continue to be trapped, representing a single group.³³

For this reason, according to Anis Matta, nationalist ideas and values should be implemented in the vision, mission, and activities of PKS. The Anis group initially developed and offered the concept of Garbi as a new foundation for PKS to engage the pluralistic context of Indonesia, both in the present and future. Anis Matta's followers believed that this vision both responds to national developments and strengthens the role of parties in the era of globalisation.

Anis Matta's goal was for PKS to play a more dynamic role in helping to eliminate ideological barriers in the life of the nation-state. On the one hand, for Anis Matta, nationalist insight must be developed and instilled, as expected by the nation's founders, for political life to represent the diverse population truly. PKS should thus concentrate its principles and activities toward that end. On the other hand, according to Sohibil Iman, the idea of a national vision, as conveyed by Anis Matta, does not require PKS to transform its identity on the basis of nationalism. Although PKS is an Islamic party, a national vision has become part of PKS identity, as seen from its establishing objectives: first, the realisation of Indonesian national ideals as stated in the 1945 Constitution; second, the realisation of a just and prosperous civil society, founded on the worship of God. These two objectives are contained in the PKS Statutes.

The party's statutes also confirm an objective to realise Indonesian national principles outlined in the Preamble of the Republic of Indonesia's 1945 Constitution. The party's other objective is to achieve a just, prosperous, and dignified civil society within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, based on Pancasila.³⁴

Furthermore, Sohibil Iman stated that Indonesia's history has demonstrated that Islam as a vision for civilisation can coexist with Islam as a vision for a nation.³⁵ Indonesia was founded on **the convergence of Islam as a vision of universal civilisation** and Islam as a vision of national identity. Because there is no conflict between Islam and nationhood,

³³ Interview with Muhammad Anis Matta (Jakarta, 5 September 2021).

³⁴ *Anggaran Dasar (AD) dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga (ART) PKS*.

³⁵ Mohamad Sohibil Iman, *Masa Depan Demokrasi Kita* (Jakarta: DPP Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, 2020), p. 83.

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PKS supports Pancasila as the official state ideology and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as the ultimate form of government. Thus, the PKS is an Islamic party that respects and strives for national principles consistent with Indonesia's contemporary situation. Therefore, Sohibul Iman felt that Anis Matta's point of view was neither novel nor urgent.

The preceding explains the basic contrasts that persist between the two groups today. On the Anis Matta side, the PKS and all its cadres should immediately apply these critiques so that they are not constantly locked in political "groups" or "flows" that build ideological boundaries and ignite the Islam-versus-nationality debate. This historical context further demonstrates PKS's ongoing dedication to representing a diverse society. Meanwhile, the Sohibul Iman faction believes that by basing the party's identity on Islam, the PKS represents limited groups by design. This faction further believes PKS has already implemented all of Anis Matta's ideals. By embracing Islam as a political doctrine, the PKS nevertheless remains open to accepting non-Muslim cadres and legislative members.

The differences between the two factions' national visions have resulted in a never-ending polemic. According to Machfud Sidik,³⁶ the dismissal of Anis Matta and the formation of Garbi are closely tied to the desire to explore new ideas about the future direction of Indonesian politics. According to Anis Matta, his concept, outlined in his book on the "third wave" of Indonesia, was well received by PKS cadres in some regions. However, the idea was found to be unconvincing and continued to receive opposition from mainstream groups led by Sohibul Iman. However, before Garbi emerged and consolidated within PKS, ideological differences among party leaders were not as pronounced. The shift began gradually, initially at the ideological level and limited to the party elite. During the *Mukernas* 2008, the party had become more open, but this shift was met with resistance.

PKS underwent a significant shift during its development, which its members accepted. Significant milestones near the end of Salim Segaf Al-Jufri and Mohammad Sohibul Iman's terms show that this shift had become more moderate under their leadership.³⁷ First was the

³⁶ Hardianto W. Prihutomo, "Perubahan Faksionalisasi Partai Keadilan Sejahtera pada Masa Kepemimpinan Muhammad Sohibul Iman 2015-2020", Master Thesis (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia, 2019).

³⁷ Yon Machmudi, "The PKS and Tarbiyah movement: Its Agenda and Future in Indonesia", in *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia: Islamic Groups and Identity Politics*, *Al-Jāmi'ah*, Vol. 62, No. 1, 2024 M/1445 H

emerging nationalist concept that emphasised Indonesia, accompanied by a recognition of a need for stronger pluralist accommodations, as expressed in the PKS slogan, “Party of Mercy for All Nature” (*Rahmatan Lilalamin*). A second development was the formation of an “advisory council” (*Dewan Pakar*) that was directly tied to the President of PKS and included non-Muslim members. Third, the party updated its insignia to convey a more inclusive message. Finally, a new PKS anthem was created to emphasise Pancasila’s values and the diversity of Indonesia.

D. New Leadership and Communication Problems

PKS underwent a significant organisational structure change after Salim Segaf’s election to Chairman of the *Majelis Syuro* (Consultative Assembly) and Sohibul Iman to PKS President in 2015. Anis Matta, who had served for more than ten years as PKS Secretary-General, was dismissed. In addition, the position of Secretary-General of the Party was no longer concurrent with the secretary of the *Majelis Syuro*. This restructuring aimed to reduce the power accrued to the Secretary-General’s position during the reign of Anis Matta. In practice, the secretary of *Majelis Syuro* position is more powerful than that of PKS president, whose role is equivalent to that of deputy chairman of the *Majelis Syuro*.

Anis Matta wielded exclusive power and privilege while holding this strategic position. Moreover, Hilmi Amunuddin, a respected figure who also served as chairperson of *Majelis Syuro* at that time, tended to support Anis Matta’s vision and political manoeuvres. At that time, Anis Matta became a “golden child” who, on the one hand, inspired several cadres in PKS but, on the other, made some members uncomfortable, defiant, or even jealous. This group includes Yusuf Supendi, a senior party figure who eventually left PKS, criticising Anis Matta over his privilege and power.

Furthermore, Anis Matta’s position allowed him to supervise cadres, organise territory, and learn the ins and outs of PKS operations, particularly in Eastern Indonesia. As a result, it became apparent that Anis Matta took a firm hand in raising almost all PKS regional coordinators. Most of them later became loyalists to Anis Matta, supporting Garbi’s organisation. Furthermore, during his tenure, Anis Matta brought about

ed. by Leonard C. Sebastian, Syafiq Hasim, and Alexander Arifianto (New York: Routledge, 2020), pp. 163–80.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) a fresh perspective in PKS through his attempts to develop character education for cadres, continuously communicating and elaborating on his views. Through this endeavour, many young cadres were eventually persuaded to adopt Anis Matta's philosophy and see him as a role model.

This setting provided fertile grounds for the emergence and spread of renewal concepts like those of Anis, often known as "Anisism," particularly among the younger generation of PKS members. Over the course of its evolution, "Anisism" took on a major role, prompting some PKS members to express concern about the growing impact of this ideology within the party.

However, not everyone concurred with Anis Matta's viewpoint. Opponents believed his ideas and actions could transform the PKS into a more open, even nationalist, party. As a result, when new leadership took over in 2015, the organisation gained momentum in its efforts to limit Anis Matta and his followers' influence and manoeuvring. The new leadership of Salim Segaf and Sohibul Iman made no effort to engage Anis Matta's faction in talks. This mainstream group wanted a return to the party's original ideological direction.

Anis Matta was moved to a solitary position as Head of the International and Middle East Cooperation Department. At the same time, his followers and sympathisers began to be monitored, limited, and even slowly replaced—not only those who served in the party but also those representing PKS in parliament. In response to this new development, Anis Matta and his followers refused to remain silent and launched a fight that quickly became hard to sustain. This situation ultimately increased the friction that occurred between the opposing sides.

There are two possible explanations for the internal tension. First, Anis Matta and his followers perceived their exclusion from the party as a form of injustice, while Sohibul Iman and his followers perceived it as a consequence of the tour of duty and cadre discipline, further remarking Anis Matta's disobedience as a form of post-power syndrome. Second, the Anis Matta faction believed that the hampered freedom of expression within the party indicated the failure of PKS to open a healthy and open dialogue with all cadres. However, for the Sohibul Iman faction, Anis Matta's actions had the potential to weaken the unity and disguise PKS's purpose as a *da'wah* party, necessitating rigorous countermeasures.

1. *Party Management and Unilateral Elimination*

Not long after Sohibul Iman became the President of PKS, the party adopted a stricter policy toward Anis Matta and his group. Matta's dismissal from his position as Secretary-General of PKS was accompanied by the dismissal of his supporters. This was evinced by the Central Executive Board (DPP) of PKS, which issued a warning letter, followed by sanctions implemented in the internal DPP and the legislature. This policy applied to members of the cadre who openly sympathised with Anis Matta as well as to those who were merely suspected of being sympathisers. Examples of this policy shift include the dismissal of Fahri Hamzah as a member of parliament (DPR) and the dismissal of Mahmud Siddiq as Chairman of Commission I of the DPR RI.

PKS insisted that their response was reasonable. In the case of Fahri Hamzah, PKS argued that Hamzah's statements were often controversial and departed from the party's political stance.³⁸ Hamzah's expulsion preceded that of others due to his apparent violation of the *tarbiyah* community's ethics and values, specifically his disrespect for guidance or advice from the instructor (*murabbi*) and his public disclosure of the party's internal difficulties. Thus, the values of *tarbiyah* in the cadre cultivation process were credited as the reason for his removal. However, this turn of events highlighted a weakness in PKS's cadre cultivation process. It resulted in forming a cadre like Hamzah, who, in practice, dared to question the values established during his cadrerization process.

Meanwhile, Mahmud Siddiq's dismissal can be seen as part of the routine rotation process, as he had occupied that position for a long time. For PKS, this reflected the expectation that each cadre should be open to reassignment, at the same time as it served as a way to refresh the leadership. In addition, given that there had been an impression of "ideological dualism and leadership" in recent years, it was necessary for PKS to enforce party discipline.

Sohibul Iman acknowledged that the PKS has various unique approaches when it comes to the dismissal process. One of them is the procedure for issuing *surat peringatan* (warning letters) to members who violate party rules. However, this procedure was not followed during

³⁸ Elza Astari Retaduari, "Dicopot dari Ketua Komisi I, Mahfudz Siddiq: Gaya Kepemimpinan PKS Berubah", *detikNews* (2016), <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3185732/dicopot-dari-ketua-komisi-i-mahfudz-siddiq-gaya-kepemimpinan-pks-berubah>.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) Fahri Hamzah's dismissal. PKS believed that the warning letter need not be issued in writing but can be issued orally as well, in the form of a summons. This is what occurred during the dismissal of Fahri Hamzah and the sympathisers of Anis Matta. Therefore, the dismissal letter from *Dewan Pimpinan Pusat/DPP* (Central Executive Board) following the summons was seen as the final warning letter.³⁹

However, for the Anis Matta group, particularly Fahri Hamzah, this procedure was illegal and violated PKS internal rules. They held that warnings should be written as a matter of procedure, following the established deliberative mechanism. Fahri Hamzah viewed his dismissal as circumventing that process, pointing to its political nuances. This prompted Fahri Hamzah to sue over his dismissal from the *Pengadilan Tata Usaha Negara* (the State Administrative Court), ultimately pursuing his case to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled that Fahri Hamzah's dismissal was indeed invalid, and Fahri Hamzah eventually won the lawsuit.

Similar cases occurred with other cadre members in Anis Matta's camp. Mahfudz Siddiq was also unilaterally dismissed as Chairman of the Commission in parliament. According to the Anis Matta group, the rotation procedure for Siddiq should have gone through a hearing process between DPP and factions in DPR.⁴⁰ The controversy over Siddiq's dismissal has further strengthened the case that Anis Matta's supporters had been unilaterally removed. In addition, Anis Matta's followers were also fired for no specific reason. For example, several PKS Bali Regional Board of Directors were fired via text messages, sparking outrage over the fact that the party did not follow an institutional procedure. One of those fired this way was Achmad Khanafi, an Anis Matta loyalist who was also believed to have facilitated Fahri Hamzah's introduction in Bali.⁴¹ In addition, cadre members who were still in contact with Fahri Hamzah were also dismissed while Fahri Hamzah's lawsuit was ongoing.⁴²

According to Fahri Hamzah, these methods indicated that the spirit of *musyawarah* (deliberation) in PKS had long since faded internally.

³⁹ Interview with Mohamad Sohibul Iman.

⁴⁰ Retaduari, "Dicopot dari Ketua Komisi I".

⁴¹ "Perpecahan dalam Tubuh PKS", *Merdeka.com* (2019), <https://www.merdeka.com/khas/perpecahan-dalam-tubuh-pks.html>.

⁴² Kristian Erdianto and Diamanty Meiliana, "Kisah Fahri Hamzah vs PKS, dari Pemecatan hingga Penolakan Kasasi", *kompas.com* (2018), <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/08/03/06340021/kisah-fahri-hamzah-vs-pks-dari-pemecatan-hingga-penolakan-kasasi?page=all>.

Their dismissals proved that PKS leadership had neglected its own organisational procedures. For Fahri, PKS preferred personal methods or manoeuvres in the name of the party.⁴³ Supporters of Anis Matta shared this view, so they focused their attention on Garbi, with most of them eventually joining the Gelora Party in 2019.⁴⁴

Based on the previous description, the mainstream group represented by the party elites preferred to exercise their power when confronting Anis Matta's group. The deliberation procedure was not evenly applied, thereby indicating a rigid leadership character. This uncompromising leadership caused difficulties in establishing effective communication between the two camps, which weakened party solidity. However, the mainstream group deemed the methods adopted by Sohibul Iman necessary to save party unity and solidarity in the face of those who had doubted its ideological orientation and manoeuvred against it. In addition, it was considered necessary to make an example regarding party discipline and the importance of regular rotations for all cadre members, as each must respect the decisions and duties of the party as ordered.

This case reveals a divergence from the standard procedures within the *Badan Penegak Disiplin Organisasi* (Organisational Disciplinary Enforcement Body, hereafter BPDO). While the BPDO process was used to dismiss Fahri and other Anis Matta supporters, its implementation deviated significantly. The BPDO appeared to function more as a tool for leadership, raising the potential for criticism. The situation highlights a breakdown in the immaculate execution of PKS's internal mechanisms as a cadre-based party, especially after the formation of the Garbi group.

In Fahri Hamzah's case, the role of BPDO became contentious, as PKS sought a quick resolution to a matter that had been dragged on for about a year. PKS's attitude towards Fahri was shaped by the view that, as a senior cadre, he should have demonstrated more "self-awareness" in following the Chairman of the *Majelis Syuro*'s direction and stepped down from his position. Fahri's refusal to do so is what ultimately led to his dismissal.

Nonetheless, Fahri capitalised on what he viewed as a "procedural flaw" exposing vulnerabilities in the dismissal process. Fahri successfully navigated the controversy by taking legal action outside of the party, using the court system to maintain his position as vice chairman of the parliament. Fahri ultimately won in court, securing his position until the

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Priohutomo, "Perubahan Faksionalisasi Partai".

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) end of his term.

2. *Breakdown of Communication*

The leadership patterns described above, which inspired such polemics, ultimately affected the quality of communication in PKS, especially among its elite circles. This led to each group becoming entrenched in its own views, eventually limiting their interactions with each other by maintaining rigid boundaries. Although, on several occasions, Anis Matta invited discussions and sought common ground with those who opposed his philosophy, the mainstream group did not accept any of his invitations. According to Anis Matta, Sohibul Iman's side was not open:

“I had invited parties within PKS who disagree with my ideas to discuss it at the *Bumi Wijaya* hotel for three days and two nights. During that time, no one attended the discussion; only those who came to monitor were present.”⁴⁵

With the deterioration of communication, Anis Matta created his own forum for discussion, which was informal and outside the official PKS forum.⁴⁶ According to some circles, Anis Matta no longer occupied a strategic position, making him reluctant to work from a PKS DPP Office. Anis Matta was more likely to be found in other places, conducting meetings and discussions with his loyalists.⁴⁷

For Sohibul Iman, though, it was Anis Matta who refused communication. According to him, PKS had been attempting to build a forum for dialogue with Anis Matta. In sum, PKS had gone so far as to accommodate Anis Matta's ideas through the party's shift to becoming an open party, especially in Eastern Indonesia. Since 2010, PKS has had representatives in Papua who are non-Muslims.⁴⁸

Moreover, dialogue had been difficult to sustain because their perspectives were diametrically opposed. For the mainstream group, the pragmatism of the New Indonesia Direction substantially deviated from the PKS spirit and would have obscured their identity. In addition, they viewed Anis Matta's philosophy as distorted because it ignored the principles of *da'wah* and idealism deeply rooted in PKS politics, potentially eroding party solidarity. Sohibul Iman confirmed this objection, stating

⁴⁵ Interview with Muhammad Anis Matta.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Priohutomo, “Perubahan Faksionalisasi Partai”.

⁴⁸ Interview with Mohamad Sohibul Iman.

that Anis Matta's ideas were not worthy of discussion within the party due to their highly controversial nature. He stated, "Such [an] idea should be an idea that can be initiated outside, but not from within the party. Please don't discuss that when inside [the party]."⁴⁹

The way Anis Matta's group disseminated new ideas to PKS cadres outside the party's official forums was also viewed as problematic. According to Sohibul Iman,⁵⁰ cadre members should only adopt any ideas through the official PKS forum. Doing otherwise is thought to spread rumours that could disrupt the party's internal stability. This practice is also regarded as violating standard procedures, with the potential for treason. Indeed, some cadre members who joined Anis Matta suggested that he deliberately attempted to take control of the PKS cadre to support his movement.

Conversely, Anis Matta explained that his reason for going outside official forums was that PKS did not open space to discuss his ideas at all. Even when he was invited to discuss his ideas, no cadre members from the mainstream group attended.⁵¹ PKS's attitude regarding the conflict was also inconsistent. On the one hand, the mainstream group did not allow the idea to be discussed within the party, as confirmed by Imam. However, Anis Matta's manoeuvre to hold dialogues and discussions outside party channels was seen as a violation.

The communication breakdown occurred because the new leadership refused to make space for ideological differences in favour of maintaining party integrity, a move that ultimately weakened party stability, particularly at the elite level. This leadership style ultimately affected interactions between the two factions. In the end, both justified their own stance while accusing the other of violating party regulations. This led to a crisis of confidence at the elite level and among supporters, leading to further factionalisation and the growth of Garbi.

E. Cadre-ization: Weakening Control and Conflict Resolution

PKS cadrerization is based on the belief that, as a *da'wah* party, PKS must have cadre members who are aware of and highly committed to enforcing the mission of Islamic *da'wah*. This focus has led PKS's

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Interview with Muhammad Anis Matta.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) cadrerization system to be considered the best in Indonesia.⁵² The basic process of cadrerization involves instructing each cadre member in basic materials to be evaluated. There are two models of cadrerization: structural and non-structural (informal) cadrerization. Structural cadrerization is aimed at cadre members within the party structure. This type of cadrerization is for official party members and is carried out under party supervision to ensure it aligns with PKS political agendas. Non-structural cadrerization is performed in *halaqah*, focusing on the basic values of the *da'wah* movement that serve as the foundation of party teachings.

Halaqah is more than a meeting; it represents an institution that forms a strong bond and a feeling of kinship. However, not all of those involved in *halaqah* are interested in or committed to politics. Therefore, not all *halaqah* members officially join the party. Those who do not join the PKS structure generally remain party sympathisers, as they hold the view that only PKS can properly implement Islamic values.

One aspect unique to PKS' practice of cadrerization is the focus on two primary figures, the *murabbi* (teacher) and *mutarabbi* (student). The quality of party cadrerization is influenced by relational patterns between them. For example, Hilmi Aminuddin, Abu Ridho, and Salim Segaf were *murabbis* for many cadres who now hold positions in both PKS management and public positions.

Although PKS cadrerization is well established,⁵³ it does not always meet the set standard. While generally consistent in its implementation, the cadrerization process can sometimes be more fluid or inconsistent. This inconsistency was relatively under control in the party's early years, considering that the number of cadre members remained small. Over time, this situation became more difficult to control, leading to repercussions.

The quality of *murabbi–mutarabbi* relationships has been negatively affected, with inconsistencies causing a pattern of declining relationships compared to previous eras. The same can be observed in the relationships among *mutarabbi*, which are not as solid as before. These relationships have become more burdened with pragmatic interests. As a result, the migration of cadres out of the *tarbiyah* movement had become more common. Similarly, the party struggles to exert ideological control over

⁵² Dirk Tomsa, *Political Parties and Democratization in Indonesia, Golkar in the Post Soeharto Era* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁵³ Noor, *Perpecahan dan Soliditas Partai Islam*.

groups with critical views, an issue that has emerged both at the level of ordinary cadres and among elites. For example, Fachri Hamzah's defiance of Salim Segaf Aljufri reflects the increasingly fluid relationship between *murabbi* and *mutarabbi*.

This phenomenon suggests that previously close relationships are increasingly prone to conflict. According to Coser,⁵⁴ such closeness can heighten conflicts' potential and intensity when they occur. Following Coser's perspective, it is clear that the escalation of regrouping in PKS is precisely due to the close relationship between party elites and cadre members who were nurtured in an unfortunately inconsistent practice of *halaqah*. Two key outcomes of these inconsistent situations and the breakdown of *murabbi-mutarabbi* relations are the rise of the Garbi movement, started by Anis Matta, and the inevitable dissatisfaction it generated.

1. *Weakening Bonds and the Proliferation of New Ideas*

The first consequence of the issues described above is that some *mutarabbis* gained the freedom to develop their own ideas, often with a progressive point of view. Their involvement in intellectual networks beyond the party or their experience in practical politics influenced their perspectives on political strategy or attitudes, though their perspectives have been criticised as overly pragmatic.⁵⁵

Several figures in the Garbi movement, such as Anis Matta, Fahri Hamzah, Mahfudz Siddiq, and Triwisaksana, who belong to the third or fourth generation of the Tarbiyah Movement were critical *mutarabbis* who are considered the driving force behind change-oriented groups within PKS. However, over time, these figures also became *murabbis* for many *mutarabbis* in their *halaqah* networks. In this role, they had an opportunity to introduce innovative concepts and attract the attention or support of the established *halaqah* networks. That strategic position allowed this critical group to gain followers. Mahmudi added:

“It is inevitable that when the leader withdraws [to join the Garbi], he will bring with him a troupe of followers. There is indeed turbulence. Some do want [it], some others don't. Some directly consider joining [Garbi]. Those who immediately joined were just following the *murabbi* who had

⁵⁴ Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict: An Examination of the Concept of Social Conflict and its Use in Empirical Sociological Research* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1956).

⁵⁵ Interview with Mohamad Sohibul Iman.

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already joined, without considering what kind of concurrence they were about to enter.”⁵⁶

Some mutarabbis who joined Garbi rejected them in their foster camps as well. They were cadre members who felt that the murabbis who joined Garbi no longer embodied the worldview and values of PKS. However, other mutarabbis were eager to follow their murabbis, believing them to be trustworthy teachers. This led to strengthening their shared ideas, vision, and mission, as well as deeper personal relationships. This dynamic fueled the pattern of socialisation, or even indoctrination, of those critical of the party to develop even more vigorously critical attitudes, resulting in a large number of loyalists.

A new direction emerged from this network. Anis Matta and other Garbi elites offered a fresh viewpoint on ideology, political conceptions, and practical strategies. Some elites who were previously barred from mainstream groups became new patrons in Anis Matta’s network. This shift created an opportunity for the proliferation of groups with opposing viewpoints, particularly within *halaqah* led by figures sympathetic to critical movements.

In the end, instead of fostering party solidity, the *halaqah* that had served as a vital instrument of the cadrerization process turned into a platform for critical party figures to indoctrinate others in their shared ideology.⁵⁷ *Halaqah* eventually also served as the basis for channelling disappointments toward the party’s leadership model. It also served as a platform for exchanging information and highlighting flaws in the current leadership, now framed as a common enemy, further strengthening the opposition.

In response to this situation, the mainstream group adopted similar behaviour by using its *halaqah* to respond to negative issues against the leadership and disseminate negative information concerning Garbi’s supporters. The group was also able to build a loyal and militant following. At this point, it was increasingly apparent that the existence of *halaqah* was fueling the factionalisation between the Anis Matta group and the mainstream group.

⁵⁶ Interview with Yon Mahmudi (Depok, 17 November 2021).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

2. *Unavoidable Dissatisfaction*

Problems in cadrerization hindered the *balaqah* from acting as a reliable tool for party's internal conflict management. Previously, *balaqah* had been one of the most effective conflict resolution units in PKS. When a cadre member experienced anxiety or frustration, it was immediately addressed with the help of the *murabbi*.⁵⁸ This prevented potential conflicts from escalating or spreading throughout the party.

The role of *balaqah* in cadre development resulted in the resolution of many conflicts in the PKS without involving high-ranking members of the party. The party would only play an active role if the conflict could not be resolved at the *balaqah* level. With this mechanism, PKS was relatively successful in managing conflicts for over a decade. However, with the deteriorating conditions of cadrerization, the ability of *balaqah* to successfully reduce conduct also diminished. As a result, complaints or anxieties among the members of the cadre could not be comprehensively resolved. In the context of Garbi's emergence, the unaddressed dissatisfaction of some cadre members led them to support the resistance movement or attitude.

This situation created mutual distrust. On the one hand, the mainstream ruling group saw the emergence and growth of a critical faction within the party as further complicating a tense situation. Cadre members' support for this group was also widespread. As a result, PKS finally unilaterally dismissed several cadres who were considered disloyal.⁵⁹

On the other hand, at the mainstream group's *balaqah* level, justifications were disseminated to limit the influence of Garbi's leaders, supporters, and sympathisers. *Halaqah* eventually became a medium of socialisation directed at curbing the growth of the pro-Garbi group while also strengthening the mainstream faction's ideas, visions, and interests. *Mutarabbis* who rejected this idea or who were seen as disagreeing with the leadership were automatically eliminated from the party ranks.

In response, the pro-Garbi group fought back by continuously criticising and exposing the darker side of the mainstream leadership. This group rejected party policies and even took legal action in the case of Fahri Hamzah's dismissal, discussed above. This group continued to use its *balaqah* network to spread the message that their exclusion resulted from their voices and aspirations being ignored, especially under the leadership of Sohibil Iman. This group also justified its stance and

⁵⁸ Noor, *Perpecahan dan Soliditas Partai*.

⁵⁹ Interview with Muhammad Anis Matta.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) continued existence through these networks.

As the situation developed, party elites who supported Garbi often held special meetings to broaden the party's political horizon based on the idea of the New Indonesian Direction. They also openly attempted to strengthen the group's cohesion while apparently being monitored by the mainstream faction, even up to the announcement of Anis Matta's presidential candidacy for PKS. This situation finally brought party factionalisation to a breaking point because Anis Matta's vision of renewal and openness gained wide support and was accommodated at the *halaqah* level.⁶⁰

F. The Decline of Garbi and the Rise of the Gelora Party

Although Garbi's presence was the result of intense factionalisation inside PKS, its formation did not stem from a movement to create a new political party. Our argument is based on evidence that shows Garbi's emergence as a reaction to dynamics in PKS and an internal platform for Anis Mata and his adherents, who held different views from mainstream PKS leaders. However, during its formation, those who became involved in Garbi faced significant pressure from PKS. For instance, PKS forced Garbi members to sign a statement of devotion to the party. Those who refused to sign were considered disloyal, and their party membership would be revoked.⁶¹

This pressure persisted and eventually became severe, including the firing of prominent cadres. Fahri Hamzah was one of them, which worsened tensions related to factionalisation. Hardianto's study⁶² found that the pressure placed on Garbi members caused anxiety, frustration, and discomfort. This became the driving factor for Garbi to leave PKS and find a new political party.

In addition to internal pressure, another reason Garbi split from PKS is inextricably linked to the ideas of Garbi's leader, Anis Matta. His views concerning Indonesia's third wave required the implementation of a new platform.⁶³ According to Anis Matta, PKS could no longer accommodate his viewpoint because the party was still engaged with so-called exclusionary Islamic idealism and struggle. Anis wanted to free

⁶⁰ Interview with Yon Mahmudi.

⁶¹ Priohutomo, "Perubahan Faksionalisasi Partai".

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Matta, *Gelombang Ketiga Indonesia*.

the party from religious issues since he believed that was exclusionary.⁶⁴ The confluence of pressure from within PKS and Anis Matta's own ambitions accelerated Garbi's metamorphosis into a political party: the Gelora Party. The formation of the Gelora Party cannot be separated from the active participation of the figures who created Garbi, especially Anis Matta, Fahri Hamzah, and Mahfudz Shiddiq. These three figures worked with several national figures to establish the Gelora Party, which officially launched on 28 October 2019.

In sum, the emergence of Garbi was the result of factionalisation within PKS, without the intention of becoming a political party. However, Garbi eventually disbanded when its supporters pushed for the immediate creation of a political party due to increasing factionalisation. Garbi's transformation into a political party largely stemmed from its members' decision to leave PKS in response to the escalating tensions and pressure they faced. In other words, Garbi served as a stepping stone for PKS cadres who disagreed with the party's leadership, ultimately leading to the formation of the Gelora Party.

G. Concluding Remarks

The findings of this study indicate that the increase in factionalism in PKS was the catalyst for the emergence of Garbi and its eventual transformation into the Gelora Party. Through factionalisation, a number of interrelated factors influenced Garbi's rise. This study further indicates that the causes of factionalisation in political parties should be investigated using multifactorial rather than single-factor analysis.

In the case of factionalisation in PKS prior to the creation of Garbi, the first factor was differing interpretations of party philosophy, which led to disagreements over the party's political orientation and strategy. The second factor was the incapacity of party leaders and elites to decrease factionalisation by reaching a compromise between opposing factions. This shortcoming manifested itself in a variety of ways, ranging from a lack of communication, which led to prejudices between contending elites, to the systematic elimination of elites who held divergent views.

The third factor was the absence of effective conflict resolution mechanisms. However, the findings of this study challenge that idea. PKS does have a conflict prevention system in the form of *halaqah*, a structured regeneration program that creates strong, familial ties among

⁶⁴ Interview with Muhammad Anis Matta.

Factionalisation in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) its cadres. However, our findings revealed that *halaqah*, as one of the regeneration mechanisms, also served as a conduit for triggering and spreading factionalism leading up to Garbi's development. The close relationship between the *murrabi* and *muttarabi* fostered in-group loyalty that did not lead to the resolution of conflicts during factional disputes. *Halaqah*, meant to function as a medium that unites and solidifies all cadres, became a medium for reinforcing factions within the party cadre.

As a result, this study adds to the analytical model of factionalisation by taking a multifactorial approach based on its findings. Furthermore, this study offers a theoretical proposition that party regeneration, which is meant to be a tool for resolving disputes and preventing factionalisation, can paradoxically contribute to and even perpetuate factionalisation.

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