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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Azca, M. N. (2024). A "Maverick Salafi Political Jihadist" in a Turbulent Period: A Biographical Study of Dr Fauzi. *Politics and Governance*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.7984>

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A “Maverick Salafi Political Jihadist” in a Turbulent Period: A Biographical Study of Dr Fauzi

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Submitted: 13 December 2023 **Accepted:** 27 March 2024 **Published:** 29 May 2024

Issue: This article is part of the issue “Indonesian Heroes and Villains: National Identity, Politics, Law, and Security” edited by Nathan Franklin (Charles Darwin University) and Hans Hägerdal (Linnaeus University), fully open access at <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.i380>

Abstract

A biographical study through the lens of Mills’ sociological imagination and Erikson’s identity crisis provides a unique understanding of Dr Fauzi AR, a dedicated Islamist. Fauzi grew up in a devout Muslim family in Kauman, Yogyakarta, the heartland of the modernist Islamic organisation Muhammadiyah. He was educated in Muhammadiyah schools and eventually became a qualified medical doctor. He was politically active in the Islamic United Development Party and joined Laskar Jihad, a Salafi-Wahabi paramilitary group, during the inter-religious conflict in Maluku in 2000. This article argues that the political turbulence during the democratic transition in 1998–1999 led Fauzi to have an identity crisis, which spurred his desire to participate in jihad (holy war). Afterwards, Fauzi became a reformed “maverick post-jihadist,” in that he was unpredictable yet competent. He was unorthodox in his methods, remaining active in mainstream political Islam through the United Development Party while also engaging in physical jihad, which is contradictory because participation in partisan politics is forbidden by the Salafi doctrine. He also remained a heavy smoker although smoking is forbidden by Salafi religious decree. He further defied Salafism by supporting his wife in an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the national parliament as a member of the secular-nationalist party Gerindra in the 2009 election. This case study of Fauzi AR reflects the complex and multifaceted nature of political Islam and Islamic movements in the post-Soeharto era, including those who resorted to extremism and violence to achieve greater Islamisation of society.

Keywords

democratic transition; Indonesia; jihad; political Islam; Salafi

1. Introduction

The two quotes below reflect the nature of the man Dr Fauzi AR:

I wish my life will end in an undisputed land of jihad, either in the holy land or in the holy war, either in Moro [the Philippines] or in Afghanistan... (Azca, 2011, p. 145)

Sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society....No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersection within a society has completed its intellectual journey. (Mills, 1959, p. 6)

Dr Fauzi was both a religious and political phenomenon in Indonesian history because he was a prominent mainstream Muslim who became a jihadist (Muslim holy war fighter). To help understand his biography, I apply Mills' (1959, p. 6) concept of "sociological imagination," as it "enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society." Using this theoretical framework, I examine how this Muslim activist transformed himself in the early period of the political reform movement (Reformasi) in 1998, from initially being a proponent of peaceful forms of political Islam into a supporter of radical and jihad (holy war) interpretations. The behaviour of Fauzi is inexorably linked to changes in Indonesian society and how he responded to them based on his personal values. Erikson's (1968) concept of "identity crisis" provides a useful method for understanding Fauzi's dramatic shift to become a jihadist during the turbulent period of Indonesia's democratic transition. When such a crisis happens, people experiment with other roles and identities, which can eventually lead to a new identity or it can exacerbate identity confusion. Fauzi is an example of an Islamist who keenly and bravely struggled for democracy and political reform when Indonesia was under the authoritarian rule of Soeharto's New Order Regime (1966–1998) but suffered personal and moral anguish when Indonesia did not adopt a more Islamic political culture. His mentor, Amien Rais, established an inclusive pluralist political party, the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional; PAN), instead of an Islamist one. Fauzi felt that Rais had betrayed the idea of Islamic revival and reform, which seeks to renew Islam as the principal governing authority according to shariah (Islamic law) and purify Islam of innovations (*bida*). Fauzi's behaviour in later life was a paradox: He was the son of the famous, moderate leader of Muhammadiyah, who chose not to follow his father's example, instead becoming an activist of the Salafi-Wahabi movement and joining jihad. However, towards the end of his life, he engaged with the secular-nationalist party Gerindra (Gerakan Indonesia Raya, or Greater Indonesia Movement) to support the political career of his wife.

To properly develop an analysis of Fauzi, we must understand the use of the term "Salafi political jihadist," as applied here. To this end, Fauzi was an Islamic political activist who later engaged in Salafi activism and participated in the jihad mobilisation in Maluku. However, his jihad participation in Maluku extended to the Salafi-Wahabi network, which rivalled the Salafi jihadist one in the field. Therefore, although having personal sympathy for some jihadist activists, he was not one among them because, from official doctrinal arguments, Salafism and Salafi jihadism are not compatible (International Crisis Group, 2004).

2. Background

Dr Fauzi AR (1956–2021) was born and raised in a devout Muhammadiyah family and communal village (*kampung*) milieu, but later in life, he abandoned mainstream Islam to become a radical Salafi jihadist. Because of his upbringing, he was naturally a “Muhammadiyah Muslim.” Muhammadiyah is a modernist and reformist Islamic organisation, first established in Indonesia in 1912, and today is the country’s second-largest mass Islamic organisation after Nahdlatul Ulama (NU; Franklin, 2020). In 2013, Muhammadiyah had about 21.5 million followers, or 7.9% of the total national population of 270 million (Bush, 2014, p. 7; Statistics Indonesia, 2020). Fauzi later became politically active in the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan; PPP), the only Islamic political party permitted during the New Order era. Towards the end of the New Order, he became a strong believer in the democratic movement under the leadership of Amien Rais, the chairman of Muhammadiyah from 1995 to 1998, who became a leading figure in the Reformasi movement. However, Fauzi was disappointed when Rais established a new pluralist and inclusive party instead of an Islamist one, like the PPP, which held Islam as its ideological base (*asas*) when it was allowed to do so following Reformasi, rather than the state ideology of Pancasila (five pillars: religion, humanity, unity, democracy, and social justice), which PAN chose to adhere to. Between 1985 and 1998, the New Order regime forced all political parties to hold Pancasila as their sole ideological platform, but Reformasi ended this obligation. The Islamic parties performed poorly in the 1999 national election, which was dominated by the secular-nationalist parties, leading Fauzi to doubt mainstream political Islam, so he joined the conservative Salafi movement. His activism and beliefs extended to participation in the jihad in Maluku, where deadly inter-communal violence occurred from 1999 to 2002.

It is also important to situate Fauzi’s position in the nexus of Muhammadiyah, PAN, PPP, and Laskar Jihad. Muhammadiyah is one of the largest Muslim organisations in Indonesia, and indeed the world, with approximately 21.5 million followers (using data from Bush, 2014). Founded on 18 November 1912 in Yogyakarta by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, Muhammadiyah aims to advance society in terms of modern education as well as social, economic and political development that is compatible according to verified interpretations (*ijtihad*) of Islam (Franklin, 2014, p. 20). It does this in two main ways. Firstly, by conducting Islamic propagation for *amar ma’ruf nahi munkar* (commanding the right and forbidding the wrong) and Islamic reform (*tajdid*; Franklin, 2014, pp. 275–276). Secondly, through establishing social welfare agencies, programmes, and modern educational institutions and activities under the direction of policies and responsibilities of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah (Muhammadiyah, 2010). In the landscape of Indonesian Islam, Muhammadiyah is commonly seen as a modernist Islamic organisation, as opposed to the larger NU, the main representative of traditionalist Islam. While this may at times lead to differing perspectives, these two mass religious organisations are not in conflict, except in exceptional circumstances, for example, when Muhammadiyah members joined radical groups like the Islamic Defenders’ Front (Front Pembela Islam) which clashed with NU (Franklin, 2009; see also Franklin, 2014, pp. 274–276). Indeed, Latif (2015) contends that Muhammadiyah and NU together have been the anchor of the public ethics that are the main reference point and the moral development of the nation. They reflect the Islam that has developed in Indonesia over the past half a millennium (Franklin, 2020).

Muhammadiyah was once part of Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Masyumi), which started as an Islamic organisation in October 1943, and became a mass Muslim political party on 7 November 1945 (Reid, 1974, p. 84; Ricklefs, 2001, p. 255), spurred on by the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies from March

1942 to August 1945. Initially, Muhammadiyah and NU cooperated in this party, but NU left to form its own party in 1952. While NU continued to maintain a political party throughout the Soekarno presidency (1945–1966), Masyumi was disbanded by presidential decree in 1960 (Siregar, 2013). Muhammadiyah remained largely independent of party politics from this time until 1998. As Rais (1995) argued at one time, organisations should concern themselves with “high politics,” that is, the politics of values, instead of “low politics,” involving practical, electoral politics, which is less prestigious because of money politics, horse-trading, and so on. However, when Rais was Muhammadiyah’s chairman, he chose to enter “low political” competition, to reference Rais’ own argument, by establishing PAN. Although PAN presented and promoted itself as an inclusive and pluralist party, it was, nevertheless, based mainly on Muhammadiyah communities and is still a representative of Muhammadiyah in the political realm (“PAN masih representasi Muhammadiyah,” 2023).

In contrast to PAN, PPP is an Islamic party established in 1973. PPP was the forced amalgamation of four main Islamic political parties, namely NU, Parmusi (Partai Muslimin Indonesia, or Indonesian Muslim Party), PSII (Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia, or Islamic Union Party of Indonesia), and Perti (Partai Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah, or Union of Islamic Education), by the Soeharto regime. Parmusi was established as the new face of Masyumi after the latter was banned by President Soekarno in 1960 for its involvement in regional rebellions. Parmusi was founded by Islamic leaders from various organisations, including Muhammadiyah, Al Irsyad, Jamiatul Washliyah, and Mathlaul Anwar. In another historical connection, Fauzi’s father, AR Fachruddin, was one of the Islamic leaders who signed the charter of Parmusi’s establishment. Its first chairman was H. Djarnawi Hadikusumo, a leader of Muhammadiyah. The strong historical bond between Muhammadiyah, Parmusi, and PPP attracted Fauzi to the only Islamic party allowed in Indonesia from 1973 to 1998 (Hakiem, 2021, pp. 248–249).

Unlike Muhammadiyah and PAN, Laskar Jihad, roughly translated as “warrior of jihad,” was a paramilitary wing of the Salafi movement that emerged in Indonesia in the mid-1980s. According to Hasan (2005, p. 161), Laskar Jihad can be seen as a religious sect that is a “strict religious organization, demanding complete loyalty, unwavering belief, and rigid adherence to the distinctive lifestyle of its members.” Laskar Jihad is an example of pious Islamic activism, with its main concern being to safeguard Muslim identity, Islamic faith, and moral order against the forces of non-Muslims, and its lack of interest in gaining formal political power (Azca, 2011). Fauzi’s move towards Laskar Jihad could be viewed as a clear move away from mainstream politics and the Islamic political establishment. However, such an interpretation is problematic, as he continued activities with mainstream parties, including PPP, until at least August 2003, and again when he supported Gerindra in 2009.

To understand Fauzi’s unpredictable and transformative life and to build an argument as to why and how Fauzi had an identity crisis which eventually resulted in his joining jihad in Maluku, some background mapping is required. This will be divided into several parts. Firstly, I will briefly cover Indonesia’s democratic transition, during which Fauzi experienced an identity crisis and adopted jihad as part of his identity and his moral obligation to Islam. Secondly, there will be an examination of his life from childhood to middle age, when he joined the jihad. Thirdly, the theoretical framework of “sociological imagination” will help us to understand and discuss him as a political jihadist. Fourthly, in the broader context, I examine the link between the biography of Fauzi and the historical dynamics of Indonesia.

Most of the information on Fauzi used in this article is based on field research conducted in 2008 for my doctoral research through a series of life history interviews with him and participatory observation in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, both located in Central Java. Information was complemented with data collected from news media, especially after his passing on 11 July 2021, and interviews with Islamist activists and politicians who were close to Fauzi from the time they were young activists.

3. Democratic Transition: A Turbulent Political Era

Indonesia had a turbulent and uncertain democratic transition in 1998 and 1999, which witnessed the rise of collective violence and the emergence of Islamist movements in some parts of Indonesia. It is within this context that Fauzi had an identity crisis that eventually led him to undergo a change of identity and allegiance by joining Laskar Jihad, a paramilitary wing of the Wahabi-Salafi movement.

Ethier (1990, p. 4) defines a democratic transition as “an interval between an authoritarian and a democratic regime.” After the resignation of authoritarian President Soeharto on 21 May 1998, a rocky transition towards electoral democracy followed, which saw the mushrooming of collective violence in several parts of the archipelago during the preliminary stages of Reformasi (Tadjoeddin, 2002; Varshney et al., 2004). According to O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986, p. 6), each transitional period is characterised by uncertainty, in which:

Transitions are delimited, on the one hand, by the launching of the process of dissolution of an authoritarian regime and, on the other hand, by the installation of some form of democracy, the return to some form of authoritarian rule, or the emergence of a revolutionary alternative.

A transitional period is commonly characterised by the dramatic decline of the government’s ability to deal with problems that arise in the context of the collapse of an established authority. Snyder (2000, p. 310) argues that the risk of an outbreak of communal conflict increases in the early stages of democratisation. Tadjoeddin (2002) and Varshney et al. (2004) confirm this hypothesis in the case of Indonesia following the fall of the Soeharto regime (see Figure 1 below).

Two of the largest, bloody, and protracted cases of communal violence in Indonesia were the religious conflicts in Ambon, Maluku, and Poso, Central Sulawesi. In Maluku, between 5,000 and 10,000 people were killed, and as many as 700,000, or nearly a third of the population, were displaced (International Crisis Group, 2002). In Central Sulawesi, at least 1,000 people were killed, with many more injured, and at least 100,000 displaced (Human Rights Watch, 2002, p. 2). Both conflicts also attracted thousands of non-local jihadists, joining what they perceived as a “religious war” (Hasan, 2005, 2006). Thus, it became an arena of jihad for Muslim holy fighters (*mujahidin*) from different parts of the archipelago. It was during this period that Fauzi became interested in joining jihad in Maluku. This was a “critical juncture” in history when a political system comes under tension and thus political institutions and the principles of national models are renegotiated by individuals and groups (Bertrand, 2004, p. 20).

Regarding causes that led to the outbreak of religious communal violence in Maluku, in my previous work (Azca, 2003, pp. 26–27), I argued that it was a combination of both national and local factors: (a) authoritarianism ending and the inability of the national government to deal with extensive problems arising from a change

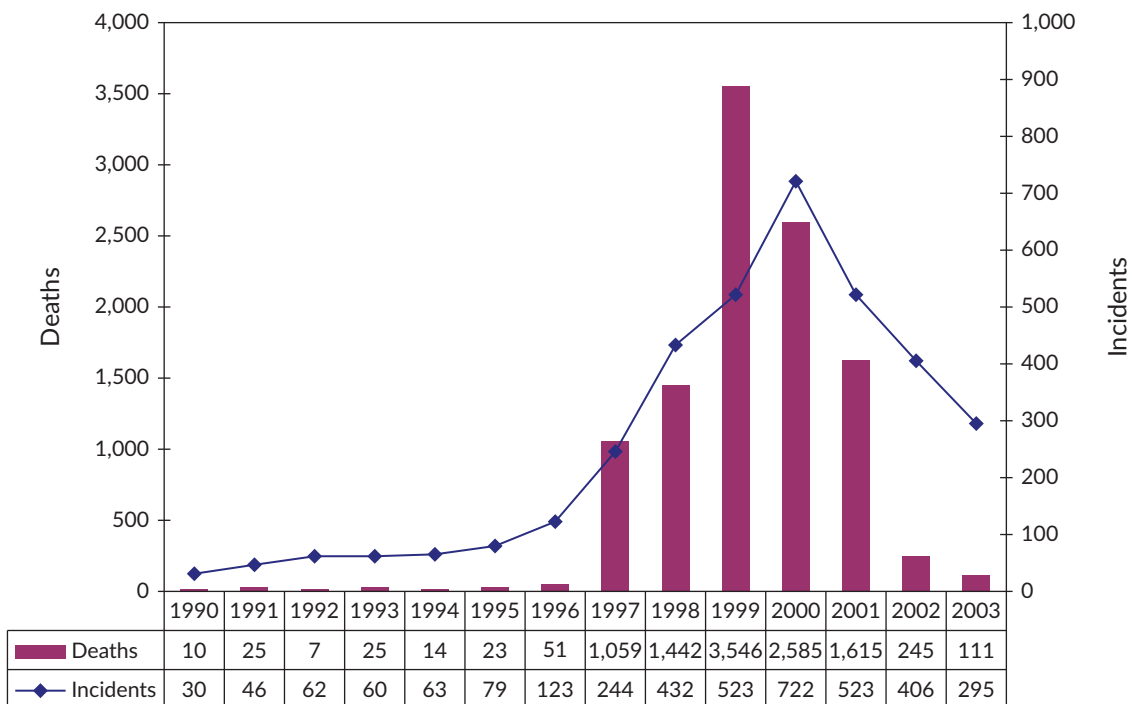


Figure 1. Death and incidents of non-secessionist collective violence in Indonesia 1990–2003. Source: Varshney et al. (2004, p. 23).

in the system, (b) resistance towards political reforms by some elements of the New Order regime, (c) the re-emergence of the politics of *aliran* (streams) from the late Soeharto era onwards, (d) deteriorating economic situation following the Asian monetary crisis (or *krismon*) in 1997–1998, and (e) timing of the general elections in June 1999. At the local level factors included: (a) the inability of the local government to deal with social unrest in the aftermath of the toppling of the New Order regime, (b) the changed composition of the Ambonese population due to Soeharto’s transmigration policy that brought thousands of Javanese and Sumatran Muslims to the area, (c) worsening economic situation as a consequence of *krismon*, (d) increased tensions between Muslims and Christians, and (e) politicisation of religion prior to the general elections in June 1999.

Fears of the break up of Indonesia, exemplified by East Timor’s independence, ideological threats from “liberalism,” regional autonomy, together with simmering local inter-ethnic tensions (with the tacit involvement of hostile elements of the military) were the conditions at the time the Christian–Muslim conflict erupted.

4. Dr Fauzi’s Early Life: 1968–1990

Fauzi was the sixth of seven children of Haji Abdul Razak Fachruddin (Pak AR, or Mister AR), the longest-serving national chairman of Muhammadiyah from 1968 to 1990. Fauzi grew up in the Muslim area of Kauman, Yogyakarta, the proverbial home of the Muhammadiyah movement. All of his schooling was completed in the Muhammadiyah educational system. Thus, his personal identity and social practices as a Muslim, and simultaneously a Muhammadiyah follower, developed from his early childhood. Fauzi portrayed himself as a rebel by trying to emulate his grandfather, Kyai Fachruddin, who was removed from his position as a religious patron in the Pakualaman Palace, Yogyakarta, because of his protest against the palace’s

collaboration with the Dutch colonialists. Fauzi was also known as a fighter (*tukang kelahi*) with strong anti-Chinese feelings (Azca, 2011, p. 164).

After graduating from a prestigious Muhammadiyah high school, Fauzi studied medicine at Gadjah Mada University, which has one of the best medical programmes in Indonesia. Later he entered specialist study as an anaesthetist at the same university. During this time, his maverick tendencies became apparent. Instead of becoming an activist in the Muhammadiyah-aligned youth wing, namely the Muhammadiyah Association of University Students (Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah; IMM), he chose to become involved in the National Movement of Indonesian Students (Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia; GMNI; Azca, 2011, p. 164). IMM and GMNI are in "ideological opposition" and this conflict often played out on university campuses across Indonesia.

So, why did Fauzi make such an extraordinary move? When asked, he said that it was a way to protest against the "bossy" attitudes of some senior activists of the Association of Muslim Students whom he knew well. Some of them even stayed in rented rooms in his house. Following his graduation from Gadjah Mada University in 1995, he became an activist and was elected chairman of the Islamic political party PPP for the province of Yogyakarta, a position which he held from 1997 to 2003. This was a transformative period, particularly because of Indonesia's Reformasi movement, which ended the New Order regime and saw four presidents: Soeharto, Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), and Megawati. It was also a time when devolution began to transfer executive power and authority to the districts and provinces through "big bang" decentralisation, and local elections became more important (Shoosmith et al., 2020). However, the PPP failed to become a significant party in Yogyakarta. In successive elections since 1999, the secular-nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan) has been the dominant party. In 1997, PPP had 14 out of 39 seats in the Yogyakarta provincial parliament, which was supposed to be a five-year term but ended prematurely in 1999 because of Reformasi (Limardi, 2006, p. 82). PPP's seats were reduced to just two out of 40 at the 1999 election, and in 2004 it further reduced to only one (Limardi, 2006, pp. 92–93; Mahdi, 2018, pp. 57, 102). Although, it must be noted that in the elections of 1977, 1982, 1987, and 1992, PDI had more seats than PPP (Al-Hamdi, 2017, p. 210). However, in July 1996, due to Soeharto's interference causing a rift in the party's leadership, including a physical attack on PDI's headquarters resulting in two deaths, 181 injured, and 124 arrests, the party was in disarray and suffered heavy losses at the 1997 election (O'Rourke, 2002, pp. 10–15) to the benefit of PPP. The situation in Yogyakarta was reflected nationally; in the parliament of 1997–1999, PPP had 89 out of 425 seats but fell to 58 in 1999–2004 (Adryamarthanino & Ningsih, 2021; Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2015). In recent years it has been reduced to the smallest party in the national parliament, barely passing the 4% threshold to be awarded seats. In the last five-year period of 2019–2024, it had just 19 out of 575 seats in the national parliament, while in the Yogyakarta provincial parliament it was only one out of 55 seats; ironically, two newly elected members were Amien Rais sons, namely Hanum Salsabiela Rais and Ahmad Baihaqy, representing their father's old party PAN ("575 anggota DPR," 2019; Kuntadi, 2019).

5. Abandoning Amien Rais

The final year of Soeharto's New Order regime presented challenges for Fauzi. When Amien Rais, then the chairman of the Muhammadiyah National Board (1995–1998), launched a political campaign against the Soeharto regime, he took the risk of becoming a special aide to Rais. As it turned out, this potentially

dangerous move for Fauzi had no real negative consequences, as the Soeharto regime collapsed, allowing a new political system and civil society to emerge. The direction of political reforms led Fauzi to take a different path to Rais. Instead of establishing or leading a purely Islamic party as demanded by Fauzi, Rais established PAN, a Pancasila-based party, in 1998. After receiving support from various political groups during his efforts to achieve democratic reform, including from nationalist and secular groups, Rais took the view that an Islamic party would be “too small and narrow for his great political ambitions” to win the Indonesian presidency (Hidayaturrahman, 2023). At the time, Gus Dur, national chairman of NU (1984–1999) and leader of the secular inclusive National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa), was championing moderate forms of Islam, and he became president from 1999 to 2001. This demonstrated that moderate forms of political Islam were more popular than strictly Islamist political parties. Despite the fact that Gus Dur was impeached because he was erratic and unpredictable as president, we should not underestimate his popularity, even in death, and acknowledge the fact that no one has replaced him (Franklin, 2017, 2024). Despite Rais’ initial image as the face of reform, even achieving the country’s third highest political position, after the president and vice president, as speaker of the People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat), he quickly became unpopular. His presidential ambitions ended in failure, for all to see in his poor performance in the 2004 presidential election, coming fourth out of five candidates, achieving less than 15% of the vote (IFES, 2004). Prior to this, he had long fallen out with both Gus Dur and Megawati, and after 2004, Rais gradually disappeared from the public eye.

For Fauzi, Rais’ political pivot towards pluralism was a betrayal of the Islamic struggle to deepen Islamisation through Islamic revival (*tajdid*) and following the traditions of Muslim society (*sunnah*). Moreover, rule by an Islamic party was the only way to achieve not just Islamic modernity and renewal (*pembaruan*), but also a state governed by *shariah* (Islamic) law. Fauzi was deeply disappointed and deserted Rais. Ironically, in April 2021, Rais was formally appointed the chairman of the Advisory Council for the Islamic Community Party (Partai Ummat), a party that explicitly holds Islam, rather than Pancasila, as its ideological foundation. So, Fauzi’s disappointment in Rais’ political decisions was not entirely misguided, and perhaps he knew something about Rais that has only recently come out publicly, that Rais was an Islamist at heart. However, Fauzi could not wait and resolved his identity crisis by taking a new pathway and engaging directly with a Salafi movement (Azca, 2011, p. 172).

6. Departure to Laskar Jihad (Late 2000)

The loss of Rais as a role model disoriented Fauzi. In search of a new direction and purpose, Fauzi found strong and charismatic leadership in Ja’far Umar Thalib, a young Salafi preacher who later became the commander of Laskar Jihad, the radical Islamic militia linked to sectarian violence in Central Sulawesi and Maluku (Hasan, 2005, 2006). Fauzi had invited Thalib, a veteran of the Soviet-Afghan War (1979–1989), who fought against the Soviet Union, to give sermons at weekly sessions held at his home in Yogyakarta from 1998 to 2000. His relationship with Thalib as a cleric and religious teacher became closer when the Maluku conflict erupted in January 1999 and Laskar Jihad was established in early 2000. Fauzi provided crucial financial and political support, before officially joining the movement in late 2000 (Azca, 2011).

Laskar Jihad was the paramilitary wing of the Communication Forum of the Salafis (Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama’ah). After the establishment of the Communication Forum of the Salafis, which was facilitated by the Salafi predication (*da’wah*) network that had spread since the 1980s, the Salafis began to

launch a massive jihad to attract support, and enlist members, train *mujadin*, and raise funds from donors (Hasan, 2005, p. 112). Under the leadership of Thalib, the Communication Forum of the Salafis attempted to convince civilian and military elites to provide support and held public rallies in several Indonesian cities to raise awareness and attract community support. Furthermore, the Salafis also mobilised their transnational networks by requesting a fatwa (religious decree) from religious authorities in the Middle East, especially those linked to Syeikh Abdul Aziz Abdullah Bin Baz, the former head of the Saudi Arabian Council of Senior Ulama, to provide religious blessing for their cause.

7. Discussion

7.1. Sociological Imagination of a Political Jihadist

To discuss the link between the biography of Fauzi and the historical dynamics of Indonesian society in political transition, I employ the distinction of two concepts of “personal troubles of milieu” and “the public issues of social structure” (Mills, 1959, p. 8). According to Mills (1959, p. 8):

Troubles occur within the character of the individual and within the range of his immediate relations with others...[therefore] the statement and the resolution of troubles properly lie within the individual as a biographical entity and within the scope of his immediate milieu—the social setting that is directly open to his personal experience and to some extent his willful activity.

Trouble is defined as a private matter, where “values cherished by an individual are felt by him to be threatened,” whereas an issue is a public matter, when “some values cherished by the public are felt to be threatened” (Mills, 1959, p. 8). Therefore, issues:

Have to do with the organization of many such milieux into the institutions of a historical society as a whole, with the ways in which various milieux overlap and interpenetrate to form the larger structure of social and historical life. (Mills, 1959, p. 8)

Fauzi’s personal trouble was reflected in his narrative of deep disappointment toward a role-model Islamist leader which he found and admired in the figure of Amien Rais, his mentor both as a Muhammadiyah activist and as a pious Muslim individual. His long-time commitment and dedication to become a sort of personal assistant and “bodyguard” to his hero suddenly collapsed, which caused him disillusionment when Rais unexpectedly abandoned the ideal of an Islamic political party. Such personal troubles occurred in the context of public issues concerning the future of political Islam, which culminated in Fauzi questioning his personal values and experiencing an identity crisis at the age of 43.

To analyse Fauzi’s personal troubles I borrow the concept of identity crisis contended by Erikson (1968, pp. 16–17) as “a necessary turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshalling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation.” Although it is usually applied to adolescents and young adults, but adapted here, Erikson (1968) argued that personal growth and societal change, and simultaneously identity crisis in individual biography and present-day crises in historical transformation, cannot be divorced since the two help to explain each other. Thus, identity crises may happen at different stages of the life cycle, as in the case of Fauzi. His identity crisis occurred during a

dramatic political transition, especially following the bewildering turn of his role model leader Amien Rais, abandoning pure Islamism and favouring the Islamic-inclusive Pancasila state. Adapting the theories of Erikson (1968) and Mills (1959), this article argues that Fauzi experienced a crisis in identity, which was compounded by uncertainty and failure in the political upheaval of 1998–1999, which was a “critical juncture” in modern Indonesian history (Bertrand, 2004). He endeavoured to solve his moral dilemmas through physical jihad, which we can describe as a kind of “act of identity” (Marranci, 2009).

7.2. Fauzi’s Jihad as an Act of Identity

Fauzi’s engagement with Salafism, especially through weekly sessions with Ja’far Umar Thalib over a two-year period, was a kind of indoctrination, which eventually led him to engage in jihad in September 2000. His close relationship with Thalib kept him informed about the objectives and activities of Laskar Jihad from the very beginning. As the leader of the political party PPP, Fauzi claimed to endorse Laskar Jihad’s establishment, both politically and financially. But this was not enough for a highly committed man of action like Fauzi, especially after he learned from the media that a massacre had taken place in Tobelo, North Maluku, resulting in the killing of several hundred Muslims. As a consequence, he decided to join the jihad in Maluku, stating “I had to retaliate!” (Azca, 2011, p. 174).

Marranci (2006, 2009, p. 20) defines an act of identity as a “self-correcting mechanism in response to drastic changes in environment, producing a deep crisis between the autobiographical self and identity.” Jihad as an expression of identity was also reflected in Fauzi’s explanation of his decision to join the jihad, where he made a distinction between the politician (*politikus*) and the religious person (*agamawan*). He said, “A politician talks a lot about jihad but never takes any action; a man of religion talks about jihad and simultaneously takes action” (Azca, 2011, p. 174). By engaging in jihad, he took charge and moved from being a “politician” to becoming a “man of religion.”

The term jihad is an important concept that should be explained. Jihad is one of the most prominent Arabic terms in the contemporary world and has highly contested meanings from “holy war” (jihad of the sword) to “*da’wa*” (jihad of the pen/tongue) to “inner struggle” (jihad of the self). Although, in the current context, the word jihad is more widely associated with acts of violence and terror, this interpretation was originally called “the smaller jihad,” in contrast to the peaceful form that is “the greater jihad,” meaning personal struggle to rid one’s soul of greed, hatred, and egotism (Azca, 2018). In the context of this article, the term mainly refers to participation in religious violence, as in the case of Maluku, a clash between Muslim and Christian groups which was perceived by Fauzi and many Muslim activists as a holy war (see Hasan, 2005, 2006).

7.3. Fauzi: The “Maverick” Post-Jihadist

Fauzi joined jihad in Maluku for only about one month, from September to October 2000. Afterwards, he returned to his “normal life” in Yogyakarta, working as a medical specialist and returning to his position as the chairman of PPP in Yogyakarta. Although it was a relatively short period, Fauzi had a dramatic experience in a battle on the island of Saparua. He was shot and sustained a minor injury to his buttocks. It was unusual for educated clergy who joined the jihad to be injured in such a way (Hasan, 2005, 2006). Moreover, he also had the experience of simultaneously giving a sermon in the middle of the battle when the fighting spirit of the Muslim soldiers had drastically declined, as both a religious obligation and to boost the morale of

jihadists (Azca, 2011). Religious obligations during religious wars are often spoken about in Muhammadiyah sermons, citing the Quran and Hadith (verified stories of the Prophet Muhammad), where Muslims maintain a commitment to prayers and sermons while fighting, where half pray while the other half stand guard (Franklin, 2014, p. 236).

Fauzi's status as a "maverick" post-jihadist is further reflected in his life trajectory as a Salafi activist after the Maluku jihad. This was unusual from a Salafi-Wahabi perspective since participation in partisan politics (*hizbiyya*) is considered unlawful. Propagating politics known as *da'wa hizbiyya* is defined by Hasan (2005, p. 143) as "Islamic movements that are perceived to prioritize politics over the purification of the individual Muslim's religious beliefs and practices." Following his experience in Maluku, Fauzi continued to be active in politics until August 2003 when he was eventually dismissed from PPP. On the other hand, Fauzi continued to be involved in Salafi activism, including holding weekly Salafi sermons at his house. Despite his continued contact with and support for Salafi leaders and groups, he maintained elements of his lifestyle that were not consistent with Salafi beliefs. For example, Fauzi was a heavy smoker, a habit that is forbidden (*haram*) by a fatwa made by leading Salafi clerics because smoking may cause physical damage and produces bad odours. It is also seen as a form of suicide, which is *haram* in Islam. Despite his commitment to Salafism, Fauzi admitted openly that he could not stop smoking.

He was also unorthodox in his response to internal disputes and fragmentation among Salafis following the disbanding of the Laskar Jihad in October 2002, because it was no longer needed, as the conflict in Maluku had ended (Hasan, 2005, p. 225). In contrast to most of the Salafi activists and Islamic teachers (*ustadz*) who left or dismissed Ja'far Umar Thalib from their network, Fauzi maintained a good relationship with him. Thalib was like Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a firebrand Muslim cleric involved in terrorism but who attracted media attention and would talk to almost anyone who would listen to him, including non-Muslims, particularly foreigners (Franklin, 2008; see also Franklin, 2014, pp. 279–280). Fauzi also invited an *ustadz* to preach regularly at his home from the Al-Turats Salafi network, a Kuwaiti-funded Salafi movement that surprisingly opposed the call for jihad and the establishment of Laskar Jihad. When asked about differences and internal disputes among the Salafis, Fauzi replied jokingly that it was part of the rivalry among people of Arab descent. Although he claimed that he would not get personally involved in religious arguments, he had sympathy for Ja'far Umar Thalib, including Thalib's engagement in collective public chanting of "the names of Allah" (*dhikr akbar*), a Sufi (Muslim mystic) activity held in a mass gatherings led by the renowned public preacher, Muhammad Arifin Ilham, which showed a level of tolerance. Thalib's participation in this practice was criticised by many Salafi leaders as a deviation from the Salafi method (*manhaj*; Hasan, 2005, p. 227).

Fauzi's relationship with the Salafi core network was reflected in his support for jihadist activism. While the majority of Salafis tend to view and respond to jihad activists with hostility, Fauzi did not. Although he did not accept their doctrine concerning jihad, he expressed his appreciation of the "spirit" behind their actions. This was reflected in his opinion concerning the 2002 Bali bomber Imam Samudra, when he said, "I admire Imam Samudra for his ability not to fall in love with the worldly life." Further, while most people run to grab the "world," he had the courage to take a different direction (interview with Fauzi, in Solo, January 15 2008). Fauzi also said that he twice visited Imam Samudra and other jihadists when they were in the maximum-security prison at Nusakambangan, Central Java. On his second visit, he brought his wife with him to teach her to be ready if someday he made the decision to "abandon the worldly life" and die as a martyr (*mati syahid*). For Fauzi, prison and politics looked like two rooms with a connecting door.

By his own admission, Fauzi continued to play “backroom” deals in politics. This included facilitating former PPP activists being recruited as functionaries of the new political party Hanura (Hati Nurani Rakyat, or People’s Conscience), led by the retired general Wiranto, as well as Gerindra, led by the retired general Prabowo Subianto. Fauzi also supported other religious figures, joining the leadership of these parties, but refrained from taking such a role himself (interview with Subagya, in Yogyakarta, 9 September 2021). He even took the step of endorsing his first wife, Uun Ilmiyatin, as a candidate for parliament in the 2009 elections, representing Gerindra for the electorate of Yogyakarta (Prabowo akan “getarkan,” 2009). Fauzi engaged in campaigning and mobilised his networks, including former supporters of PPP. Despite these efforts, however, his wife was not elected. Nevertheless, this activity marked him out among the Salafis because it was clearly direct involvement in a political election and endorsement of a female figure as a political candidate for parliament, both of which are contrary to Salafism. Further, it shows that to a certain degree, he endorsed the politics of Prabowo Subianto, who was the former head of Indonesia’s special forces (Kopassus) as well as the son-in-law of President Soeharto when he was married to Titiek Soeharto from 1983 to 1998.

Fauzi was able to lead such an unconventional way of life as a Salafi post-jihadist because of the interlinkage of two main factors: his individual agency underpinned by his strong position and elite level in the networks of political Islam in Indonesia and his maintenance of relations with the diverse leadership of Salafi networks in the post-jihad period. Fauzi was a relatively prominent public figure and robust political leader with extensive social networks before his engagement with Salafism and his participation in the jihad movement in Maluku. So rather than submitting himself to the Salafi core network, he utilised it as a patronage network. While continuing his social and political roles, Fauzi maintained his engagement with a variety of Salafi networks and continued identifying himself as a Salafi follower. This manifested in his personal lifestyle and appearance, such as growing a long beard and wearing a long white gown in his daily life. He also continued to hold weekly sermons at his house, which were conducted by invited Salafi clerics. Despite his unorthodox ways, he was accepted by some Salafi groups, including the At-Turats Salafi network. To support his life choices, he possessed significant social and economic resources that helped him pursue and realise his unconventional approaches to Islam.

Despite Fauzi’s unorthodoxy, clearly, Salafi beliefs were important to him. He said that he had no doubt that “jihad is the ultimate worship to God.” Further, he expressed a personal wish to end his life in jihad: As mentioned above, he was content to die as a martyr in the “holy land or in the holy war” (Azca, 2011, p. 145). He was attracted to the idea of a martyr’s death which guarantees reward, including entry into heaven, as supported in the Quranic verse Surah Ali ‘Imran (169–171), as well as numerous strong (*sahih*) Hadith. However, on 11 July 2021, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, Fauzi died at the age of 65 years, with few details about his death, except that it was sudden and without warning. Media outlets were referring to him as “Laskar Jihad Muhammadiyah” (Azca, 2021) and claiming that “Muhammadiyah had lost its best cadre” (Sihaloho, 2021). Even Muhammadiyah on its website acknowledged the passing of “Dr Fauzi the son of the former head of Muhammadiyah AR Fachruddin,” but it was notably light on details about his life with no reference to his politics or jihad activities (Syifa, 2021).

8. Conclusion

Dr Fauzi AR represents a unique individual who was a political activist from a Muhammadiyah family and network who became a Salafi activist. Through the lens of Mills’ (1959) “sociological imagination” and Erikson’s

(1968) “identity crisis,” it has been shown how the complex biographic trajectory of Fauzi has strong links to the historical dynamics of Indonesia, especially during its political transition from authoritarian rule to democracy. During Reformasi in 1998, Fauzi experienced a sort of identity crisis when his Islamic political mentor, Amien Rais, adopted a secular approach to Indonesian politics and founded a secular party, PAN. The outbreak of religious communal war in Maluku, when many Muslims were killed, awakened his Islamic identity and passion to become a jihadist. For Fauzi, jihad provided him the opportunity for self-calibration when his understanding of self and identity was unstable, shifting from being a “politician” to a “man of religion.” In the case of Fauzi, personal troubles through an identity crisis were exacerbated by emotionally charged public issues, particularly in the trajectory of political Islam and the broader Islamic struggle, which includes the physical defence of Islam through active jihad.

The life story of Fauzi has shown us that political Islam and Islamic movements in post-Soeharto Indonesia are multifaceted and complex. Reformasi resulted in religious communal violence and the emergence of conservative Islamic movements in many parts of the archipelago, including the Salafi movements. However, as demonstrated by Fauzi as a maverick post-jihadist, political Islam is fragmented by a variety of streams including those who follow peaceful or violent pathways. This post-jihad activist continued to play a role in electoral politics through a secular-nationalist political party by supporting his wife in a political election while simultaneously committed to Salafi activism. Thus, the future of Indonesian democracy in terms of the empowerment of Muslim society and its engagement within is constantly evolving. The case of Fauzi shows that political Islam can manifest in many ways, including through politics, violence, and the mainstream of Islamic movements like Muhammadiyah and NU. The inconsistencies in Fauzi’s life may also reflect the type of person he was: a person who opposed authority and the status quo. It also shows that he cannot be defined by simple definitions or a single taxonomy. Another view might be that he was a loose cannon or a “maverick,” or perhaps a hero or villain, depending on one’s perspective. However, these anomalies only add to the religious and political phenomenon of this late Salafi activist and medical doctor.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers, as well as Dr Nathan Franklin, Professor Hans Hägerdal, Associate Professor Steven Farram, and Dr Stephen Miller for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Funding

This article was produced with the assistance of a Rainmaker Grant from Charles Darwin University.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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