

RIDING TO PARADISE Pop-Islamism and Muslim Biker Movement in Central Java

Muhammad Rosyid* and Syamsul Rijal**

*Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

**Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia and Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Jakarta, Indonesia

email: syamsul.rijal@uiii.ac.id

Abstract

This article examines the rise of the Muslim biker movement in Indonesia through an ethnographic case study of Bikers Sububan (BS), a motorcycle-based community that promotes congregational dawn (Subuh) prayers. Over the past eight years, BS has expanded to 108 chapters across Indonesian cities, driven by interpersonal networks, ritualised rides such as the Safar Ride, and intensive social media engagement. Drawing on Dominik Müller's concept of Pop-Islamism, which theorizes the integration of Islamist ideas into popular culture, the study analyzes how BS blends religious piety with lifestyle appeal to mobilize urban Muslim youth. Based on six months of fieldwork in Solo, Central Java, including participant observation, digital ethnography, and interviews, the article argues that BS operates less as a hobbyist club and more as an Islamist movement leveraging motorcycle culture for ideological outreach. While it maintains a public image of casual community engagement, it internally circulates Islamist discourses, including support for Islamic law and the establishment of an Islamic state. The study contributes to scholarship on Islamic activism by showing how leisure-based practices function as vehicles



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

© 2025
M. Rosyid; S. Rijal

al-jāmi'ah
JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

ISSN: 0126-012X (p); 2338-557X (e)

Al-Jami'ah Research Centre, Yogyakarta- Indonesia
<https://aljamiah.or.id>

for religious and ideological mobilization.

[Artikel ini mengkaji kemunculan gerakan biker Muslim di Indonesia melalui studi etnografis terhadap Bikers Subuhan (BS), sebuah komunitas pengendara motor yang mempromosikan salat Subuh berjemaah di masjid. Selama delapan tahun terakhir, BS telah berkembang menjadi 108 cabang di berbagai kota di Indonesia, dengan pertumbuhan yang didorong oleh jejaring antarpribadi, kegiatan touring ritual seperti Safar Ride, dan keterlibatan aktif di media sosial. Menggunakan konsep Pop-Islamisme dari Dominik Müller, yang menyoroti integrasi gagasan Islamisme ke dalam budaya populer, studi ini menganalisis bagaimana BS memadukan kesalehan religius dengan gaya hidup untuk menarik dan menggerakkan pemuda Muslim urban. Berdasarkan penelitian lapangan selama enam bulan di Solo, Jawa Tengah, yang mencakup observasi partisipatif, etnografi digital, dan wawancara, artikel ini berargumen bahwa BS lebih berperan sebagai gerakan Islamis daripada sekadar klub hobi, dengan memanfaatkan budaya motor sebagai sarana penyebaran ideologi. Meskipun menampilkan citra publik sebagai komunitas santai dan inklusif, BS secara internal menyebarkan wacana Islamis, termasuk dukungan terhadap bukum Islam dan negara Islam. Studi ini berkontribusi pada kajian aktivisme Islam dengan menunjukkan bagaimana praktik berbasis hiburan dan gaya hidup dapat menjadi wahana mobilisasi keagamaan dan ideologis.]

Keywords: *hijrah* movement, Pop-Islamism, invisible doctrines, Bikers Subuhan.

A. Introduction

Over the past decade, Islamic activism has gained renewed visibility in Indonesia, particularly through movements that emphasize self-transformation and the pursuit of piety.¹ Among the most prominent are *hijrah* communities, which have grown steadily and now adopt diverse ideological forms. Their emergence poses a notable challenge to the longstanding influence of traditional Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. These groups have introduced innovative and appealing religious initiatives that increasingly compete with the authority and outreach of established institutions.

¹ Syamsul Rijal, "Pursuing *Hijrah* to Salafi Path: Urban Muslim Youth and the Quest for Self-Transformation in Indonesia", *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 19, no.1 (2025), pp. 101-21.

Through expanding networks and media-savvy strategies, *hijrah* actors are constructing new spheres of religious authority, signaling a broader shift in the landscape of Indonesian Islam.

More than merely a cultural or religious trend, the *hijrah* movement is closely tied to broader Islamist currents that call for a return to what is perceived as a purer and more orthodox Islam. Its growing appeal has grown largely through its capacity to engage diverse audiences, particularly via the strategic use of popular culture, digital media, and personalized outreach. By blending modern sensibilities with religious practice, the movement presents an accessible and resonant model of piety for many urban Muslims.² According to the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM), this phenomenon has gained significant momentum alongside the broader rise of religious conservatism in Indonesia, marking an important shift in the country's religious and sociopolitical dynamics.³

The term *hijrah*, traditionally signifying “migration,” has shifted in contemporary usage to denote a spiritual transformation from a less devout lifestyle to one more closely aligned with Islamic principles. Central to the doctrine of the *hijrah* movement is the promise of a meaningful life, culminating in the ultimate reward of paradise.⁴ One notable example is Bikers Subuhan (BS), a community of motorcycle enthusiasts dedicated to promoting dawn (*Subuh*) congregational prayers. Established in Lampung in 2017 by three motorcycle clubs: MACI (Montor Antik Club Indonesia, Indonesian Antique Motorcycle Club), Rider Lampung, and Mad Elephant Motor Club. BS emerged in response to concerns over destructive behaviors such as drug use and aimless loitering.⁵ The movement seeks to reframe motorcycle culture through an Islamic lens, offering early-morning prayer gatherings as an alternative to

² W. P. Utomo and R. Noormega, “Indonesia Millennial Report 2020,” *IDN Research Institute*, no. 1 (2020), p. 54.

³ PPIM, “Tren Keberagaman Gerakan Hijrah Kontemporer” (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM), 2021), pp. 1–2.

⁴ Élise Imray Papineau, “Hey! Ho! Let's Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety in Java, Indonesia”, Master Thesis (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2019), p. 108.

⁵ Interview with Farhan (*anwalun* of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 18 March 2023. It should be noted that all names in this paper are pseudonyms. *Anwalun* is an Arabic term meaning “the first one”, it refers to the first generation of pioneers who initiated the establishment of Bikers Subuhan in a particular locality. Within the organizational culture of the movement, the *anwalun* possess symbolic and moral authority derived from their role as founders and early mobilizers, and they function as key figures in the diffusion and decentralization of the movement into new local chapters.

the late-night activities that had previously characterized the community.⁶ As of 2023, BS has grown into a network of at least 108 groups across Indonesia and abroad, including in Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore.⁷ It embraces an inclusive approach with no formal entry requirements, which has facilitated its rapid expansion. In Solo, Central Java, an area associated with both Islamic conservatism and historical religious tension, BS has established several chapters, with Klaten, Sukoharjo, Karanganyar, and Boyolali remaining active after the pandemic.⁸

This research focuses on the Bikers Subuhan (BS) movement in Solo, Central Java, a city widely recognized as a stronghold for various Islamic radical groups where Islamist ideologies remain both pervasive and influential. Two primary reasons underlie the selection of Solo as the research site. First, Solo has a documented history of hosting vigilante organizations, and some scholars have identified the city as a breeding ground for terrorism.⁹ As a result, the pattern of Islamization in Solo is both consistent and expansive. Second, the majority of the city's Muslim population historically adhered to the *abangan* tradition and experienced a tumultuous past marked by political, social, and religious conflict. Consequently, a softer, more culturally appealing approach, such as that offered by the BS movement, has found increased resonance among Solonese youth.

This study investigates the BS movement with particular attention to its propagation of a covert or 'invisible doctrine'. This term refers to the implicit dissemination of Islamist ideologies as a strategic response to state repression. These doctrines are subtly embedded in sermons

⁶ Interview with Warno (awwalun of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 25 February 2023.

⁷ Interview with Ahmad (*murabbi* of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 18 February 2023. *Murabbi* refers to a religious mentor responsible for ideological and spiritual guidance performed by his pupils, a role rooted in the pedagogical tradition of the Tarbiyah movement. Unlike the neutral term "advisor", *murabbi* denotes a morally charged relationship of religious cultivation (*tarbiyah*) and authority. The authors retain the original terms *awwalun* and *murabbi* rather than translating them as "pioneers" or "advisors" in order to preserve their emic meanings within the pedagogical tradition of the Tarbiyah movement, where these roles denote not merely functional positions but morally and spiritually charged relations of guidance and authority embedded in a decentralized cell-based structure.

⁸ Interview with Zaenal (*awwalun* of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo), 19 March 2023.

⁹ Muhammad Wildan, "Youth Radical Islamism in Solo as Manifested by Front Pemuda Islam", *Socio-Politic*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2018), p. 90; Taufik Nugroho et al., "Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School Ngruki Sukoharjo, The Misunderstood Islamic School", *Jurnal Nuansa Akademik*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2022), p. 204.

and narratives shared within closed group settings, eventually becoming internalized by community members. This process aligns with Berger's concept of 'social influence', whereby individual behaviors and beliefs are shaped by their immediate social environment.¹⁰ As a case study, this research explores how Solo's urban and sociopolitical landscape enables the diffusion of Islamist ideology. It poses three central questions: What drives the spread of BS in Indonesia? How has the movement evolved in Central Java? How do members internalize and enact implicit doctrinal messages as tools for self and social transformation?

This study refers to Dominik Müller's concept of Pop-Islamism, which explains how Islamist ideas are accommodated, mediated, and articulated through diverse forms, aesthetics, and practices of popular culture. By embedding Islamic symbols, values, and discourses into lifestyle practices such as pious rock music, fashion, sports, and digital media, Pop-Islamism enables Islamist messages to resonate with wider audiences by softening their ideological edges and presenting them as natural, enjoyable, and attractive.¹¹ Within this framework, the Bikers Subuhan movement can be interpreted as an instance in which religious piety is bonded with motorcycle culture, ritual riding practices, and the strategic use of social media, thereby allowing Islamist discourses to circulate in disguised or hybridized forms through everyday leisure activities and communal belonging.

This research is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Solo throughout 2023, combining participant observation, semi-structured interviews, digital ethnography, and supplementary online questionnaires. Field observations were carried out by attending weekly Safar Ride, Islamic study sessions (*pengajian*), annual *Milad* celebrations, and collaborative events with other communities, which provided insights into both the devotional and lifestyle dimensions of the movement. Digital ethnography was conducted through systematic monitoring of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp private groups, which constitutes a crucial space for the circulation of narratives dissemination and cultivation of collective identity. A total of

¹⁰ Jonah Berger, *Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior* (Simon & Schuster, 2016), pp. 114–6.

¹¹ Dominik Müller, "Post-Islamism or Pop-Islamism? Ethnographic Observations of Muslim Youth Politics in Malaysia", *Paideuma*, vol. 59 (2013), pp. 261–84; Dominik Müller, *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

23 individuals were interviewed to capture perspectives across different roles: two members of Bikers Subuhan Klaten (BSK), eleven members of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo (BSS), two mosque caretakers (*takmir*), three *murabbi* (advisors), four *amwalun* (founders), and one DPRD staff member affiliated with the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). The interviews ranged from informal conversations to semi-structured discussions, while online questionnaires were employed to supplement data on members' motivations and levels of involvement. The collected materials were analyzed using thematic coding and triangulated across sources to ensure analytical validity.

This paper argues that, despite its culturally accommodating use of motorcycle subculture, BS continues to circulate Islamist narratives, such as calls to awaken the *ummah*, support for Islamic political parties, and advocacy for the implementation of Islamic law, including aspirations toward an Islamic state. However, these messages are primarily articulated within closed internal circles, indicating that Islamist ideology persists not through overt mobilization but through subtle forms of socialization embedded in communal practices. This article proceeds in four parts. First, it traces the emergence of the *hijrah* movement in Indonesia and its fusion of religious devotion with elements of popular culture. Second, it examines the development of BS as one of the most expansive *hijrah* communities, with over 100 chapters across the country, focusing on the context of Solo. Third, it analyzes how BS members conceptualize *hijrah*, not merely as behavioral transformation but as fostering exclusivist attitudes toward outsiders. Finally, the article investigates the direction of the BS movement and the mechanisms through which it disseminates its so-called “invisible doctrines” to its members.

B. Embracing Faith and Fun: The Emergence of the *Hijrah* Movements in Indonesia

In recent decades, Islam has become increasingly visible and actively articulated in the public sphere, especially in Indonesia. Since the wave of Islamic revivalism in the mid-1970s, Muslims have become more confident in expressing their religious identity publicly. This shift has expanded Muslim participation in political discourse, economic activity, and socio-cultural life, all grounded in Islamic values.¹² In Indonesia, this

¹² Noorhaidi Hasan, “The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere”, *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 3, no. 3 (2009), p. 229.

revival is evident in the widespread use of religious symbols, the growth of Islamic educational institutions, and the emergence of new Islamic lifestyles, often associated with Arabization.

The collapse of Suharto's regime in 1998 catalyzed the rise of various Islamic movements. One notable trend has been the increasing demand for the implementation of Islamic law across different regions of Indonesia, signalling the depth of the revival.¹³ The success of the "Bela Islam" (Defending Islam) rallies in 2016–2017 further underscores the enduring strength of Islamism in the country. These events reflect the growing influence of new Islamic movements and alternative religious authorities, which now compete with established institutions such as NU and Muhammadiyah for the allegiance of Indonesian Muslims.¹⁴ Beyond politics, external forces, particularly the accelerating currents of modernization and globalization, have disrupted long-standing notions of religious authority. As Fealy and White argue, one of the major effects of modernization has been the emergence and consolidation of a Muslim middle class.¹⁵ This segment of society has become a key driver of Islamic revival, envisioning Islam as a potent force for societal transformation. Through the formation of dynamic networks that transcend social backgrounds, this middle class has cultivated a sense of collective identity and belonging. Consequently, the discourse of Islamic revival has vibrated across social and political domains, offering new paths for religious and social mobility.¹⁶

A defining feature of this revivalist discourse is the growing number of Muslims, particularly youth, who seek to integrate religious teachings into all aspects of everyday life. While young people are often seen as key agents of political and cultural change, they are also portrayed as

¹³ Martin van Bruinessen, "Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the 'Conservative Turn' of the Early Twenty-First Century", *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"*, ed. by Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013), p. 2.

¹⁴ Wai Weng Hew, "The Art of Dakwah: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siauw", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 46, no. 134 (2018), p. 75; Alexander R. Arifianto, "Rising Islamism and the Struggle for Islamic Authority in Post-Reformasi Indonesia," *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2020), pp. 1–3.

¹⁵ Greg Fealy and Sally White, "Introduction", in *Expressing Islam Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. by Greg Fealy and Sally White (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), p. 4.

¹⁶ Hasan, "The Making of Public Islam", p. 231.

vulnerable to radical ideologies and social instability.¹⁷ Islamist groups, in particular, recognize the strategic importance of youth and often promote anti-fun rhetoric as a means of cultivating disciplined, militant, and devout followers. This anti-fun ethos has encouraged some Muslim youth to oppose behaviors and activities perceived as inconsistent with Islamic principles. Historical manifestations of this attitude can be found in the 1980s, when Islamist student movements in Egypt disrupted concerts, theatrical performances, and other forms of entertainment. These students publicly condemned peers who engaged in mixed-gender socializing or pursued recreational pleasures. They also imposed bans on films, dancing, and both classical and popular music, viewing such expressions as cultural threats and moral deviations. Likewise, in Saudi Arabia, fun and leisure are tightly regulated by the state under the guise of promoting morality and piety. In such contexts, personal behaviors and individual morality, traditionally considered private matters, are reframed as public concerns subject to communal or state control.¹⁸

Drawing on Bayat's concept of the "politics of fun," the rejection of leisure by Islamist actors should therefore be understood not merely as a reflection of scriptural orders, but as a political strategy aimed at disciplining bodies, controlling public space, and maintaining ideological authority. Fun and pleasure are considered as potentially subversive because they cultivate spontaneity, autonomy, and social interaction beyond the reach of doctrinal supervision.¹⁹ In conservative Islamist discourse, these practices are commonly characterized as profane and lacking spiritual significance, understood to distract believers from religious commitments and to weaken collective discipline and cohesion.

However, in contrast to earlier Islamist groups that promoted a rigid anti-fun ethos, many contemporary Islamic movements, particularly those associated with the *hijrah* trend in Indonesia, have adopted a different cultural strategy. Rather than rejecting popular culture and fun activities, these movements selectively appropriate and islamize them in order to attract sympathy, participation, and emotional attachment, especially among Muslim youth. These movements attempt to harmonize religious

¹⁷ Asef Bayat, *Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 3,

¹⁸ Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (California: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 435–6.

¹⁹ Asef Bayat, "Islamism and the Politics of Fun," *Public Culture*, vol. 19, no. 3 (2007), pp. 455–9.

faith with elements of popular trends, positioning this convergence as a central orientation of their outreach.

The Hijrah movements in Indonesia exemplify how Islamic expression can be embedded within popular cultural practices. Using personalized approaches that center on youth interests, *hijrah* communities aim to demonstrate that being devout and being modern are not mutually exclusive. This synthesis fosters a dual identity in which religious piety and youthful self-expression reinforce one another. The growing visibility and popularity of the Hijrah movement illustrates Islam's adaptability to contemporary cultural contexts, allowing Muslims to remain faithful while engaging in modern lifestyles. Groups such as *Sahabat Hijrah* (the Companion of Hijrah) employ fun as a vehicle to cultivate a strong sense of community and deepen religious commitment.²⁰ Similarly, *Jaga Sesama Solo*, a *hijrah* community based in Solo, has successfully attracted local Muslim youth by integrating activities such as futsal, archery, and swimming into their religious programs.²¹ BS also exemplifies this hybrid model, combining elements of piety with popular culture. Through activities like motorcycle riding, swimming, hiking, and archery, the group not only fosters shared recreational interests but also promotes a sense of spiritual unity, conceptualized as *ummatan wāhīdan* (a united Muslim community).

Although the *hijrah* movement is often commended for encouraging individual religious renewal and offering lifestyle alternatives grounded in Islamic values, it is not without its critiques. Scholars and observers have raised concerns about its tendency to cultivate exclusivist attitudes and reinforce conservative religious orientations. Its dynamic, youth-driven character enables the movement to rival long-established Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. The emergence of *hijrah* marks a broader shift in Indonesian Islam, where religious practice increasingly takes the form of lifestyle expression. Characterized by unconventional *da'wah* strategies that merge Islamic morality with elements of popular culture, the movement's flexibility and aesthetic appeal have significantly contributed to its rapid growth

²⁰ Dony Arung Triantoro and M. Alam Zumiraj, "Dakwah, Kesenangan, dan Sense of Community: Sahabat Hijrah Pekanbaru", *Harmoni*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2021), p. 32.

²¹ Abraham Zakky Zuhazmi and Erma Priyanti, "Eksistensi Komunitas Hijrah dan Dakwah Masa Kini: Studi Komunitas Jaga Sesama Solo", *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, vol. 40, no. 2 (2020), p. 174.

and resonance among urban Muslim audiences.²² It is crucial, however, to note that the *hijrah* movement's focus on personal piety does not preclude the possibility that some factions within it may promote or align with Islamist ideologies. While not all *hijrah* communities espouse political Islam, some appear to slightly support or disseminate Islamist messages through cultural and social initiatives. For this reason, greater engagement and oversight are necessary to ensure that the movement does not become a conduit for exclusivist or radical agendas.

The growing popularity of the *hijrah* movement has attracted scholarly attention because of its potential intersections with conservative and Islamist discourses. Research on religious mobilization in Indonesia has shown that youth-based Islamic networks can become significant social and political resources, especially in periods of electoral competition and moral polarization.²³ In this sense, the relationships between *hijrah*-oriented communities and state institutions can be examined as part of a broader process through which religious actors negotiate legitimacy, visibility, and influence in the public sphere. The presence of diverse and sometimes competing currents within the *hijrah* movement also indicates that religious enthusiasm among urban youth may be articulated in multiple directions, ranging from civic engagement and social solidarity to more exclusivist forms of identity politics. Exploring these interactions therefore helps to illuminate the conditions under which religious activism is incorporated into, or distanced from, broader projects of pluralism and democratic governance in contemporary Indonesia.

C. BS in Central Java: Promoting Reward and Commercializing Piety

BS, or the Dawn Prayer Bikers, is a movement of motorcycle enthusiasts who have ritualized the merging of religious devotion and personal passion through riding.²⁴ The group asserted that, by mid-2023, it had expanded to 108 local chapters across Indonesia and Southeast

²² Hadri Hasan, "Contemporary Religious Movement in Indonesia: A Study of Hijrah Festival in Jakarta in 2018", *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2019), pp. 230–65.

²³ For instance, Punk Muslim Surabaya participated in the prosecution of the Ahok case in 2016; see Hikmawan Saefullah, "Nevermind the Jahiliyyah, Here's the Hijrahs': Punk and the Religious Turn in the Contemporary Indonesian Underground Scene," *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 6, no. 2 (2017), p. 275.

²⁴ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Pious Bikies", *Inside Indonesia* (19 December 2019), <https://www.insideindonesia.org/pious-bikies>.

Asia, with branches in Brunei, Singapore, and Malaysia. Due to its scale and organizational dynamics, this study categorizes BS not merely as a community, but as a movement.²⁵ Drawing from Schwab's conception of Islamic movements, BS exemplifies a group united not only by religious ideology but also by a shared sense of community and collective purpose.²⁶ The movement articulates several core missions: adherence to Allah's commands, especially performing the Subuh prayer in congregation; fostering relationships (*silaturahmi*) with local communities; promoting the image of a pious Muslim biker; connecting Muslim bikers across regions; and increasing Subuh attendance to levels comparable with Friday prayers.²⁷ Its motto, "*hijrah tanpa syarat, asal mau shalat*" (unconditional *hijrah*, as long as one is willing to pray), captures its inclusive yet faith-centered approach. Membership is open regardless of motorcycle type or brand, and while there are no age restrictions, the group is largely comprised of youth and young adults.

BS avoids a formal organizational structure in favor of collective leadership. They promote the principle "all members are leaders" (*semua anggota adalah ketua*), drawing inspiration from a hadith emphasizing individual responsibility in leadership. Founders, referred to as *anwalun*, oversee the movement, and while certain members manage specific roles (*e.g.*, treasurer), the movement remains largely decentralized. This informal and flexible structure distinguishes BS from more hierarchical *hijrah* movements and facilitates the rapid establishment of new branches. However, this fluidity also presents risks: local leaders/founders (*anwalun*) may guide their chapters in divergent or unclear ideological directions, making the movement susceptible to co-optation.²⁸ BS finances its activities through various means, including fundraising during Safar Ride

²⁵ Interview with Ahmad (*murabbi* of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 18 February 2023.

²⁶ Wendell Schwab, "Islam, Fun, and Social Capital in Kazakhstan" *Central Asian Affairs*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2015), p. 51.

²⁷ Interview with Untung (member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 11 February 2023.

²⁸ The authors had the opportunity to attend the fifth anniversary (*Milad*) celebration of Bikers Subuhan on 18 February 18 2023, in Klaten. During the event, a member originally from Medan, who was currently studying at an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) in Solo, expressed his intention to establish a Bikers Subuhan chapter in Medan upon completing his studies. This story illustrates how easily Bikers Subuhan communities can be established in different regions. The relative ease with which new chapters are formed is one of the key factors contributing to the movement's rapid proliferation across various parts of Indonesia.

events,²⁹ public donations, and merchandise sales (e.g., T-shirts, prayer caps under the “Kopling” initiative). These funds support pro-Palestinian causes, mosque construction, relief efforts for natural disasters, charity for children and elderly congregation as well as operational needs.³⁰ In practice, BS replicates pre-Hijrah fun activities while integrating them with Islamic values, providing members with a mediated “middle way” that allows for the simultaneous pursuit of piety and leisure. Islamic symbolism is also embedded in the group’s branding, for instance, the use of Arabic-script logos, which serves to articulate and reinforce a religiously-infused biker identity.³¹

Across Indonesia, BS branches share a core agenda, including obligatory activities such as weekly Safar Rides during Subuh, mosque-cleaning initiatives, and Qur’an recitation sessions often held in informal settings like cafés. These are creatively branded according to local culture, such as *Ngelupis* (BS Jogja), *Jumanji* (BS Bandung), *Makar* (BS Manado), *Dugeman* (BS Sukoharjo), and *Ngamalke* (BS Klaten).³² Additional recreational programs include archery, swimming, camping, horse riding, and hiking, combining fun with religious fellowship. The presence of BS has been positively received by the local community, including mosque caretakers (*takmir*). Their activities, particularly Safar Rides, are seen as addressing gaps in Islamic teaching in areas historically dominated by *abangan* practices. Safar Rides serve not only as occasions for devotional and social engagement but also as strategic platforms for *da’wah* and recruitment. By combining religious performance, social interaction, leisure and small-scale socio-economic assistance in a single event, these rides offer an accessible entry point for local Muslims who might otherwise be unfamiliar with or hesitant about joining a motorcycle-based religious community.³³ The support and acceptance from mosque

²⁹ Safar refers to travel, while Ride denotes a convoy. In the context of Bikers Subuhan, it involves convoys from one mosque to another, with the aim of visiting as many mosques as possible in a given area. This strategy functions as a form of outreach, intended to promote the movement and invite wider Muslim participation. The Safar Ride constitutes the central and most consistent agenda of the Bikers Subuhan movement across regions, typically conducted on a weekly basis during weekends.

³⁰ Jati, “Pious Bikies”.

³¹ Interview with Wardo (member of Bikers Subuhan Klaten), 5 February 2023.

³² Dhiya Ulhaq Mujaahidah and Abdulloh Hadziq, “Bikers Subuhan Karanganyar: Dakwah Komunitas Dalam Kegiatan Keagamaan”, *At Tabyir: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2021), p. 23.

³³ Interview with Yono, mosque caretaker (*takmir*) of al-Huda Mosque Klaten, 4 February 2023. Similarly, Harno, one of the mosque caretakers in Sukoharjo, expressed

authorities and residents enhance the legitimacy of BS activities and reinforce the effectiveness of these rides in expanding the movement's network while maintaining its devotional and communal objectives. As part of the broader *hijrah* movement, BS encourages its members to abandon past behaviors perceived as sinful and adopt an Islamic lifestyle, including changes in dress, behavior, and leisure activities.³⁴ In 2023, during the sixth anniversary of Bikers Subuhan, the founder Rizani acknowledged in a Facebook post that when he first established the community, his religious knowledge was limited, and he sometimes cited hadiths inaccurately to persuade bikers to join. He also mentioned adopting an Islamic dress style (e.g., *gamis* and *peci*) to symbolically show that he had “*hijrah*” and committed himself. He began to invite other motorcycle communities and expand to other regions to attract more participants, framing the forum as an effort to encourage bikers to improve their Islamic practice.³⁵

BS frequently frames its activities in religious terms, using Qur'anic verses and hadith to promote the idea that every effort, such as time, money, and energy spent during Safar Rides, will be rewarded in the hereafter. For instance, a *murabbi* (advisor) in BS Sukoharjo emphasized that every drop of gasoline and every kilometre ridden for Subuh prayers is an act meriting divine reward.³⁶ The promise of *pahala* (spiritual merit) and eventual paradise is used as a motivational tool to sustain member involvement and attract new participants. Preparatory activities such as gathering punctually, fundraising, cleaning mosques, and erecting banners are similarly framed as spiritual investments. While Bikers Subuhan (BS) offers a constructive outlet for youth and promotes positive behavioral changes, its intense focus on religious transformation raises concerns support for Bikers Subuhan to hold Safar Ride activities at his mosque (Harno, *takmir* of al-Ikhlas Mosque Sukoharjo, 5 February 2023).

³⁴ 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*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2020), p. 2.

³⁵ Despite repeated attempts to arrange an interview since June 2023, direct access to Rizani proved difficult. After initially responding and requesting the researcher's WhatsApp contact, he ceased further communication when an interview schedule was proposed. Consequently, in-depth face-to-face or online interviews with the founder could not be conducted, and the analysis relies on his public statements and digital traces available at the time of research. Sani Rizani <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1SG8DCrEmn/>.

³⁶ Interview with Ridho (*murabbi* of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo), 5 February 2023.

about its broader implications. On the one hand, BS deserves recognition for providing a positive outlet for youth previously involved in street racing, gang violence, or other forms of delinquency. Its emphasis on brotherhood, religious discipline, community service, and charity has led to tangible improvements in members' behavior.³⁷ For example, Nanang, a member since 2019,³⁸ shared that his participation in BS increased his awareness of the suffering of fellow Muslims, especially those affected by natural disasters. On the other hand, the movement's strong emphasis on religious transformation, without a parallel focus on interfaith tolerance or peace-building values, raises certain concerns. A pronounced orientation toward orthodoxy may encourage exclusivist attitudes, limit openness to religious and ideological diversity, and increase susceptibility to more rigid or radical interpretations of Islam. These dynamics are particularly relevant in areas such as Solo, which has historically served as a locus for radical Islamic activism. Within this environment, BS could become susceptible to co-optation by more conservative or radical groups. BS movement thus occupies an ambivalent position. While it offers opportunities for strengthening communal ties and religious engagement among urban youth, it also risks constraining religious expression in ways that may resonate with exclusivist or radical agendas. How the movement develops will likely depend on the broader social, religious, and political contexts in which it operates, as well as on the nature of its interactions with key actors and institutions.

D. Beyond *Hijrah*: From Personal Piety to Exclusivism

Among the events organized by BS is *Dugeman*, an acronym for *dunia gemerlap* (literally “glittering world”), a term typically associated with nightlife or clubbing in Indonesian slang. Reappropriated by BS, *Dugeman* is framed as a form of Islamic counter-culture. Rather than featuring music or dancing, the event closely resembles a *balaqah* (Islamic study circle), in which members sit together and take turns reciting the Qur'an aloud, deliberately raising their voices to compete with surrounding non-Islamic gatherings, locally referred to as *suara tongkerongan*, as noted by

³⁷ Mohammad Taufiq Rahman and Muslim Mufti, “Massification of Youth Religious Studies to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency in Bandung”, *Theological Studies*, vol. 77, no. 4 (2021), p. 6.

³⁸ Interview with Nanang (member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo), conducted online via WhatsApp, 21 May 2023.

one informant, Zaenal.³⁹ After completing a *juʿz* (or occasionally half), an *ustadz* (Islamic preacher) delivers a sermon that reinforces religious teachings centered on their vision of Islamic living. These sermons often emphasize the need for a moral revolution in response to perceived moral decline among Muslim youth, echoing themes common in more conventional *halaqah* groups.⁴⁰

Approximately twenty young individuals attended the event, arriving on various types of motorcycles including automatics, scooters, Vespas, and sport bikes. It indicates that BS is not merely a motorcycle enthusiasts' community but rather a religious movement that leverages a shared hobby (*i.e.*, motorcycling) as a tool for mobilization.⁴¹ Coincidentally, the event coincided with the final match of the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games between Indonesia and Thailand. Zaenal, acting as the event coordinator, promoted the *Dugeman* by organizing a collective viewing (*nobar*) of the match. This illustrates the movement's hybridization of religiosity and leisure. By 9:30 PM, the match had gone into extra time, prompting participants to move to a larger venue nearby to continue the Qur'anic recitation. As they recited aloud, their voices competed with the cheers of football spectators. Zaenal, who had initially combined the *Dugeman* event with the *nobar* to broaden its appeal, repeatedly referred to the football fans as 'devils', accusing them of disrupting the Qur'anic session. He remarked, "Let's continue the recitation; do not let the voices of those devils overpower us." This incident highlights how BS leverages leisure activities to attract participants, while ultimately using these moments to further its religious agenda. We argue that Zaenal's use of the term *setan* (devil) reflects a stance of intolerance and a tendency toward conservatism, especially given the decision to hold *Dugeman* events in public or secular spaces, such as cafés hosting *nobar* gatherings.

A similar display of intolerance occurred during a second *Dugeman*

³⁹ Participant observation at a "Dugeman" event organized by Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo, including remarks by an informant (Zaenal), fieldnotes, Sukoharjo, 16 May 2023

⁴⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia", *Indonesia*, vol. 73 (2002), p. 156.

⁴¹ According to questionnaires distributed among Bikers Subuhan (BS) members in Solo, just 20% reported joining out of enthusiasm for motorcycling. Most participants were instead attracted by the group's dynamic *da'wah* programs and its capacity to cultivate belonging. Notably, one respondent, Ali (a member of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo), even reported that his initial motivation to participate was the breakfast served following Subuh prayers.

event that we attended. Following the recitation session, Zaenal began preaching about the challenges facing young Muslims. Midway through, a couple entered the venue holding hands. Roni, a BS member and high school student, shouted at the couple, calling them *haram* (forbidden), devils, and bound for hell. He then challenged the attendees to confront the couple directly, offering IDR 100,000 (approximately USD 6.65) to anyone who would do so. Regardless of whether this offer was made in jest, such behavior illustrates the group's low tolerance for deviation from their moral standards and their ease in morally condemning others. This aligns with Ghannouchi's argument that all individuals possess the potential for violence, which can be reinforced by particular religious ideologies.⁴² The concept of *hijrah* within BS appears to have shifted from a personal journey of leaving non-religious activities for Islamic ones to a more public expression that includes moral regulation. In this process, religious commitment is articulated in communal settings where certain local customs and behaviors are subject to critique. A notable example occurred in Klaten during a sermon by Hanan, *murabbi* of BS Klaten, on February 4, 2023. Addressing a congregation of dozens or possibly hundreds, Hanan stated:

“In Klaten, it is no longer a secret that practices of *syukuran* (gratitude) are expressed in inappropriate ways—through *dangdutan* (popular music), dancing, food wastage, and the *sedekah gunung* (mountain alms) tradition—particularly among the *abangan* community. If gratitude is expressed in such ways, then one does not truly understand gratitude, which should be demonstrated through obedience to Allah.”

Java, especially Klaten, is characterized by the presence of *abangan* communities, whose religious life combines Islamic elements with local ritual traditions such as *sedekah bumi* and *sedekah gunung*, as well as popular cultural performances including *dangdutan* (dancing).⁴³ Nevertheless, BS appears determined to reorient everyday cultural life, communal rituals, and social norms toward what they define as a more scripturally grounded Islam.

The concept of *hijrah* emerges as a central element for understanding the dynamics of religiosity within the Bikers Subuhan (BS) community

⁴² Rached Ghannouchi, “Deradicalization through Religious Education”, in *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement*, ed. by Stig Jarle Hansen and Stian Lid (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), p. 156.

⁴³ Andrew Beatty, *Varieties of Javanese Religion: An Anthropological Account*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 25-31.

in the Solo area. Based on questionnaire responses from fourteen BS members representing diverse social backgrounds and age groups, the findings indicate that the meaning of *hijrah* has shifted from its historical-spatial connotation to a more symbolic and deeply personal spiritual significance.⁴⁴ The majority of informants define *hijrah* as a process of self-transformation from a negative state toward a better one, framed by Islamic values. This transformation encompasses not only moral and ethical dimensions, such as abandoning sinful acts, bad habits, or un-Islamic behavior, but also reflects a strong aspiration to become more pious individuals in accordance with sharia principles. As articulated by Roni (16 years old), a student, *hijrah* means “leaving sin behind and filling previously un-Islamic time with better, Islamic activities.” This process is frequently understood as a gradual spiritual journey. Many informants emphasized that *hijrah* is not an instantaneous event but rather a continuous effort to improve oneself over time. Juan (19 years old) and Surya (29 years old), for instance, highlighted the importance of becoming a better version of oneself compared to the past, without necessarily aiming for an absolute or final transformation. Some members also articulate *hijrah* through concrete activities carried out collectively within the community, such as learning to read the Qur’an, giving charity, and increasing religious observance. In this context, *hijrah* is not solely an inner spiritual change but also manifests in social and transformative practices. Beni (28 years old) noted that through BS Sukoharjo he not only learned religious teachings but also engaged in social initiatives alongside fellow Muslims.

Furthermore, the meaning of *hijrah* is often linked to the commitment to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad and to live in accordance with Islamic law. This was affirmed by several respondents, such as Isa (27 years old), Kamil (26 years old), and Ridho (37 years old), who emphasized the sharia and the Prophet’s exemplary life as central to their understanding of *hijrah*. These findings suggest that within the BS community, *hijrah* is not merely a symbolic shift in religious identity, but also an ethical and social project pursued collectively. The community provides a space in which its members can interpret and endorse *hijrah* within the framework of contemporary Islamic spirituality,

⁴⁴ The questionnaire was distributed online between May 2023, and focused on participants’ motivations for joining BS, their understanding of *hijrah*, and levels of religious practice before and after involvement in the community. The responses were subsequently cross-checked with interview data for analytical consistency.

while simultaneously fostering a sense of social solidarity through shared religious practices. This interpretation of *hijrah*, grounded in personal piety and religious discipline, can also be accompanied by practices that draw sharper distinctions between what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior. In some instances, conduct or cultural expressions outside this framework are described as “un-Islamic.” For example, in one observed incident, a young couple holding hands was publicly reprimanded and called “setan” by community members. In another case, a traditional Javanese *sedekah bumi* was characterized as misguidance or *shirk*. These examples illustrate how *hijrah*, while framed as self-improvement, may also operate as a means of defining and reinforcing particular religious boundaries.

Such dynamics reflect a broader trend in contemporary Islamic revival movements, wherein personal piety becomes a marker of group identity, and religious transformation entails not only behavioral change but also ideological distancing from what is perceived as *jahiliyyah* (ignorance). In the case of BS, this often results in moral policing, informal surveillance, and public condemnation of those who do not conform. While the community provides a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose, it can also contribute to a binary worldview that categorizes others as either within or outside the bounds of acceptable Islamic behavior. In sum, *hijrah* within the BS community is simultaneously a spiritual journey, a social practice, and a form of moral regulation. It reflects the complex entanglement between personal religiosity and communal identity in Indonesia’s urban Islamic revival, and exemplifies the ambivalent nature of pop-Islamism: accessible and empowering for its adherents, yet potentially alienating for those who live outside its interpretive boundaries.

E. From Hobby to Ideological Mission

While the Bikers Subuhan outwardly identifies as a motorcycle club, observations and interviews reveal that its activities diverge significantly from the typical characteristics of such groups. Within their private communication channels, such as WhatsApp and Telegram groups, members rarely discuss technical aspects of motorcycling, such as spare parts or mechanical advice. Instead, the content shared centers on religious teachings, moral guidance, and discussions on how to lead a devout Islamic life. This shift indicates that BS is not merely a gathering

of motorcycle enthusiasts, but rather a religious movement that integrates Islamic *da'wah* with elements of popular culture. Their approach, merging faith and leisure, can be seen as a creative alternative to more rigid Islamist movements like Tarbiyah, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), or other transnational groups, which have seen declining public appeal in recent years. This strategy of blending hobby and religiosity allows the community to attract a diverse range of followers. What begins as a shared interest in motorcycling gradually evolves into a tightly-knit community with strong social cohesion. The trajectory of such communities is often shaped by their leadership. In the case of BS, there is no centralized leader; instead, each local chapter is led by a group of *anwalun*, typically three or more, who guide the community through consensus-based decision-making (*musyawarah*). This decentralized leadership structure makes it difficult to pinpoint the movement's ideological direction or formal affiliations. Despite this, the movement has grown substantially, with chapters now present in hundreds of cities across Indonesia.

In the case of BS Solo, ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews reveal that some *anwalun* and members are affiliated with or sympathetic to various Islamist networks, such as KOKAM (the paramilitary wing of Muhammadiyah), the Tarbiyah movement, and former HTI members.⁴⁵ This finding is further supported by the content shared in private group discussions. For example, BS chapters in Klaten and Karanganyar display a tendency toward political engagement, often criticizing public policy. In contrast, BS in Sukoharjo and Boyolali maintain an apolitical stance, echoing HTI's rejection of democracy, which it views as a *thagut* (illegitimate) system.⁴⁶ Despite the ideological diversity within the BS networks, all BS chapters in Solo reportedly share the same religious advisors (*murabbi*), many of whom are affiliated with the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS).⁴⁷ This configuration suggests, despite

⁴⁵ During a discussion at a Bikers Subuhan gathering (*silaturrahmi*) in Wonogiri, Arhan disclosed that he was a sympathizer of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), further stating that many members of BS Solo—particularly those in Boyolali, Sukoharjo, and Karanganyar—were affiliated with or formerly cadres of HTI. He also confirmed that several *anwalun* and BS members in West Java, especially in the Tasikmalaya region, shared similar sympathies. (Interview with Arhan, *anwalun* of Bikers Subuhan Sukoharjo, 26 March 2023).

⁴⁶ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, "The Quest for Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia", *Asian Journal of Social Science*, vol. 37, no. 4 (2009), pp. 623–45.

⁴⁷ Advisors of BS Sukoharjo (Ridho), BS Klaten (Hanan and Ahmad), BS Karanganyar (Muhsin), and BS Surakarta (Ridwan, although no longer active) are all *Al-Jāmi'ah*, Vol. 63, No. 2, 2025 M/1447 H

internal diversity. BS is held together by common discursive framework and pedagogical authority.

Within this framework, the “unseen doctrines” that circulate among BS members revolve around three interrelated themes. First, the awakening of the Muslim community (*ummah*) is promoted as a core ideological message. BS members regularly participate in and support *pengajian* (Islamic lectures) that emphasize *ukhuwah Islamiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood). The movement’s flexible approach toward various *hijrah* communities enables wide collaboration and recruitment. During fieldwork, BS members were observed attending lectures by figures associated with hardline Islamist movements, including KH. Abdullah Manaf Amin and Ust. Abu Fatiah al-Adnani (both senior Jemaah Islamiyah figures), as well as Ust. Tengku Azhar and Ust. Hasan Agha from ANNAS (National Anti-Shia Alliance of Soloraya).⁴⁸ At the fifth anniversary event of BS Klaten, for example, a participant expressed concern over the permissibility of music, stating his desire to avoid environments where music is prevalent. In response, Hanan (*murabbi*) de-emphasized the debate on music and instead stressed the priority of maintaining Muslim unity over theological differences. Events such as the BS Solo anniversary further reinforce this message, as various BS communities from outside the region attend to strengthen solidarity and Islamic brotherhood.⁴⁹

Second, despite claims of political neutrality, political orientations are articulated in semi-private and internal arenas. Through public da’wah and private group discussions, participants frequently critique the current political regime. Issues such as corruption in hajj fund management (discussed during Safar Ride #227), the comparison of the current government to the era of Pharaoh (Safar Ride #228), denunciations of

identified as PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) cadres in their respective regions. This information was obtained by the authors through a direct conversation with a staff member of the PKS faction in the Sukoharjo Regional Legislative Council (DPRD). (Interview with Faiz, Staff DPRD Sukoharjo, 26 March 2023).

⁴⁸ Greg Fealy, “Apocalyptic Thought, Conspiracism and Jihad in Indonesia”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 41, no. 1 (2019), p. 73; Ismail Hasani and Bonar Tigor Naipospos, eds., *Dari Radikalisme Menuju Terorisme: Studi Relasi dan Transformasi Organisasi Islam Radikal di Jawa Tengah & D.I. Yogyakarta* (Jakarta: Pustaka Masyarakat Setara, 2012), p. 93; Bruinessen, “Introduction: Contemporary Developments”, p. 200.

⁴⁹ The *Milad* (anniversary) event of BS Solo is typically attended by representatives from BS communities in Klaten, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, Karanganyar, Purwodadi, Yogyakarta, Demak, Wonosobo, Jakarta, Depok, and various other regions.

democracy (Safar Ride #190), and calls to vote for Islamic parties (Safar Ride #195) illustrate how participation in electoral politics is framed instrumentally, as a means to contest secular governance and advance Islamic moral agendas. Although BS avoids explicit party endorsement in public forums, support for PKS and Islamic political figures such as Anies Baswedan is repeatedly evident in internal communications.

Third, these political sensibilities are embedded within a broader normative vision that aspires to the institutionalization of Islamic law as the proper foundation of social and political order. This orientation is expressed through attempts to regulate everyday practices according to scriptural standards and through internal narratives that portray the application of Sharia as the ultimate solution to moral and societal decline. For example, during Safar Ride #227, Hanan condemned the rising popularity of yoga in Solo, framing it as an un-Islamic practice. He cited scholars like Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen and fatwas from the Malaysian and Indonesian Ulama Councils (MUI) to assert that yoga is forbidden (*haram*). Moreover, within private groups, BS members frequently share narratives romanticizing the Islamic golden age, advocating for the implementation of Sharia, and even expressing aspirations for a caliphate. These utopian ideals are inspired in part by content from Kaffah, a media outlet linked to ex-HTI activists.⁵⁰ While not voiced openly, such ideas continue to circulate and shape the ideological landscape of BS, particularly in Solo.

In a nutshell, these three themes form a constellation of “unseen doctrines” that are transmitted not primarily through overt preaching, but through everyday interaction, internal media, and routine collective activities. It is within this subtle yet cohesive ideological environment that members from diverse Islamist backgrounds are integrated under the umbrella of Bikers Subuhan. This convergence indicates that the integration of motorcycling culture and religious commitment in BS should not be understood merely as a lifestyle turn toward piety, but as a form of Pop-Islamism in which popular subcultural practices are mobilized to frame long-standing Islamist aspirations socially appealing and organizationally sustainable.

F. Concluding Remarks

This article has examined the emergence and evolution of the

⁵⁰ 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*, vol. 46, no. 1 (2023), pp. 26–37.

Bikers Subuhan movement as a distinctive expression of youth-led Islamic activism in contemporary Indonesia. It has shown how the movement creatively integrates pop culture, particularly motorcycle riding, with religious practice to promote piety, solidarity, and community engagement. While BS has offered a constructive outlet for young people seeking meaning, discipline, and moral direction, its strong *hijrah* ethos and selective interpretation of Islamic values have also fostered exclusivist orientations and ideological rigidity. By situating BS within the broader context of the *hijrah* movement and the Islamization of leisure, this article argues that such movements represent a new strategy of religious revivalism in the face of modernity's emphasis on individualism and self-expression. At the same time, the BS case nuances and extends Dominik Müller's concept of Pop-Islamism. Whereas Müller highlights the consumerist, commodified, and hybrid dimensions of youth religiosity, BS illustrates how popular cultural forms can be deliberately mobilized as infrastructures of ideological diffusion. The movement's relaxed and inclusive style coexists with, and often facilitates, the consolidation of revivalist agendas, the cultivation of religious discipline, and the articulation of political imaginaries that critique secular governance and envision Islamic alternatives.

In this respect, BS demonstrates that Pop-Islamism cannot be understood solely as a cultural or lifestyle phenomenon. It also functions as a channel through which Islamist orientations are rearticulated in youth-friendly idioms, thereby blurring the boundary between cultural adaptation and ideological activism. Bikers Subuhan, therefore, is not merely a motorcycle community with spiritual aspirations but part of a broader trajectory in which leisure, piety, and political critique intersect. This case contributes to debates on Islamic activism, youth religiosity, and civic pluralism by underscoring the ambivalent potential of such movements: as avenues for moral renewal and as vehicles of ideological polarization. It suggests that, in the Indonesian context, Pop-Islamism must be analyzed not only in terms of commodification and identity but also as a dynamic field where cultural forms are strategically harnessed for revivalist and political projects.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arifianto, Alexander R., "Rising Islamism and the Struggle for Islamic Authority in Post-Reformasi Indonesia", *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2020, pp. 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2019.10>
- Bayat, Asef, *Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2010.
- , "Islamism and the Politics of Fun", *Public Culture*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2007, pp. 433-59, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-2007-004>.
- , *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*, California: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Beatty, Andrew, *Varieties of Javanese Religion: An Anthropological Account*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Berger, Jonah, *Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior*, First Simon & Schuster hardcover edition, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016.
- van Bruinessen, Martin "Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the 'Conservative Turn' of the Early Twenty-First Century", in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"*, ed. by Martin van Bruinessen, Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013.
- Fealy, Greg, "Apocalyptic Thought, Conspiracism and Jihad in Indonesia", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2019, pp. 63–85, <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs41-1d>.
- Fealy, Greg, and Sally White, "Introduction", in *Expressing Islam Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Greg Fealy and Sally White, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008.
- Ghannouchi, Rached, "Deradicalization through Religious Education", in *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement*, ed. by Stig Jarle Hansen and Stian Lid, London and New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Hasan, Hadri, "Contemporary Religious Movement in Indonesia: A Study of Hijrah Festival in Jakarta in 2018." *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2019, pp. 230–65, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.230-265>.
- Hasan, Noorhaidi, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the

- Era of 'Transition in Indonesia", *Indonesia*, no. 73, 2002, pp. 145–69, <https://hdl.handle.net/1813/54259>.
- , "The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere." *Contemporary Islam* 3, no. 3, 2009, pp. 229–50, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-009-0096-9>.
- Hasani, Ismail and Bonar Tigor Naipospos, eds., *Dari Radikalisme Menuju Terorisme: Studi Relasi dan Transformasi Organisasi Islam Radikal di Jawa Tengah & D.I. Yogyakarta*, Jakarta: Pustaka Masyarakat Setara, 2012.
- Hew, Wai Weng, "The Art of Dakwah: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siauw", *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 46, no. 134, 2018, pp. 61–79, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757>.
- Jati, Wasisto Raharjo, "Pious Bikies", *Inside Indonesia*, 19 December 2019, <https://www.insideindonesia.org/pious-bikies>.
- Muhtadi, Burhanuddin, "The Quest for Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia", *Asian Journal of Social Science* vol. 37, no. 4, 2009, pp. 623–45, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853109X460219>.
- Mujaahidah, Dhiya Ulhaq, and Abdulloh Hadziq, "Bikers Subuhan Karanganyar: Dakwah Komunitas dalam Kegiatan Keagamaan", *At-Tabsyir: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2021, pp. 16–26. <https://doi.org/10.21043/at-tabsyir.v8i1.10307>.
- Müller, Dominik, *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS*, New York: Routledge, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.4324/94781315850535>.
- , "Post-Islamism or Pop-Islamism? Ethnographic Observations of Muslim Youth Politics in Malaysia", *Paideuma*, vol. 59, 2013, pp. 261–84, <https://journals.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/paideuma/index.php/paideuma/article/view/286>.
- Nugroho, Taufik, et al., "Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School Ngruki Sukoharjo, The Misunderstood Islamic School", *Jurnal Nuansa Akademik*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2022, 203–18, <https://doi.org/10.47200/jnajpm.v7i2.1181>.
- Papineau, Élise Imray, "Hey! Ho! Let's Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety in Java, Indonesia", Master Thesis, Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2019.

- PPIM, “Tren Keberagaman Gerakan Hijrah Kontemporer”, Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, 2021.
- Prasetyo, Heru, “Bikers Subuhan, Gabungan Hobi Berkendara dan Kewajiban Salat.” *TribunLampung.co.id*, 24 April 2017, <https://lampung.tribunnews.com/2017/04/24/video-bikers-subuhan-gabungan-hobi-berkendara-dan-kewajiban-salat>.
- Rahman, Mohammad Taufiq, and Muslim Mufti, “Massification of Youth Religious Studies to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency in Bandung”, *Theological Studies* vol. 77, no. 4, 2021, pp. 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.7055>.
- Rijal, Syamsul, “Pursuing *Hijrah* to Salafi Path: Urban Muslim Youth and the Quest for Sel-Transformation in Indonesia”, *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2025, pp. 101-21, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-024-00564-x>.
- Rosyid, Muhammad, and Ramita Paraswati, “From Pamphlet to Utopian Caliphate: Utilization of Mass Media and Promotion of the Caliphate Ideology among Muslim Youth in Solo”, *Dialog*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2023, pp. 26–37, <https://doi.org/10.47655/dialog.v46i1.777>.
- Saefullah, Hikmawan, “Nevermind the Jahiliyyah, Here’s the Hijrahs’: Punk and the Religious Turn in the Contemporary Indonesian Underground Scene”, *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2017, pp. 263–89, <https://doi.org/10.1386/punk.6.2.2631>.
- Sari, Trie Yunita, 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*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2020, pp. 1-26, <https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v5i1.1673>.
- Schwab, Wendell, “Islam, Fun, and Social Capital in Kazakhstan”, *Central Asian Affairs*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2015, pp. 51–70, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142290-00201004>.
- Triantoro, Dony Arung, and M. Alam Zumiraj, “Dakwah, Kesenangan, dan Sense of Community: Sahabat Hijrah Pekanbaru”, *Harmoni*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2021, pp. 16–34, <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v20i1.472>.
- Utomo, W. P., and R. Noormega, “Indonesia Millennial Report 2020,” *IDN Research Institute*, no. 1, 2020, pp. 1–83.
- Wildan, Muhammad, “Youth Radical Islamism in Solo as Manifested by *Al-Jāmi’ah*, Vol. 63, No. 2, 2025 M/1447 H

Muhammad Rosyid and Syamsul Rijal

Front Pemuda Islam”, *Socio-Politic*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2018, pp. 90–103, 10.15575/socio-politica.v8i1.3478.

Zulhazmi, Abraham Zakky, and Erma Priyanti, “Eksistensi Komunitas Hijrah dan Dakwah Masa Kini: Studi Komunitas Jaga Sesama Solo”, *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* vol. 40, no. 2, 2020, pp. 168–81, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v40.2.6249>.