

# Considering the Moderate Da'wah Path of the Purist Salafism: *Rodja TV* Community Case

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## Abstract

Salafi is often accused of being an extremist group supporting violence. However, recently there have been several attempts by this group to become a moderate Muslim. It is called the purist salafi or the traditional salafi group. By taking the case of the *Salafi-Rodja* community located in Cileungsi Bogor, this study aims to examine some of the moderation efforts undertaken by this Salafi group. Based on a qualitative approach with the interview, observation, and documentation methods, this study argues that this group has pursued attitudes of religious moderation by combating suicide bombings, rejecting acts of terrorism even against non-Muslims, changing the language of da'wah to be wiser (*al-hikmah*), avoiding involvement in practical politics, conducting recitations (*ta'lim*) in government agencies including in the police office, building mosques independently for the needs of *ubudiyah* to avoid clashes with people with different beliefs, establishing educational institutions as a cultural pathway to instill Islamic and Indonesian values as well as mastering science and technology, and being involved in social activities.

**Keywords:** *extremist, purist salafism, moderate, salafi-Rodja.*

## Introduction

This paper examines the preaching of purist salafism<sup>1</sup> in its efforts to become a moderate Muslim group in Indonesia. So far, in Indonesia, the two largest mainstream Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah<sup>2</sup> and NU (Nahdlatul Ulama)<sup>3</sup>, are considered two institutions that have always been vocal in voicing Islamic moderatism (the middle path of Islam). Muhammadiyah with its *al-Islam dan Kemuhammadiyahan* and charities, and NU

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<sup>1</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.) *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Approach* (Indiana University Press, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> To a certain extent, Muhammadiyah itself is referred to as "wasathiyah salafism," to show that having a salafi ideology is not necessarily synonymous with violence. See Azyumardi Azra, "Wasathiyah Salafism," *Republika*, (October 13, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> These two Islamic groups (Muhammadiyah and NU) are deliberately mentioned because the existence of salafis seems to be dealing with these two mass organizations ideologies in many cases. Salafis are closer to Muhammadiyah on the one hand in some doctrinal aspects, and experience many differences with NU on the other. The three of them are both struggling to gain public space in an effort to drive their respective ideologies. This kind of reflection can be seen in Din Wahid's research, "Challenging Religious Authority: the Emergence of Salafi Ustadhs in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 6, No 2 (2012), 246-264.

with its *Islam-Aswaja* and *pesantren* treasures, have emerged as moderate Islamic movements. As mainline Islamic organizations, these two mass organizations are almost always used as references in every Islamic issue in the country.

In addition, there is a religious group that has been seen as a splinter group, intolerant, and spreader of the radicalism-extremism, but has a moderate da'wah orientation. This group is a traditionalist-purist-salafist group, non-political, or non-jihadist salafist.<sup>4</sup> Hence, it is called rejectionist salafist as well because of their rejection of reformist-political salafi and jihadi salafi. The group, according to Mohamed and Ali Adraoui, is consistent in preaching activities and Islamic studies with *manhaj salaf al-salih* and does not like to carry out efforts of resistance or rebellion against the legitimate government.<sup>5</sup> The group also rejects acts of violence and involvement in practical politics. It does not confront the non-Islamic West through physical force, and most importantly it rejects terrorism-extremism as *jihad fi sabil Allah*, as the jihadist salafi group did. Azyumardi Azra calls it "soft salafism," which is religiously oriented towards the past, but in socio-cultural life tends to be open and dynamic.<sup>6</sup>

Its pureness which is non-political and non-jihadist is in principle part of the spirit of cultural da'wah.<sup>7</sup> In Indonesia, the salafi that has developed massively recently is generally salafi characterized by this type of salafism. It seems that in the effort to fight terrorism, the traditionalist-purist salafi movement growing quite massive is important to be taken into account and can be considered.

Several previous studies on this issue can be found from the writings of Mark Woodward, et al. They questioned the general view on Salafism as a group supporting violence and Sufism as a tolerant group. In some cases, Sufism appears to be involved in committing violence rather than salafism.<sup>8</sup> In line with that, Amir Sheikhzadegan saw a shift from rigid to moderate among salafists in Switzerland.<sup>9</sup> Mohamed Bin Ali noted the same thing as well, in which the salafi movement cannot be generalized. The term he uses is that modern salafi is an ideology with many variants of movement, and one of them is the traditional puritan salafi.<sup>10</sup> The same conclusion also comes from Mashail Haydar Ali who

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<sup>4</sup> The traditionalist salafis, however, differs from the political-jihadist salafis. It is also different from traditionalist Sufism. Even the presence of salafis is itself an anti-thesis of Sufism. See Imtiaz Gul, "Transnational Islamic Networks," *International Review on The Red Cross*, Volume 92 Number 880 December 2010. See also Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., London, 1994, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Mohamed and Adraoui, "Purist Salafism in France," *ISIM Review* 21/Spring 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Pesantren Salafi (2)," *Kolom Republika* (Kamis 08 Feb 2018), <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/kolom/resonansi/18/02/07/p3shrr440-pesantren-salafi-2>.

<sup>7</sup> Sturla Godo Saether, "Humanitarian Salafism: A Contradiction in Terms? A Study of The Salafi Organisation 'The Book and the Sunna Society' and Their Efforts in Relief Work in Jordan," Thesis, University of OSLO, (2013).

<sup>8</sup> Mark Woodward, Muhammad Sani Umar, Inayah Rohmaniyah and Mariani Yahya, "*Salafi* Violence and *Sufi* Tolerance? Rethinking Conventional Wisdom," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 7, No. 6 (December 2013), 58-78.

<sup>9</sup> Amir Sheikhzadegan, "From Rigid to Moderate Salafism: Paths of (Re-)Conversion to Islam Among Activists of A Muslim Organisation in Switzerland," *Journal of Muslims in Europe*, Volume 9: Issue 2 (2020), 196-219. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22117954-BJA10003>.

<sup>10</sup> Mohammad Bin Ali, "Modern Salafism: One Ideology, Many Movements," *Politics & Society, the Madyan*, (MARCH 9, 2018). [https://themaydan.com/2018/03/modern-salafism-one-ideology-many-movements/#\\_ftn5](https://themaydan.com/2018/03/modern-salafism-one-ideology-many-movements/#_ftn5).

views that the belief systems of the salafi group are the same, but what distinguishes them is *the manhaj* (the application of actions and methods).<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, Husnul Arifin more clearly describes the variant of salafi groups in the Pakistani context where the salafi movement appears as a moderate movement supporting peace.<sup>12</sup> Other research by Henri Lauzière also encourages studies of salafi to be carried out from a historical perspective to see their existence as a whole so that they are not trapped in political and pragmatic claims.<sup>13</sup> The term progressive salafi was coined by Rusli in his research regarding online fatwas on a website promoted by Yusuf al-Qaradhawi and his colleagues. This site contains a progressive-substantial's approach (combining text and reality), which is built on the principles of minority fiqh (*fiqh al-aqalliyyāt*), such as *taysīr* (providing convenience), *wasalīyyah* (moderate), and *i'tidāl* (balance), which seen as universal values that contribute to the creation of a pluralist global society.<sup>14</sup> Mark Sedgwick's writing criticizes the doctrinal studies on salafis which often ignore social studies of this movement, even though this is an important part of the issue that must be discussed.<sup>15</sup> Finally, Jeremy Menchik's writing criticizes the involvement of NU and Muhammadiyah organizations in politics thus distancing these two groups as moderate Islamic organizations supporting democracy. This means that the position of NU and Muhammadiyah seems contradictory to the salafis who tend to stay away from politics.<sup>16</sup>

The studies above are different from this research. First, this research was conducted in Cileungsi where the salafi community and *Rodja TV* are located. Second, previous research has focused more on the form of salafi moderation in general, but this research tries to specifically highlight traditional-purist salafi where it only busies its self with da'wah activities. Third, this research tries to prove that salafi preaching can be considered as a moderation movement within certain limits so that it can resolve the problem of over-claiming the salafi group as an intolerant movement. Besides, this study is distinctive in the midst of studies on salafism which are more concerned with placing this group as anti-social and radical.

This study uses a qualitative approach with interviews, observation, and documentation techniques. Interviews were conducted with Salafi Ustadh in Cileungsi, namely Ustadh Abdul Qadir Jawas, Ustadh Yahya Badr Salam, Ustadh Firanda Andirja, and Ustadh Muhammad Ihsan. The collected data is strengthened by participation observations in the daily religious activities in the Cileungsi salafi neighborhood, a place where the al-Barkah Mosque is adjacent to the *Rodja TV* station. Meanwhile, documentation data

<sup>11</sup> Mashail Haydar Ali, "The Traditionalist Salafis' Perspective and Discourse on Militant Jihad", *Humanities*, (2019), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Husnul Amin, "Moderate Salafism and the Challenge of De-Radicalization. The Case of Pakistan," *Romanian Journal of Political Science; Bucharest*, Vol. 17, Iss. 1, (Summer 2017): 62-90.

<sup>13</sup> Henri Lauzière, "The Construction Of Salafiyya: Reconsidering Salafism From The Perspective Of Conceptual History," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (August 2010), 369-389, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>14</sup> R. Rusli, "Progressive Salafism in Online Fatwa," *al-Jami'ah*. Vol 52, No 1 (2014). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2014.521.205-229>.

<sup>15</sup> Mark Sedgwick. "Introduction: Salafism, the Social, and the Global Resurgence of Religion," *Comparative Islamic Studies*, 8(1-2), 57-70. <https://doi.org/10.1558/cis.v8i1-2.57>.

<sup>16</sup> Jeremy Menchik, "Moderate Muslims and Democratic Breakdown in Indonesia," *Asian Studies Review*, 43:3, (2019), 415-433, DOI: [10.1080/10357823.2019.1627286](https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1627286).

refers to data originating from official sources on the Site and YouTube, which contain videos, audios, and articles they publish. By focusing on *the Rodja TV* salafi community in Cileungsi as the object of study, this paper seeks to answer the question of how are they doing moderate da'wah efforts to become part of the moderate Islamic mainstream in Indonesia?

## Salafism and Its Typologies

The term Salafism cannot be separated from Wahabism. The two are often combined in the term 'salafi-wahabi'.<sup>17</sup> Wahabism (Arabic: Wahhābiyah) is a religious movement taken from the name of its founder, Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1115-1206 H /1701-1793 AD) from Najd, Saudi Arabia, which was developed in the 18th century. The main idea of this movement is tawhid, the oneness of God (Allah).<sup>18</sup>

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was heavily influenced by the writings of Ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328 H) which questioned classical interpretations of Islam, and referred to the purity of the al-Qur'an and Hadith.<sup>19</sup> This movement aims to perfect the teachings of Islam to the real teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith and to clean it from impurities such as *bid'ah*, *shirk* and *khurafat* practices.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, aspects of moral decline and political weakness in the Arabian peninsula, idolatry, polytheism, the cult of saints, worshiping the graves of the pious, and making graves a place of worship were the main targets of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's preaching.<sup>21</sup> However, at a practical level, according to Azra, in contrast to Ibn Taymiyah, Abd al-Wahhab called all people who did not follow the doctrine of tawhid as infidels and legally waged jihad against them.<sup>22</sup>

This movement was in the process of political alliance with the Saud dynasty,<sup>23</sup> so it is not surprising that this understanding eventually became the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia.<sup>24</sup> To spread their influence, Wahhabi through the Saud dynasty developed a sizeable network in the Muslim world through the funding of Saudi mosques, schools, and social programs and others. Wahabists, religiously, are people who consistently follow the footsteps of the salaf so that some people often call them salafi-wahabi. However, the salafi groups themselves always refuse when they are accused of being Wahabi.

So what is salafi? According to Ibn Manzhur (d. 771 H), etymologically, salaf means

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<sup>17</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29 (2006), 207-239.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Schwartz, "Saudi Arabia and the Rise of the Wahhabi Threat," *Middle East Forum*, (February 23, 2003), 3. See <http://www.meforum.org/535/saudi-arabia-and-the-rise-of-the-wahhabi-threat>.

<sup>19</sup> Editors team, *Encyclopedia Britannica: School and Library Subscribers*, (2014). See <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Wahhabi>. See also Justiti, "Salafism in the Netherlands: a Passing Phenomenon or a Persistent Factor of Significance?" *National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTb)* (May 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Abu Mujahid and Haneef Oliver, *Virus Wahhabi* (Toobagus Publishing, 2010), 120-121.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Schwartz, "Saudi Arabia and the Rise of the Wahhabi Threat," *Middle East Forum* (February 23, 2003), 4. See <http://www.meforum.org/535/saudi-arabia-and-the-rise-of-the-wahhabi-threat>.

<sup>22</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Fenomena Fundamentalisme dalam Islam: Survey Historis dan Doktrinal," *Jurnal Ilmu dan Kebudayaan Ulum al-Qur'an*, No. 3, Vol. IV, (1993), 19.

<sup>23</sup> Editors team, *Encyclopedia Britannica: School and Library Subscribers*, (2014). See <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Wahhabi>.

<sup>24</sup> David Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), ix.

the former (ancestor), who is older and more important.<sup>25</sup> If it is said (سَلَفُ الرَّجُلِ) “salaf of someone,” it means both parents who have preceded him.<sup>26</sup> In terminology, the word salaf means the first and best generation of Muslims, which consists of prophet friends, *tabi'in*, *tabi 'al-tabi'in* and the Imams who carry instructions in the first three generations that are glorified by Allah, as the Prophet Muhammad said: “The best human beings are in this period (namely the time of the companions), then afterwards (the *tabi'in* period), then afterwards (the *tabi 'al-tabi'in* period).”<sup>27</sup> Joas Wagemaker states that salafism is a branch of Sunni Islam whose modern day adherents claim to imitate “pious predecessors” (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*).<sup>28</sup>

Shaikh Shalih bin Abd al-'Aziz ibn Muhammad Ali Shaikh in giving an introduction to the writings of Abd Allah bin Abd al-Hamid al-Athary said that the determination of the term salaf is not enough to be limited by time, but must be in accordance with the Quran and al-Sunnah according to the understanding of the *salaf al-salih*. Anyone whose opinion is in accordance with al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah<sup>29</sup> regarding 'aqidah, law, and *suluk* according to the understanding of salaf, then he is called a salafi, even though his place is far and different in time. On the other hand, if his opinion violates al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah, then he is not a salafi even though he lived in the time of the *Sahaba*, *tabi'in* and *tabi 'al-tabi'in*.<sup>30</sup> Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: “It is not a disgrace for a person who shows the *salaf manhaj* and consecrates himself to the salaf, even obliged to accept it because the *manhaj salaf* is nothing but the truth.”<sup>31</sup>

From some of the opinions above, it seems that Wagemaker's opinion is more relevant to the current salafi context. The Salafis group that is currently developing is more of a neo-salafist group that consecrated its self to the generation of companions and the traditions of the Prophet.

In its development, there are three typologies of salafi, namely: (1) traditional-rijectionist salafi; (2) reformist salafi; and (3) salafi jihadists.<sup>32</sup> The terms Koning uses to denote these three groups are “selefies,” politically involved Salafists, and the jihadi/takfiri

<sup>25</sup> Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-'Arab* (http://tnp.,t.t), Juz VI, 331.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrawi, *al-Mufasssirun bayn al-Ta'wil wa al-Ithbat fi Ayat al-Sifah* (Riyadh: Muassasah ar-Risalah, 1420 H), 11.

<sup>27</sup> al-Bukhari (No. 2652) from 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud ra. See Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Ismail ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhary* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Rusyd, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Joas Wagemakers, “Salafism,” *Islamic Studies, Religion and Politics*, Online Publication (Aug 2016).

<sup>29</sup> They also reject all forms of contextual and empirical understanding of the Koran and Hadith. See Zoltan Pall, *Lebanese Salafis between The Gulf and Europe: Development, Fractionalization and Transnational Networks of Salafism in Lebanon* (Amsterdam University Press, 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Shaikh Salih bin Abd al-'Aziz ibn Muhammad Ali Shaikh, in Muqoddimah Abd Allah bin Abd al-Hamid al-Athary, *al-Wajiz fi 'Aqidah Salaf al-Salih* (al-Mamlakat al-Sa'udiyah: Wizarat al-Syu'un al-Islamiyah wa al-Awqaf wa al-Da'wat wa al-Irsyad, 2010), 34.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Taimiyah, *Majmu' Fatawa* (Madinah: Dar al-Wafa', 2005), 149.

<sup>32</sup> Political group or political salafits allows joining political organizations. It generally fights for Islam as the state ideology. Its da'wah is more structural in nature. Meanwhile, the latter are those who legalize rebellion against other groups who disobey religion, especially the government and the West. They are called salafi jihadists. Sturla Godo Saether, “Humanitarian Salafism: A Contradiction in Terms? A Study of The Salafi Organization 'The Book and The Sunna Society' and Their Efforts in Relief Work in Jordan,” 8. See also Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 19.

salafists (salafi-jihadists).<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchen uses the terms quietist, activists and jihadist.<sup>34</sup> In fact, he argued between salafism and eksterimism. This paper will only use the first type of salafi to discuss. It is a group that does not want to, even prohibits them from joining formal organizations or institutions, including politics. They are more accurately referred to as da'wah salafi or traditional salafi or puritan salafi.

This type of salafi group is engaged in da'wah and socio-culture. This group is not involved in political efforts, including structurally fighting for an Islamic state. The da'wah they are fighting for is more of an improvement in community religious practices that deviate from Islamic teachings. Even to a certain extent, this type of salafi, in their view of the legitimate leader of a state, is different from the other two types of salafi. This group considers it *haram* to fight or disobey legitimate leaders in a democratic country.

With this character, traditionalist-rijectionist salafi can be called a salafi group that preaches culturally, because cultural da'wah does not make structural instruments, such as political power or physical strength, as da'wah approaches. The cultural approach pays more attention to the cultural aspects of society as a consideration in the da'wah process.<sup>35</sup> Salafi cultural da'wah in this term does not mean a local cultural approach because there are several local cultures considered heretical by them, but it means a global-modernist cultural approach. The principle is to pay attention to the tendency of people as cultured beings.

## Re-actualizing Fundamentalism in Islam: A Way to a Moderate Path

Among the experts who refuse to link acts of violence with Islamic fundamentalism is Andreas Armbrorst. He said there was no connection between Islamic fundamentalism and acts of violence, let alone terrorism. According to him, fundamentalism is identified as salafism which among its characteristics is opposition to the consensus of modernism and secularism and adhering to a textual interpretation of the scriptures. Salafism cannot be called global jihad and terrorism, because the majority of them are absent from political activities.<sup>36</sup>

Meanwhile, John L. Esposito tended to use the term 'Islamic revivalism and Islamist' for religious movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt which succeeded in building a more Islamic society. Their existence exists in almost all levels of society, such as psychologists, journalists, lawyers, political scientists. Their activities are scattered in many institutions such as Islamic schools, health clinics, hospitals, social services, and publishing agencies.<sup>37</sup> They emerge as a response to state failure and social crises when there is no effective leadership in the country. The use of the terminology of Islamic fundamentalism,

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<sup>33</sup> Martijn de Koning, "Changing Worldviews and Friendship: An Exploration of the Life Stories of Two Female Salafis in the Netherlands," in Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 408-410.

<sup>34</sup> Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchen, "Salafism in America History, Evolution, Radicalization," *Program on Terrorism*, The George Washington University, (Oktober 2018).

<sup>35</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkan, *Kesalehan Multikultural: Berislam Secara Autentik-Kontekstual di Aras Peradaban Global* (Jakarta: PSAP Muhammadiyah, 2005), 223.

<sup>36</sup> Andreas Armbrorst, "A Profile of Religion Fundamentalism and Terrorist Activism", *Defence Against Terrorism Review*, 2, 01, 2009.

<sup>37</sup> John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 96

as in his other works, namely *The Future of Islam*, is only limited to Islamic Wahhabis and Islamic salafi.<sup>38</sup>

In addition, Muhammad Imarah is also an academic who questions the validity of the term fundamentalism in the Islamic context. Islam does not recognize fundamentalism with a character as in the West which refers to three characters, among others: first, impasse, rejects adaptation, rejects every change and development. Second, return to the past, and be affiliated with the legacy of the past. Third, intolerance, closed-mindedness, fanaticism of the school, and stubbornness. Whereas in Islam, the term is equated with the term *al-usuliyat* which means the basics of religion.<sup>39</sup>

It appears that Islamic fundamentalism cannot necessarily be understood as understood by some parts of the West. Islam is a religion that is always open to a developing context, even Islam can synergize with modernity and become the spirit of modernity itself. Therefore, it is not appropriate to position fundamentalism as the culprit of violence and acts of terrorism developing in the world.

### **The Moderat Da'wa of Indonesian Purist Salafist**

Salafi da'wah in Indonesia is manifested in at least two forms, namely: first, verbal da'wah in the form of studies, *ta'lims*, and Islamic *dawrahs*. They call it "sunnah preaching." Second, da'wah in the form of cultural actions, such as the establishment of radio and TV stations, construction of madrasa houses, schools and mosques, assisting to disaster victims and people in need, and so on.

This traditionalist-puritan salafi group is concerned with Islamic preaching and studies, without being tempted to involve itself in Islamic organizations or to join certain political alliances. The da'wah carried out is only aimed at forming an Islamic society following the teachings of the al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah. The following are the efforts of salafi da'wah to present itself as a moderate Islamic group.

#### *Its Attitudes against Terrorism*

In this aspect, the attitude of this group regarding terrorism can be seen from its understanding of the terminology of *jihad* in Islam. According to the group, the term *jihad* which is misused to legitimize acts of violence is something that is not in line with the principles of al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah and is counterproductive to Islamic preachings. It was seen in the view of Ustadh Abdul Qadir Jawas in one of *Rodja TV's* shows. He stated that:

"Threatening others, causing anxiety, shedding blood, rebelling against the authorities, frightening security, carrying out suicide bombings, killing innocent people, children, women, including killing *kafir mua'had*, is not *jihad* and punished as *haram* in Islam. Once again it is not *jihad* and the law is *haram*."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> John L. Esposito, *The Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Muhammad Imarah, *al-Usuliyah bayn al-Gharby wa al-Islam* (Beirut: Dar al-Syuruq, 1968), 22. See also Alyahya, Mohammed, "Don't Blame 'Wahhabism' for Terrorism," (Oct. 19, 2016), <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/20/opinion/dont-blame-wahhabism-for-terrorism.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Rodja TV broadcast document. See also Abdul Qadir Jawas, *Jihad in Islamic Sharia* (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Taqwa, 2014).

So according to him, *jihad* is not what terrorists do. He understands *jihad* as a manifestation of the purity of faith in Allah Almighty and adheres to the al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah. The strong solemnity of the Qur'an and al-Sunnah is a real *jihad*. He saw *jihad* as a struggle to be a good servant of Allah. Even, according to him, any act of violence including rebelling against the legal ruler is an act of *haram* and prohibited in Islam.

In line with that, Ustadh Firanda Andirja wrote a quite long article regarding terrorism. Here are some excerpts:

“We praise Allah and thank Him that the preaching of *salafiyah* in Indonesia is of great kindness. One will be amazed if you see the enthusiasm of the people in many regions in Indonesia. Spread the headquarters of knowledge, schools of the Quran and al-Hadith. This is a pleasure to be grateful for and guarded, because *salafiyah dakwah* is the target of the enemy, as we have heard from your sayings (*wejangan*).

Among the critical matters that have occurred in our homeland are the practices of terrorism and bombing that have been carried out by *takfiriyins* (people who disbelieve others) and also by deceived people.

We have known their characters for a long time. Some of these deviant people provided scattered and recorded studies, namely studies from the books of Shaykh Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab and the preaching *Imams* of Najd. So the enemies of proselytizing from the Sufiyah and liberal circles took this as an opportunity to accuse that *tawhid* preaching is terrorist preaching. The case is that most state officials from the ministers have sent me a file so that I can show my views on the contents of the file. It turned out that the file contained the book of Tauhid by Shaykh Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab. And the official asked me to refute the book of Tawheed on the grounds that it is the main reference for terrorists. So the essence of preaching *salafiyah* is confused by their slander (people who deviate).

So we consider it obligatory to be distinguished from these deviants in order to maintain preaching. And their silence on deviants (*takfiriyin* and bombers or terrorists) as well as being easy on people who are convicted of deviants is a very dangerous matter.

And truly Allah has manifested goodness with this self-differentiating attitude. One year there was a bombing at an embassy in Jakarta. The perpetrators of the bombing admitted to their actions, including a person called Aman Abdurrahman who was a preacher at the Al-Shofwah foundation. In the past, he often preached close to the headquarters of our brothers in Jakarta. This man has taught a number of the books of Shaykh Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab, and has translated the books of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi al-Suri into Indonesian. And our brothers had arrested this man and had explained his falsehood *manhaj* sometime before the bombing. Therefore when the bombing took place, the authorities were not preoccupied with our brothers because of their “self-differentiation” attitude.

Among the sad cases of a number of Radio and TV Rodja preachers is their *tasahul* attitude towards people who are not clear, because these people who are not clear make *salafiyah* preaching accused of propagating terrorism.”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> See Ustadz Firanda, “What’s wrong with Rodja TV2? (<http://firanda.com/index/php/artikel/manhaj/534-ada-apa-dengan-radio-rodja-rodja-tv-bag-2-surat-al-ustadz-dzulqarnain-kepada-syaikh-sholeh-al-fauzaan>). In this article he mentions Ustadh Abu Nida ‘and Ustadh Abu Qatadah as people who are partners with the Ihyā Turath Foundation for acts of bombing / terrorism. See also the article entitled “Is the title of *takfiri*

Ustadh Firanda's explanation describes a map of salafi da'wah in Indonesia. As in other countries, salafis in Indonesia are also not in one movement. There are many variants of those who take shelter under the salafi robe, and it seems that some of them preach violently. At least from Ustadh Firanda's explanation, it can be seen that there are two types of salafi preaching in Indonesia. First, the soft salafi preaching which in this paper is represented by the Salafi community of Cileungsi. Second, the extreme salafi, which can be seen, for example, from the figure of a salafi Ustadz named Aman Abdurrahman who once carried out a bombing at an embassy in Jakarta. And strangely, the book that Aman was referring to was also the book used by salafi ustadhs in Cileungsi, namely the book of Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab from Najd.

In addition, it is also important to discuss that Ustadh Firanda wants to emphasize that not all followers of Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab preach to extremes or adhere to *takfiri*. This seems to show the character of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's followers. Some of them follow his rigid preaching ideology which then gives birth to an extremity of action. Of course this extreme action is supported by political interests as well. There are also those who follow Muhammad Abdul Wahhab for reasons of al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah,<sup>42</sup> which are the ways of *salaf al-salih*, and because of this they refuse to commit acts of violence.

On one occasion, Ustadh Yahya Badr Salam conveyed several important things about terrorism. He stated:

"Terrorism! We often hear this word, even the issue of terrorism is spreading from time to time. I don't know what interests are behind all of this, but again and again the issue of terrorism is always accused to Muslims around the world. Meanwhile not a few extremist groups from among non-Muslims have gone radical. Just look at the massacre of Muslims in Andalusia, for example. Not to mention in China and the Rohingya in Myanmar, they were massacred and expelled. Do not forget the historical records that are still carved to this day: Syria, Palestine, and other Middle Eastern countries. Day by day, children and the elderly are terrorized by the bullets and bombs that are always exhaled by infidels, even though they are true adherents of human rights. In reality we often see with the naked eye, the cruelty after cruelty that took place there. Muslims are raped for their rights to carry out their Shari'a.

So who are the real terrorists? And does Islam itself deserve to be called a terrorist religion? There some Quranic verses misunderstood by some. For instance, "Fight those who do not believe in Allah and do not (also) in the hereafter, and they do not prohibit what is forbidden by Allah and His Messenger and do not have religion with the true religion (the religion of Allah), (i.e. people) who are given Al-Kitab, until they pay *jizyah* obediently while they are in a submissive state." (Surah At-Taubah [9]: 29), or the verse "... indeed those disbelievers are a real enemy to you." (QS An-Nisa '[4]: 101).

Based on the above verses, there are some groups who claim that Islam and terrorists cannot be separated, because they see Allah's verses and then understand them with shallow minds, though Islam is not the case. There are certain limits, jihad is inflated in Islam. Only

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appropriate?," (<http://firanda.com/index/php/artikel/bantahan/603-gelar-takfir-pantaskah?>) In his article he said that those who like to disbelieve deserve to be called the takfiri group, in this case what he meant was Abu Bakr Ba'asyir and Aman Abdurrahman.

<sup>42</sup> Jami'at Ihyaa' Minhaaj Al-Sunnah, *A Brief Introduction to The Salafi Da'wah* (Ipswich, Suffolk, UK: Jami'at Ihyaa' Minhaaj Al-Sunnah, 1993), 5.

irresponsible people commit acts of violence by calling it a part of *jihad* in Islam. In fact it is not.”<sup>43</sup>

Ustadh Badr Salam's statement, although there appears to be an attempt to confront the West, still indicates his impartiality with acts of terrorism in the name of Islam. For example, it can be seen from his assertion that *jihad* must be carried out with certain limits and conditions. And he called people who do *jihad* in that way are irresponsible. Badrus Salam's attitude shows a view of *jihad* that takes into account the prevailing context in a place.

A view that tends to be more contextual emerged from Ustadh Muhammad Nur Ikhsan when he was interviewed about terrorism and radicalism. He said:

“Jihad in Islam depends on the needs. In the context of Indonesia which is experiencing many social probabilities, violent *jihad* is not justified. Indonesia is at a high level of poverty and there are many *mustad'afin*, so the *jihad* justified in this context is *jihad* with property (*bi al-amwal*). Building hospitals, helping the poor, and establishing educational institutions and other social actions is the only *jihad* justified. The case is different if Indonesia is in a state of war emergency.”<sup>44</sup>

Thus it appears their translation of *jihad* in Islam where *jihad* is not always interpreted as *al-Qital* (war) in a physical sense. If the several statements above are combined, it can be said that in the traditionalist-salafist group view, terrorism is not an act justified in Islam. On the other hand, taking a substantive *da'wah* path such as empowering the *ummah*, helping the poor and people in need is the most important part of *jihad* in today's global context.

If we make a comparison, in the context of Amsterdam-Holland, salafists have also been pressured when one of them committed murderous violence. For example after the murder of a liberal intellectual Van Gogh by the Hofstad group who was a visitor or congregation of the As-Sennah and El Tawheed mosques in The Hague and Amsterdam. Since that event, various salafi leaders have warned their followers against interpreting radical texts without consulting clerics.<sup>45</sup> Even in 2005, the Amsterdam priest Fawaz had urged several young Muslim women who were under the influence of the Hofstad Group to go to the police. In addition, in 2006 the Islamic Foundation for Culture and Welfare in Tilburg, led by the apolitical salafi priest Befta Selefie, published a booklet condemning suicide attacks, warning against preachers of hatred, and calling on Salafis to turn away from sinful violence.<sup>46</sup>

Such a preaching attitude towards terrorism shows that the traditionalist salafi group is quite open in understanding the term *jihad* in Islam, even though it is claimed to be a very textual group. The rejection of acts of terrorism naturally departs from the religious attitude of the group who see *da'wah* as more important than *jihad*.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, what this group has done in the form of changing the *da'wah* strategy from hard to soft strategy can also be said to be an effort to save itself from threats of the authorities.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Ustadh Yahya Badr Salam, and also see Rodja TV Youtube.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Ustadz Muhammad Nur Ikhsan.

<sup>45</sup> Joas Wagemakers, “Framing the ‘Threat to Islam’: al-Wala’ wa al-Bara’ in Salafi Discourse,” *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 30:4 (2008), 1-22.

<sup>46</sup> Beatrice de Graaf, “The Nexus between Salafism and Jihadism in the Netherlands,” *Combating Terrorism Center*, Volume 3, Issue 3, (March 2010).

<sup>47</sup> “Fatwa Ima m Ibn Ba z (D. 1420 H) Regarding Algeria's Problems,” 2-3, posted on (www.troid.org). See also ([http://www.allaahuakbar.net/scholars/albaani/debate\\_on\\_jihad.htm](http://www.allaahuakbar.net/scholars/albaani/debate_on_jihad.htm)), 9 December 2004.

### *Its Adaptive Attitudes to Social Context in Media Use*

Traditional salafi cultural efforts in displaying religious moderation can also be seen from their adaptive attitude towards modern products. The use of modern media as a means of da'wah and Islamic studies is a form of da'wah modernization which characterizes the accommodative attitude of salafi groups towards social change.<sup>48</sup> This appears to be a *wasathiyah* or moderate-progressive Islamic character, such as the Muhammadiyah organization.<sup>49</sup> Within this limit, it is certainly not always correct to judge the salafi as a group that is not open to accepting modernity.<sup>50</sup>

Among the quite influential media of salafi is *Rodja TV*. This TV did not stand alone. Its existence is supported by other media devices such as online streaming TV, *Rodja TV* on mobile, *Rodja TV* telegram, *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Whatsapp*, and so on. This makes it easily accessible to the public.

What they emphasize in media is an attitude of moderation. This can be seen from their efforts to build a positive image of *salaf da'wah* that solely fights for al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah and presents Islamic studies rejecting terrorism. For instance, during one of the program breaks on *Rodja TV* there was the phrase "*Islam is released from terrorist acts.*"<sup>51</sup> There is also an Islamic study entitled "*Disrupting Security is Not Part of Islam*"<sup>52</sup>; "*Islam Rahmatan Li al'Alamin*"<sup>53</sup>; "*The Nature of Radicalism*,"<sup>54</sup> and others. This seems to show their efforts to fight against terrorism through the media as an instrument of cultural da'wah.

In addition, the latest developments of salafi da'wah in *Rodja* indicate a tendency towards non-provocative behavior. It is different from its early days where provocative words such as *tabdi* ' , and even *takfir* of other groups were often found. However, lately they have taken more of the persuasive path, *tarbiyah* and *tasfhiyah*. This is evidenced by the chosen words in preaching. For example, to say something "*bid'ah*" this group replaces it with "a practice that did not exist at the time of the Prophet," although the essence is still *bid'ah* according to its version. This group also rarely uses the word "*kafir*," but replaces it with the statements such as "a wise Muslim is to accept the truth when given the truth and not disobey." Or when this group wanted to reject all kinds of *dhikr* and Islamic practices developed in society, it began to provide counter studies with the theme of "*the virtues of*

<sup>48</sup> In the salafi context, only the jihadi groups reject modernity. They were born as a result of industrialization in Europe in the 19th century. This group is a product of modernity. Assaf Moghadam, *The Salafi-Jihad As A Religious Ideology*, *Combating Terrorism Center*, Volume 1, Issue 3 (February 2008).

<sup>49</sup> Quoted from Azyumardi Azra's statement at the Contemporary Islamic World lecture, at Graduate School of Islamic Studies, State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2019.

<sup>50</sup> Salafi *Rodja* (Cileungsi) in particular appears to be a modernist salafi. It seems that its ideology is an elaboration of the model of the reformers Muhamamad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (tawhidic oriented) and Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha (the modernist). On modernist Islam, see Charles Kurzman, ed., *Modernist Islam 1840-1940: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in The Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Mansoor Moaddell and Kamran Taltoff, ed., *Contemporary Debates in Islam: "An Anthology of Modernist and Fundamentalist Thought* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

<sup>51</sup> *Rodja TV document*, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxdaVZ7V9CM>.

<sup>52</sup> Ustadh Ahmad Zainuddin, *Youtube of Rodja TV document*, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4SOR1n8dyw>.

<sup>53</sup> Syaikh Ali Hasan al-Halaby, *Youtube of Rodja TV document*, see <https://www.radiorodja.com/15573-islam-rahmatan-lilalamin-syaikh-ali-hasan-al-halabi/>.

<sup>54</sup> Ustadh Abu Qatadah, *Youtube Rodja TV document*, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTgSxQ0M5EQ>.

*dhikrs*," "sunnah practices," "dhikrs which were often underestimated," and so on.<sup>55</sup> Such titles and themes of the studies (*ta'lim*) seem to be salafi group efforts to refuse certain *amaliyah* (practices) in society in subtle ways. It no longer penetrates its understanding frontally, but by creating a counterculture. Besides, the theme of Islamic studies in *Rodja* has been quite varied. They do not only talk about *aqidah* and *ubudiyah* issues, but also discuss a lot of social, cultural, domestic, trade, and so on. This can be seen from the title of the lecture they presented. For instance, "Islam Upholds Gentleness," "Lukman's Will to His Children," "Adab and Ethics on Social Media," "the Beauty of the Holy Land," "Muslim Rights over Other Muslims," "Difficulties of the Hereafter," "The Importance of Silaturrahmi," and others.<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, its persuasive efforts are to provide Islamic studies (*ta'lim*) continuously and routinely by convincing the *ummah* that their da'wah is pure teaching originating from al-Qur'an and al-Sunnah, without calling other different groups *kafir* or heretical. Regarding this matter, Ustadh Abdul Qadir Jawas wrote in his book that the da'wah tradition that easily disbelieves others is the Khawarij tradition. *Salaf da'wah* is a polite da'wah and does not berate the da'wah messages recipients.<sup>57</sup>

The salafi attempts in presenting moderation through the media mean that textual-scriptural understanding does not always side with acts of violence as blamed by some. And most importantly, that the media content of preaching that reconciles and rejects acts of terrorism is a form of effective cultural da'wah in fighting radical terrorism, because the media has the power to build a reality. What is built by the media will be a value that can affect society.<sup>58</sup>

Traditionalist salafi preaching in the media against extremist terrorism is increasingly finding its significance when looking at *jihadi salafi* media such as *Arrahmah.com*, where almost every report presents about *jihad* in the sense of war (*al-Qital*). Of course, in this context, the Islamic da'wah (preaching) media presenting *jihad* in the sense of peace and avoiding violent displays such as those practiced by traditionalist salafi on *Rodja TV* are starting to get attention.

### *Its Closeness to Law Enforcement Officials*

In fighting against terrorism-extremism, the Cileungsi salafi group also familiarizes itself with legal institutions, in this case the Polda Metro Jaya. Apart from the polemic of their closeness to this legal institution, what is clear is that this closeness explicitly indicates that they are not a radical-terrorist movement wanted by the authorities. Ustadh Yahya Badr Salam himself is a salafi Ustadh who often fills recitation at Polda Metro Jaya, in addition to other Ustadhs.<sup>59</sup> The presence of salafi ustadh in this legal institution shows that the legal

<sup>55</sup> Ustadh Muhammad Nur Ikhsan, *Rodja TV YouTube*.

<sup>56</sup> See [www.rodjatv.com](http://www.rodjatv.com) to find various salafi dakwah videos on the official website of *Rodja TV*. The video is free to download and play.

<sup>57</sup> Abdul Qadir Jawas, *Mulia dengan Manhaj Salaf*, 65. Compare with Abu Hamza al-Misri, *The Khawarij and Jihad* (Birmingham, UK: Makhtabah al-Ansar, 2000).

<sup>58</sup> Anthony R. Dimaggio, *Massa Media, Mass Propaganda : Examining American News In The "War On Terror* (United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2009), 55-68.

<sup>59</sup> Based on the tracing, it turns out that the Polda Metro Jaya official website admin is a salafi follower. This certainly makes it easier for salafi ustadhs to appear giving da'wah at the Polda. According to Siti Tarawiyah's research, salafi also make government mosques their place of preaching. See Siti Tarawiyah, "Behind the

apparatus itself is not worried about the existence of this group who is often considered dangerous. It confirms that this group is not an extremist-terrorist movement or a group of self-bombers, and so on. Not to mention, for some time, *Radio Rodja* itself was once an Islamic radio that was always played at Polda Metro Jaya.<sup>60</sup> However, due to protests from some people<sup>61</sup>, the radio, which was installed on the official website of Polda Metro Jaya, had to be revoked.<sup>62</sup>

One thing to consider is that the Cileungsi salafi community is located behind the Cileungsi Police office.<sup>63</sup> They are closer to the supervision of the authorities. If this salafi is an Islamic group carrying out acts of terrorism, then the Cileungsi Police apparatus would be the first institution to reprimand, arrest, and even close their recitations. I, when attending the Friday prayer at the al-Barkah Mosque in the Cileungsi complex, saw several policemen were also participating in the prayer at this mosque.<sup>64</sup> This seems to increasingly show that the Cileungsi salafi community is a purists salafi group that does not have an orientation of preaching by means of violence.

### *Its Charities and Social Cares*

In addition to preaching verbally, da'wah is carried out by cultural actions, such as multiplying Islamic sites, translating the Quran, hadith books, and other Islamic books (especially those with *salaf manhaj*), and publishing Islamic magazines such as Sunnah magazine, al-Furqon magazine, including women's magazines, as well as the development of educational institutions, such as general schools and Islamic boarding schools.

One of the salafi educational institutions located in the Cileungsi salafi complex is the Cahaya Sunnah Education Foundation. This school has a vision: to become a quality Islamic elementary school based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah with the understanding of *salaf-salih* that provides intelligent students with a good character mastering of knowledge and

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Burqa: A Study on Ideology and Social Role of Salafi Women in South Kalimantan," *Paper of AICIS XII*, 1485-1500.

<sup>60</sup> Radio Rodja has been posted on the official website of the Polda Metro Jaya. In addition, under the *Radio Rodja* icon, there is also a menu called "Advice for Salaf Ulama," which when clicked on will lead to the courtyard of the Masjid al-Kautsar. On that page, there are various articles of Islamic studies such as: "Turning on the Sunnah of the Prophet who is increasingly estranged," "Let's Follow the Sunnah," "Don't Dispute the Sunnah," "Don't Mock the Sunnah," "Know the Characteristics of Ahl Sunnah," "This Religion is Perfect," "Bid'ah: A New Case Infatuated in Religion," "Why Should Follow the Manhaj Salaf?" "Get to know the history and understanding of Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah," and many others.

<sup>61</sup> One of the comments appeared regarding *Radio Rodja* on the Polda Metro Jaya website was a sub-discussion in an article entitled "Polda Metro Jaya Site Infiltrated by Wahhabi." It is said, "Why Rodja Radio, not NU Radio." In this article it is emphasized, "Nahdatul Ulama as the largest moderate Islamic organization in Indonesia also has da'wah facilities, such as NU Radio which can be accessed online, but why is what is displayed on the Polda Metro Jaya (PMJ) website is Radio-Rodja, not Radio NU? Likewise with the recitation site, why is Wahhabi's blog displayed, not NU Online's official website or Muhammadiyah's website? This comment is sufficient to show the disappointment of some people.

<sup>62</sup> According to Polda Metro Jaya Administrator, Mujiarto Karuk, "many members of Polda Metro Jaya have moved to Manhaj Salaf since 2008 under the guidance of Ustadz Subhan Bawazer, and in 2010 I installed the Rodja Radio Link on the website that I manage." See further [http://facebook.com/groups/178870065487878/permalink/646112385430308/?Stream\\_ref=2](http://facebook.com/groups/178870065487878/permalink/646112385430308/?Stream_ref=2) (Accessed March 2020).

<sup>63</sup> Observation Results in January 2020.

<sup>64</sup> Observation Results in January 2020.

technology.<sup>65</sup> In addition, the curriculum in this school is developed with an awareness of science and technology developing dynamically. Therefore, the spirit of curriculum content provides learners with learning experiences to follow and take advantage of developments in science and technology.<sup>66</sup> And the purpose of this school is to assist the government in providing quality education for the society.

From this it can be seen that the Salafi School has a progressive orientation, namely an education that is dynamic and open to change, is not rigid and does not lead to being left behind. It seems that with educational institutions, they want to form a society with al-Qur'an roots, mastering the treasures of modern science and technology in order to support the Indonesian government's programs. This is certainly a cultural step they take in producing qualified students in general sciences, but still rooted in the al-Qur'an and al-Hadith for the benefit of the nation and state. Moreover, the education they offer is a modern salafi Islamic education. In turn, this education model will give birth to students who are mature in religion and are not easily tempted to commit careless acts, such as acts of terrorism.

In addition, this Cileungsi traditionalist salafi is also active in social activities. For example, during the recent Ramadan, this group made a special Ramadan Kitchen program that was broadcast on *Rodja TV* for 1000 Palestinians.<sup>67</sup> In addition, they have also distributed IDR 1.12 billion in aid to Syria through the *Muhsinin Rodja program*. This is as written on their official website:

“In order to practice the words of *Allah Ta'ala* and the words of the Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h who teaches us to help each other in kindness and piety, then through the *Humanitarian Care Program*, we are again distributing donations which are the mandate of *Indonesian Muhsinin* to Muslim victim's war in Syria. The total *infak* (donation) that has been distributed is 85,000 USD (1.12 billion IDR). Meanwhile, the donation will be in the form of baby milk and necessities for children; compensation for orphans and families of *syuhada'insha Allah*; and logistics of basic foodstuffs for civilian war victims.

We say *jazakumullahu khairan* to all Indonesian *muhsinins* who have invested a portion of their sustenance for our brothers in Syria. May Allah give rewards and blessings to the *Muhsinins* especially in this blessed month of *Ramadan*. And may Allah give His help to the Muslims in Syria.”<sup>68</sup>



Rodja Cares for Syria banner

<sup>65</sup> <https://sdicahayasunnah.wordpress.com> (Accessed in 2020).

<sup>66</sup> <https://sdicahayasunnah.wordpress.com> (Accessed in 2020).

<sup>67</sup> See [www.radiorodja.com/2018/05/30/program-dapur-ramadhan-untuk-muslim-gaza-ramadhan-2018](http://www.radiorodja.com/2018/05/30/program-dapur-ramadhan-untuk-muslim-gaza-ramadhan-2018) (Accessed 2020).

<sup>68</sup> See [www.rodjatv.com](http://www.rodjatv.com) (Accessed 2020).

The humanitarian orientation displayed by the salafi reinforces its impartiality towards acts of violence. At the same time, this group is actually involved in activities caring about humanity. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to call this salafi traditionalist group an Islamic movement seeking to build a salafi Islamic society but moderate in religion. It seems that this group is the same as the Islamic organization such as Muhammadiyah, which is textual oriented in Islamic understandings but balance its movements with cultural efforts.

## Conclusion

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that purist salafi da'wah such as the Rodja-TV (Cileungsi) salafi community can contribute to social and religious harmonization efforts. It seems that this group is starting to realize that in the context of preaching to a pluralistic society, the preaching approach using cultural-persuasive ways is much more effective than attacking actions, let alone physical violence.

Salafi of this type take a moderate path in rejecting radicalism and terrorism by: rejecting suicide bombings, combating acts of terror even against non-Muslims, changing the language of da'wah to be wiser, avoiding involvement in practical politics, conducting recitations in government agencies including in the police office, building mosques independently for the needs of *ubudiyah* in order to avoid clashes with people with different beliefs, and establishing educational institutions as a cultural effort to instill Islamic and Indonesian values. To some extent, these efforts can be considered as part of the path of religious moderation.

What is done by the traditional Salafi Cileungsi as described in this paper is important to consider as a new perspective in seeing the existence of salafi groups in the Indonesian context. Of course, the religious moderation that this group strives for can be examined further from various perspectives so that a definite pattern can be found.

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