After jihad: A biographical approach to passionate politics in Indonesia

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Citation for published version (APA):
Photo 12: ‘Holy Kampong’: Kampung Muhajirin, Ambon, 2009

Photo: taken by author
This dissertation is a collection of life stories of ordinary people who carried out extraordinary actions during an extraordinary period of Indonesian modern history. Furthermore, it presents and discusses in depth their life stories in the aftermath: the ‘after jihad’.

The informants who narrated their life stories in this dissertation are ordinary people—perhaps with the exception of Doctor Fauzi for two reasons: he was a leading local politician in Yogyakarta and his late father, A.R. Fachruddin, the former Chairman of National Board of Muhammadiyah, was a prominent figure in Indonesian politics in his time. The rest of the informants are ordinary people in the truest sense of the word: young men of 20-30 years of age from ordinary, mostly middle and lower-middle class and some lower class, families (namely sons of farmers, laborers, rural teachers, simple preachers, company employees, small-medium traders), none of them famous or otherwise remarkable in their own careers.
Conclusions

(being high school or university graduates or dropouts, religious teachers, humble preachers, or petty traders).

Some of them later became well known for their jihad action and its repercussions, such as Ali Imron, especially after his role in the first Bali bombing in 2002. To a much lesser extent and merely at the local level, Awod Umar and Abu Ayyash, leaders of Islamic paramilitary groups in Solo and Pekalongan respectively, also became somewhat prominent, especially after their imprisonment for their role in leading vigilante activism in their respective towns. Surahman, a tarbiyah activist from Jakarta who joined the PKPU da’wa program in the Maluku conflict area who was later appointed as one of the PKS Maluku leaders also became somewhat prominent locally. But other jihad activists remain unknown except to their limited circles.

However, these ordinary young men had carried out extraordinary actions by taking part in the jihad movement in Indonesia. As discussed throughout this dissertation, especially in Chapter 1, the jihad movement was a response to the ‘religious war’ between Muslims and Christians that unfolded in eastern Indonesia, particularly in Ambon-Maluku and Poso-Central Sulawesi, during an extraordinary time in modern Indonesian history: the period of the so-called ‘political transition’ following the collapse of the New Order authoritarian regime, a critical juncture in Indonesian modern history. Following the reports of the persecution of hundreds of Muslims in the area, a call for jihad was launched: more than five thousand Muslims from various places in the archipelago were moved to join the jihad movement, the ‘holy war’ against the Christians, in the two regions.

Their participation in the jihad movement involved extraordinary actions in various senses. First, from a historical perspective, such a massive mobilization for ‘holy war’ was unprecedented in Indonesia’s post-independence period. Secondly, from a social movement study perspective, it was a particular kind of ‘repertoire of collective action’, characterized by the use of religious symbols, which successfully mobilized a huge number of people to take part over a certain period of time. Thirdly, when viewed from a risk and cost assessment perspective, it was a ‘high-risk activism’ that required a
high level of risks and costs to participate, thus making greater demands on those activists who decided to participate. In short, jihad is ‘passionate politics’: an instance of social movement involving strong passions and both emotional and cognitive processes. These are not the rational and instrumental calculations required by a rational choice approach. The chapters in this dissertation are structured and informed by the ‘passionate politics’ approach of social movement theory.

So: this dissertation is a bundle of stories of the jihad and its aftermath as ‘passionate politics’. In this concluding chapter, I will briefly review the research findings while revisiting my main arguments from throughout this dissertation. Rather than summarize the life story narratives of the individual informants as already provided in Chapters Four-Six, I will discuss and compare the different types of Islamic activism across the three different stages of jihad: before, during and after. I will then continue by highlighting some empirical contributions produced by this research in two areas, namely communal violence and Islamic movements. I then continue to formulate the modest theoretical contribution of this research to the ‘passionate politics’ approach of social movement theory and, finally, conclude this chapter by presenting some reflections from my personal involvement with radical and jihadi activism during my teenage years.

**Research findings: main arguments and discussions**

- **Three ways of becoming a jihadist**

  Through the thesis I have developed an argument explaining how the informants became jihad activists through a process which I have termed ‘radical reasoning’. Informed by the ‘passionate politics’ approach of social movement theory, what I mean by ‘radical reasoning’ is a set of micro-sociological processes that constitute the decision-making to join jihad, involving both cognition and emotion through either ‘moral shocks’ or ‘cognitive opening’ or both. I have
also suggested that the decision to join jihad can be seen as an *act of identity* because it takes place in the context of, or in response to, an identity crisis experienced by the actor. So, jihad as act of identity is a way to resolve the identity crisis experienced by the actor through ‘radical reasoning’ which ruptures the ‘normal life’ of the actor and marks a new phase in his life.

The summarized life story narratives of the individual informants have already been presented in the previous chapters. Here I intend to highlight the research findings on the different styles of radical reasoning of the three different types of Islamic activism: *pious*, *jihadi* and *political*. As presented in Chapter 4, *pious* activists usually began their radical reasoning through a cognitive opening which led them to join Salafi activism. After becoming attached to Salafi activism, they were later moved to join the jihad following the *fatwa* issued by leading Salafi clerics stating it was the personal obligation (*fardh ‘ain*) for Indonesian Muslims to conduct jihad in Maluku. So, their participation in the jihad movement was mainly motivated by, and due to their compliance with the Salafi issued *fatwa* for jihad. I maintain that the discourse of these *fatwa* was the typical motivating factor to join the jihad movement evident in *pious* narratives, a factor not apparently present in the narratives of the *jihadi* and *political* activists. Of the four *pious* jihadists only Doctor Fauzi did not place great emphasis on the role of *fatwa* in motivating him to join jihad. With regard to the impact of moral shocks, three *pious* jihadists (Fauzi, Reza and Adang) spoke of how moral shocks influenced them to join jihad. However, Taufan, claimed not to have experienced moral shocks, alleging that the *fatwa* were his main, if not only, reason to join jihad.

Like *pious* activists, the *jihadi* activists commonly began their radical reasoning through cognitive opening which led them to join *jihadi* activism. However, moral shocks were also crucial elements in recruiting them as *jihadi* activists: the display and the screening of pictures and videos of Muslims being persecuted in places, such as Palestine and Afghanistan, were a basic part of the *jihadi* activist religious sessions. As presented in Chapter 5, Fauzan and Ali Imron
took part in such religious sessions before they decided to join jihad through the *jihadi* network. Hendro did not explain to me his process of becoming a *jihadi* activist but it is unlikely to be much different than that of Fauzan and Imron. The *fatwa* discourse was absent in the narratives of *jihadi* activists since the use of violence had already been justified as an integral part of *jihadi* ideology or *jihadism*. What was needed by *jihadi* activists to join jihad actions was simply an order from their leader (as in the cases of Ali Imron and Hendro) or just the impulse triggered by news reports and the coordination of other *jihadi* fellows (in the case of Fauzan).

Unlike *pious* and *jihadi* activism which is characterized by an exclusive movement network based on relatively strict discipline and structure, *political* activism usually has *multiple affiliations* with a relatively loose structure, doctrine and organization. Thus, instead of being influenced by the organization, as presented in Chapter 6, the process of moral shocks was a crucial factor for *political* activists to join the jihad movement, although in different ways. In the cases of Umar and Ayyash, it was moral shocks triggered by the reported persecution of hundreds of Muslims that influenced them to join jihad. On the other hand, in the case of Surahman, it was moral shocks triggered as a reflection of his own preaching and sermons calling on people to join *jihad* which eventually moved him to join jihad. The discourse of *fatwas* was also absent in their narratives, replaced by the strong moral emotions of solidarity toward Muslims as the victims of religious violence.

**Jihad experience as a radical experience**

I have argued throughout the chapters that the jihad experience signified a ‘radical experience’ that brought about ‘a pivotal meaning structure’ for the jihad actor that organized the other activities in actor’s life. The jihad experience was a ‘radical experience’ for the actor because, I argue, it consisted of two key elements, namely, *firstly*, the nature of ‘high-risk’ activism, which involves high levels of ‘costs’ and ‘risks’ in its participation that bring a strong significance to the
actor’s actions through engaging high level emotions; and secondly, through the use of religious symbols and meanings in the actions, as reflected in the use of the term *jihad*, that impact powerfully on the actor. The combination of both elements resulted in the creation of ‘a pivotal meaning structure’ as reflected in the use of the marker referring to those who participated in the movement as jihadist or jihad actor/activist or *mujahid* (Arabic: plural, *mujahidin*). It also marked the key life phase of the jihad actor/activist by symbolically distinguishing between their life before and after the jihad.

The informants joined jihad in different locations and periods of the conflict and spent different amounts of time, playing different roles in it (see Table 2 in the Appendices). Instead of summarizing the life story narratives of the individual informants, which have already been presented in the previous chapters, I will discuss the different ways in which the jihad experience was narrated by the different types of actors. For *jihadi* activist informants combat and related violence was the main theme of their narratives as presented in Chapter 5, either from their ‘first jihad’ abroad or in the ‘second jihad’ in Indonesia. Whereas the narratives of the *pious* and the *political* jihadists were varied; some of them took part in combat while others did not. In the case of *political* jihadists, only Umar took part in actual battle whilst of the *pious* jihadists it was Taufan and Fauzi who narrated their involvement in real battles. The remainder narrated their non-combat roles and experiences, mainly in *da’wa* and education programs for local children.

While battle experiences were among the most dramatic stories from the *jihadi*, as discussed in Chapter 4 (by Taufan and Fauzi) and Chapter 5 (by Hendro and Fauzan), it does not mean that the non-battle narratives were less meaningful to the actors. As shown in Chapter 5 in the case of Ayyash, his relationship with local children in a remote village of West Ceram became so close and intimate that his transfer to another location depressed them and him. His non-battle experiences also shaped his later life trajectory, commencing from his change of name after his jihad period to Abu Ayyash from his original name of Slamet Budiono. A comparable story was also
narrated by Adang, the *pious* jihadist from West Java, in Chapter 4, regarding the significance for him of participating in religious gatherings with his Salafi fellows in Poso during the jihad. His (non-battle) experience also strongly shaped his later life trajectory as indicated by his return to Poso after spending about six months in his hometown and other cities in Java.

While combat narratives were typical of *jihadi* activists, amongst *pious* activists narratives of strong reciprocal emotional bonds among Salafi jihadists were common. In addition to Adang, as mentioned earlier, quite similar stories were also narrated by Taufan and Reza, the exception being Dr. Fauzi who spent only one month in the land of jihad. The fact that *pious* jihadists spent a relatively long period of time during jihad, namely more than one year for Reza and Adang and more than two years in the case of Taufan in Ambon, seems likely to have contributed to the strong emotional bonds that developed among them. It further encouraged the exclusive tendencies of their life style, also due to deployment to the area in of large numbers of people in single groups of Laskar Jihad. This was different to the cases of the *political* jihadists: Ayyash and Umar who joined jihad through KOMPAK as a *tactical-network* (not through their *core-network*), while Surahman joined jihad as a single activist through PKPU. The JI activists also joined jihad through different networks, including KOMPAK which at times were even ‘rivals’ of the JI network as occurred in Poso, as discussed in Chapter 5.

How do the highly emotional experiences of jihad participation link to the dynamics of identity of the jihad actors? I have argued that the highly emotional experiences during the jihad affect significantly the consolidation of both collective identity and movement identity of the actors. Identity consolidation is linked closely with a particular type of Islamic activism network through which the activists joined the movement.

Thus, jihad experiences were interpreted through the particular ideological framework of a certain Islamic activism network: it was an action and expression of *pietism* for the *pious* activists; it was action and expression of *jihadism* for the *jihadi* activists; it was an
action and expression of political Islamism for the political activists. Therefore, jihad participation was seen in different ways by actors of different types of Islamist activism and gave birth to different kinds of actor in its aftermath: the creation of pious actors by the pious activism; the creation of jihadi actors by the jihadi activism; the creation of political actors by the political activism. As shown through the life story narratives in this dissertation, jihad participation resulted in the creation of the different Islamist activists: Reza, Fauzi, Taufan and Adang as pious activists; Fauzan, Ali Imron and Hendro as jihadi activists; and Awod Umar, Abu Ayyash and Surahman as political activists.

• After Jihad: the life trajectory of the three types of Islamists

I have argued that the jihad experience is ‘a pivotal event’ informing the later life trajectory of the actors in combination with two other main factors, namely biographical traits and social networks. Through an analytical framework of three kinds of social networks, namely, core-network, tactical-network and extended-network, I have also shown that the dynamic engagement of informants with different social networks influences the choice of life trajectory in the post-jihad period. Besides a variety of life choices among post-jihadists (for example, either to stay on or to return a typical pattern of ‘after jihad’ life trajectory emerged for the jihadists from the three types of Islamic activism: pious activists began to live in a sort of ‘enclave community’ or ‘holy kampong’; jihadi activists continued to carry out terrorist actions and were eventually sentenced to prison for months or years; political activists became further involved and took up larger roles in local politics.

I will describe briefly the pattern of ‘after jihad’ life trajectory of the post-jihadists as reflected in their life story narratives before discussing further why such pattern emerged. As related in Chapter 4, pious activists tended to disengage from public issues, withdrawing to live in ‘enclave communities’, characterized by an exclusive
way of life in the post-jihad period. Taufan and Adang both live in a Salafi compound in Ambon and Poso, respectively, while Reza lives in a small complex of Salafi dwellings in Yogyakarta. The exception to the rule is Dr. Fauzi who lives in a upper-middle class housing complex in Yogyakarta and continues to be involved in political affairs, although indirectly and covertly. On the other hand, the *jihadi* activists tended to continue to be engaged in ‘terrorist’ activities and eventually remained, or at least served some time, in prison. This was reflected in the life story narratives of Ali Imron and Hendro who continue to serve time in prison and Fauzan who was released after serving more than three years in prison, as related in Chapter 5. Finally, the *political* activists tended to become further involved in public issues and played larger public roles, as reflected in the cases of Awod Umar, Abu Ayyash and Surahman. As presented in Chapter 6, these three *political* activists have been promoted to higher positions within their own groups: Umar was elected chairman of the PBB in Solo in 2009; Ayyash was elected chairman of the FPI Pekalongan in 2005 and was then re-elected in 2010; Surahman was elected vice chairman of the PKS Maluku in 2004.

I have argued that the pattern of the ‘after jihad’ life trajectory is linked to three factors, namely, first, the post-jihadists’ ideological stance on the legitimacy of participation in public issues through democratic frameworks and processes; second, their ideological stance on the justification of the use of violence in public issues; and finally, their different types of membership affiliation. On the first issue, the three types of Islamic activism are divided into two camps: the *political* activists who believe in legitimate participation in the institutions and processes of democracy while *pious* and *jihadi* activists reject it. On the second issue, they are divided into three camps: *jihadi* activism that basically justifies the use of violence and terrorist actions in most cases; *pious* activism which basically rejects the use of violence unless supported by *fatwa* issued by leading Salafi clerics; whereas *political* activists are divided into two groups: those who basically reject the use of violence and others who justify the use of limited violence for vigilante action against ‘moral vices’. On
the third issue of diverse membership affiliations, the three activist types are divided into two camps: those who apply exclusive affiliation, namely the pious and the jihadi activists, and those who have multiple affiliations, namely the political activists.

I argue that these three linked factors produce a particular pattern of life trajectory in the post-jihad period. If one examines the case of pious activists, it is clear that due to their rejection of participation in public affairs through democratic frameworks and processes, pious activists have largely disengaged from public issues and political processes. They do not commonly participate in political elections or other public political occasions, such as discussions and deliberations on particular political issues and policies. On the other hand, they reject the use of violence actions unless supported by Salafi clerical fatwa. The pious activists were among the fiercest critics of terrorist actions by jihadi activists. Finally, due to their exclusive affiliation membership, they tend to focus on the Salafi core-network and have only a limited extended-network. As a repercussion of these three factors, pious activists tend to live in an ‘enclave community’ or sort of ‘holy kampong’. There was, however, the one exception of Dr. Fauzi, a maverick Salafi post-jihadist. As discussed in Chapter 4, his unique situation was due to his strong pre-existing social profile and extensive social networks prior to his involvement with Salafism and joining the jihad movement. So he is not a typical Salafi with exclusive affiliation and, in fact, his profile was more similar to that of a political activist, particularly before he officially withdrew from the political party.

Jihadi activists share two aspects of the way of life of pious activists: their rejection of participation in public affairs through democratic frameworks and processes and their exclusive affiliation membership. So these two types of Islamic activists basically share more commonalities than differences across these three factors. Where they do stand at odds and sometimes conflict, is their contradictory stance on the justified use of violence for achieving goals: unlike pious activists, jihadi activists basically justify the use of violence to achieve their political goals, including, but not limited
to, the establishment of the Islamic state, as discussed in Chapter 5. Furthermore, some of the JI activists who became informants in this research were involved in global jihadi activism, such as Ali Imron’s participation in the first Bali bombing in 2002 and Fauzan’s role in the Philippines Embassy bombing in 2000. Fauzan was also involved in the protracted religious conflict in Poso, as was Hendro in the later stage of the conflict. These cases led to their imprisonment in the post-jihad period.

Political activists differ from pious and jihadi activists in not one but two aspects: their multiple affiliations and their participation in public affairs through democratic frameworks and processes. This contrast is also reflected in their large extended-networks in the post-jihad period. If one examines the cases of Awod Umar and Abu Ayyash, they both joined jihad through the tactical network of KOMPAK, but came from different core-networks, namely Umar from PBB’s Brigade Hizbullah and Ayyash from the FPI. They both returned to their respective core-networks, but also expanded their social networks beyond the ‘conventional’ Islamist movement; Umar worked with a legal aid NGO led by a Christian lawyer while Ayyash took part in a mass protest against local government policy on reorganizing street vendors, establishing the interest and class-based Forum Komunikasi Pedagang Kakilima se-Pekalongan (FKPK, Communication Forum of Street Vendors in Pekalongan). Both Umar and Ayyash were also actively involved in local politics through campaign support during local political elections.

Interestingly, as the leader of an Islamic paramilitary group affiliated with the Islamic PBB party, Umar endorsed a candidate pair nominated by the PDI-P, a secular nationalist party, in the Solo elections in 2005. This could be termed a form of political desertion as his own party, the PBB, had endorsed another candidate pair. Umar’s endorsement reflected sound judgment as Jokowi-Rudy, his endorsed candidate pair, won the election. Ayyash, as an FPI leader, on the other hand, became indirectly involved in local politics through the FSUI (Forum Silaturahmi Umat Islam, Communication Forum of Muslim Community) Pekalongan, a network of Islamic
groups in Pekalongan. Basyir Achmad-Abu Mafachir, the candidate pair endorsed by the FSUI, also won the election in 2005. As mentioned earlier, both subsequently had bright activist careers: Ayyash was re-elected of the FPI Pekalongan in 2010 and Umar was elected chairman of the PBB Solo in 2009.

Surahman, a jihad activist who joined jihad through the PKPU as a tactical network, also revealed an interesting story from Maluku. The PKPU was a charity and humanitarian organization associated with the Tarbiyah movement and the PKS. Following his successful da’wa program in the Tual village in Southeast Maluku from 2001, Surahman was recruited as a leading figure of the PKS Maluku in the wake of the 2004 election. In that election PKS reaped a great success, by successfully gaining five seats in provincial parliament compared to the one seat it won in the 1999 election. The success of the PKS in Maluku was certainly linked with its successful da’wa activities, the very heart of PKS as the self-claimed “da’wa party”. In the aftermath of the 2004 election, Surahman was elected First Deputy of the PKS Maluku in charge of cadre development. His strong position and links to the PKS core-network was reflected in one of my interviews with him in Ambon: he called some PKS members of local parliament just to verify some data I had requested on the results of local elections. During another interview, I happened to meet the Head of the Central Maluku district, Abdullah Tuasikal, who had come to meet K.H. Azis Arbi, a senior figure of the PKS Maluku.

On the issue of the justification of violence to deal with public issues, political activists in this research were divided into two camps: Surahman, who basically rejected the use of violence, and Umar and Ayyash, who justified the use of limited violence for vigilante action against what they perceived as ‘moral vices’. How can one explain this different stance towards violence among political activists? I argue that it is due to the different nature and culture of Islamic activism in which they were engaged: both Umar and Ayyash were involved with, and even led, an Islamic paramilitary group and were familiar with a culture of violence; while Surahman was in-
volved with the PKS and a da’wa movement which is commonly dis-
associated with the culture of violence. Their familiarity with a cul-
ture of violence, enabled both Umar and Ayyash to take part in, and
even lead, a ‘sweeping operation’ against a liquor business which led
to their imprisonment. Both received short sentences: one month for
Umar and six months for Ayyash. Yet instead of feelings of shame,
their prison sentence was viewed as a badge of honor among their
core-network as later indicated by their promotion as leaders.

**On three types of Islamism: a reflective note**

I would like to reflect here on the distinction between the three
types of Islamic activism used in this research: pious, jihadi and po-

titical. This categorization was not intended to be treated as a fixed
and final classification, but rather a loose taxonomy to guide analy-
sis, but could be subject to change as needed. In discussion of the
research findings there indeed appears to be some fluidity on the part
of certain members and their membership of a certain type of activ-
ism at certain stages of their life.

Dr. Fauzi is one example of the porous boundaries between
the categories of Islamic activists. I have categorized him as a pious
jihadist since he identified himself as a Salafi, a perception support-
ed by his simple life style, his dress and his long beard. He has also
held Salafi preaching sessions at his house for many years. However,
his ‘official’ status as a politician, during his jihad period, and his
‘unofficial’ political involvement in the post-jihad period puts him at
odds with his fellow Salafi. Furthermore, his sympathetic views of
the jihadi activists in the post-jihad period, as indicated by his two
visits to Imam Samudra in prison, also puts him in a strange position
in between categories.

It is also difficult to fit political activists Umar and Ayyash into
one fixed category. Their engagement with KOMPAK during jihad
cauised confusion since Mujahidin KOMPAK was recruiting jihadi
activists during the movement, include Fauzan and Ali Imron. The
fact that KOMPAK’s Solo branch was led by ‘Afghan alumnus’ Aris
Munandar complicated the story further. However, I tried to resolve this problem by categorizing KOMPAK as their *tactical-network* rather than *core-network*, signaling their participation without necessarily sharing its ideological framework. However, this does not mean that it would be impossible for *political* activists to shift alliances, becoming *jihadi* activists for example—or vice versa.

A similar alliance shift is also apparent in the case of Ali Imron who changed his ideological view and conviction after his term in prison. While claiming to remain committed to the doctrine of jihad, the breakdown in his relationship with JI and his friendly relations with the police made him somewhat anomalous among *jihadi* activists. Likewise Fauzan, the *jihadi* activist similarly had problems with some JI activists after his term in prison, who suspected he had disclosed the JI network and members to the police. Whilst he still identified himself as a JI member, his troubled relationship with his JI fellows and his good relationship with the police somewhat estranged him from *jihadi* activists. Furthermore, he developed quite a vast *extended-network*, including *political* activists, foreign journalists and researchers, which was uncommon among *jihadi* activists. So it would not be surprising should he shift to become a *political* activist in the near future.

**Contributions and reflection**

This research contributes to two levels of academic research: empirical and theoretical. Empirically, it enriches academic studies at the intersection of two research areas: communal violence and Islamic movements in Indonesia. Theoretically, it contributes by helping to shape a new approach in social movement research: the so-called ‘passionate politics’ approach. I discuss these two levels of academic contribution below, and end by presenting personal reflections.
The Voices of the ‘Foot Soldiers’: Empirical Contribution

This research enriches academic study empirically at the intersection of communal violence and Islamic movements in four ways: by focusing on non-local actors/activists; by comparing different networks of non-local actors/activists; by following the trajectory of actors/activists in the post-jihad period; and by giving voice to the non-local actors/activist ‘foot soldiers’. There is an intersection between communal violence and Islamic movements study in this research: those viewed as non-local actors from the perspective of the study of communal violence are viewed as non-local activists from an Islamic movements study perspective.

By focusing on non-local actors/activists, this research contributes to an understanding of the nexus between the local-national-global networks of actors/activists. Thus, the local communal violence in Ambon-Maluku and Poso-Central Sulawesi cannot merely be seen as a local conflict phenomenon (although it indeed has deep local factors and roots) as non-local actors/activists were involved and played remarkable roles. Understanding the nexus between local-national-global networks enriches an understanding of the dynamics of social networks of Islamic movements at three levels of analysis. For example, the strong local-national-global networks of the Salafi activists in the post-jihad period, were manifest in the participation of Salafi activists from different areas, including Ambon and Poso, in the annual Salafi national gathering (daurah) in Yogyakarta. During the daurah some leading Salafi clerics from the Middle East were invited to give sermons. After the daurah the clerics sometimes made preaching trips to some Salafi stronghold areas.

Another critical empirical contribution of this research is its focus on the three different types and networks of Islamic activism, namely, pious, jihadi, and political. Since most of the research is focused on a single Islamic network, it enriches the understanding of the different nature of Islamic activism, particularly in connection with the processes of participation, meaning-making, and different life trajectories taken in the post-jihad period. As discussed previous-
ly, this research found three distinct ways of becoming a jihadist and three kinds of life trajectory Islamic activists in the post-jihad period.

The next contribution of this research is its focus on the post-conflict or post-jihad period. While much research has been focused on the mobilization and conflict period, few have been able to reveal the situation and the dynamics in the post-jihad period. This research enriches understanding of both the post-conflict dynamics and situation in the post-conflict areas, namely in Ambon and Poso, and the post-jihad dynamics and situation of three types of Islamic activisms: pious, jihadi, and political.

Finally, this research contributes to academic study of both communal violence and Islamic movements by giving voice to the non-local actors/activist ‘foot soldiers’. Whilst much research into both communal violence and Islamic movements has focused on elite actors, this research chose to collect the life story narratives of the jihadist ‘foot soldiers’ from the three types of Islamic activism. I used their life story narratives to critically engage with dominant accounts of both communal violence and Islamic movement studies, based on the ‘structural approach’ and ‘rational choice approach’.

I begin this discussion by examining the main thesis of the ‘structural/post-structural’ approach which basically contends that the underlay of communal violence and jihad mobilization in Indonesia was a sort of collective anxiety. Bertrand (2004: 114-5) suggested that the collapse of Soeharto regime, followed by President Habibie’s launch of political reform of state institutions and the electoral mechanism, made Muslims “anxious about the likelihood of losing their recent gains”; or as Sidel (2006a: xii) suggested in the later stage of political reform when “the Islamist networks…began to lose…[their] position of influence, access, and security within the national political class.” Although these observations were common in the macro-sociological context, they were interestingly almost absent in the narratives of informants in that period. The only informant to reveal such anxiety was Awod Umar, an activist of the PBB’s Brigade Hizbulah in Solo who spoke of “the red-threat” during the Habibie period. What he meant by “the red-threat” were suspicions
of a sort of conspiracy of nationalist-secularist-communist movements against Islamic forces during the Habibie period. The fact that he was a political activist who had taken part in paramilitary training held by the military during the period, as part of the Pamswakarsa program, might help explain his suspicions.

This discourse was not evident among the Salafi activists who were basically apolitical and distanced from political affairs. Interestingly, such concerns were also not visible among the jihadi activists. Instead of concerns over losing access or gains, they were more concerned at the news of persecution of Muslims, in Ambon on 19 January 1999 in Tobelo on 26 December 1999 and in Poso in May-June 2000. It may be because the jihadi activists did not received political access or gains during the political transition period as some political activists did. Ayyash, the political activist in Pekalongan, in fact made use of the political opportunity during reformasi to mobilize collective action to close down prostitution complex located next to his house in Boyongsari, Pekalongan. So, instead of collective anxiety, on the contrary Ayyash spoke of the rising confidence of Muslim politics at the local level in Pekalongan, the Central Java town well known as a base of Muslim traders.

I continue by examining the main thesis of the ‘rational choice approach’ of social movement theory applied by Noorhaidi (2005) and Van Klinken (2007) that basically contends that participation in social movement was based on an evaluation of costs and benefits or, as prominently formulated in a statement, as “politics by other means”.

While Noorhaidi successfully described the rational and political dimensions of the elite of the Laskar Jihad, especially its leader Ja’far Umar Thalib, it appears hard to grasp the narratives of its foot soldiers by merely using a costs and benefits calculation. In the case of Reza, the UGM Engineering student who joined jihad in his second year at university after attending a mass gathering to mobilize recruits, Reza gained little, if any, benefit from his participation in jihad in Ambon. It even caused tensions with his mother, who came all the way from Sulawesi to Yogyakarta to prevent him from joining
the movement. The costs and benefits calculation also fail to explain his later decision to quit a top faculty of UGM, one of the best universities in Indonesia, to study Salafi teaching in a small pesantren in rural Muntilan, in the post-jihad period.

Similarly this approach fails to cover the reasons why Dr. Fauzi, the medical specialist and chairman of the Yogyakarta PPP, took part in the movement. If ‘politics’ in its narrow meaning was his main motive for the action, he would have gone to Jakarta to mobilize support or raise funds as done by some local Maluku politicians during the conflict. It is also an inadequate explanation for his involvement in the battlefront in Saparua which led to his slight injury to his buttocks, despite his participation in Maluku as a member of the medical team. In short, instead of simple rational ‘costs and benefits’ calculations, the narratives of the Laskar Jihad foot soldiers have revealed participation in passionate collective action.

In his work, Van Klinken eloquently portrayed key roles played by local elites in towns outside Java in mobilizing resources through patronage networks to capture political opportunities to achieve their political goals. Such a rational and instrumental approach, however, seems at odds with the narratives of political activists collected in this research. As discussed earlier, political activist narratives of becoming a jihadist were characterized by strong dimensions of moral emotions triggered by a sort of moral shock. In the case of the narrative of Awod Umar, the activist and leader of the Solo PBB Brigade Hizbullah paramilitary group, rather than benefitting from jihad mobilization campaigns, he claimed he spent his own money to go to Maluku fed up with the long bureaucratic delay in sending volunteers to the land of jihad. His decision to join jihad was initially opposed by his mother and some of his fellow activists, but his passions drove him to leave, even with no friends to join him.

An even more passionate story was related by Abu Ayyash, a political Islamist activist from a lower class background who was married with two little children when he joined the jihad. As a married man with family responsibilities Ayyash fits the category of someone with no “biographical availability” to join ‘high-risk’ ac-
After Jihad—to refer McAdam (1988). But his religious convictions and strong feelings of solidarity toward Muslims in Maluku moved him to leave his family in Pekalongan. The life story narratives of these foot soldiers on joining the jihad movement led me to abandon the rational choice approach and view them instead as an instance of ‘passionate politics’ activism.

The life story narratives of the foot soldiers, particularly in the post-jihad period, also helped me to dismiss some simplistic alarming theses from Abuza (2007) on the recent dynamics of Islamist movements in contemporary Indonesia. His view of Laskar Jihad as an example of a “high violence” movement is certainly out of date and misleading. Following the life trajectory of ex Laskar Jihad activists who live together in a sort of ‘holy kampong’ in the post-jihad period proves that such a thesis is not supported by the facts. His classification of KOMPAK as a group aimed at establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia also appears exaggerated and inaccurate. As evident in the various life trajectories of the KOMPAK post-jihadists in this research, namely, some being jihadi activists engaged with terrorism actions and others being political activists actively involved in local politics, it would appear that KOMPAK could be more accurately described as a tactical-network rather than a movement with a solid ideological framework.

• The ‘passionate politics’ theoretical contribution

The modest contribution of this research has been to follow theoretical developments in the literature of social movement and the new endeavor to return emotions to the study of social movements (Goodwin, Jasper, Poletta 2000, 2001b, 2004c). Applying a ‘passionate politics’ approach to this research was a risky and challenging trajectory, since it is a relatively new approach to social movement theory with no ready-made toolbox available. Thus this research has experimented by combining a passionate politics approach with life history. By incorporating the two approaches I have attempted to develop a research framework sensible to the dynamics
of identity and emotions of the actors as reflected in their life story narratives as collected during the fieldwork.

In linking the two approaches, I formulated three mechanisms in three stages of jihad movements, namely, before, during and after, based on, or at least informed by, the passionate politics approach as follows. First, in the process of becoming a jihadist, I have argued that the informants underwent a series of micro-sociological processes which I call ‘radical reasoning’. Radical reasoning involves both cognitive and affective process, particularly through ‘cognitive opening’ (Wiktorowicz 2005) and ‘moral shocks’ (Jasper 1997, 1998), which eventually brought about the decision to join jihad. I highlighted the critical role of two processes, namely, cognitive opening and moral shocks, to produce ideological acceptance and moral emotions in mobilizing people to join jihad movement. In the second stage, I have argued that jihad experience becomes a ‘pivotal event’ that brings about a new ‘pivotal meaning structure’ (Sartre 1971/1981 as cited by Denzin 1989) to the actor through two of its elements: highly emotional experiences and the use of a powerful religious symbol: jihad. It also marks the life of the actor with a powerful symbolic marker: by joining the jihad movement and becoming a jihad activist, the actor distinguishes the life in two distinctive periods: before and after jihad. Finally, in the third stage, I have argued that the jihad experience is ‘a pivotal event’ that informs the later life trajectory of the actor in combination with two other main factors, namely biographical traits and social networks. I have also proposed an analytical framework of the dynamic role of social networks to influence the actors’ life trajectories in the post-jihad period through three kinds of social network: core-network, tactical-network, and extended-network. This framework was able to help explain how the actors took different life trajectories in the post-jihad period, either to sustain or exit or neglect the movement. Its focus on demobilization and disengagement has also contributed to fill this somewhat neglected area in the study of social movement as suggested by some scholars (McAdam 1999, Klandermans & Stragenberg 2002, Koopmans 2004, Giugni 2004).
• Personal reflections

This dissertation consists of a collection of (life) stories, reflecting not only the informants but also myself, the researcher. In some stages of my life story, I met, befriended, and even took part in the same movement and events as some of the informants, the (post-) jihadists. In this final section of the dissertation, I would like to reflect personally on my biographical intersection with the radical Islamic movements and why my chosen life trajectory differs from that of the informants.

Born and raised in a santri family in Pekalongan I began to participate in Islamic activism in my early adolescence when I was in junior high school. Following the trajectory of my older brothers and sisters, I became involved with the PII, a youth Islamic movement associated with Masyumi. It was in the early 1980s when Islamic movements began to reflower in Indonesia (as discussed in Chapter 1), especially reflecting the cultural atmosphere of the post Iran Revolution in 1979. I still remember that I enjoyed reading the translated books of Ali Syariati, the leading Islamic scholar from Iran who had played a key role during the Iran Revolution, such as Sosiologi Islam (Islamic Sociology) and Sesat pikir Marxisme dan Kapitalisme (The Fallacy of Marxist and Capitalist Thinking). When the Soeharto regime launched the draconian policy of “Asas Tunggal Pancasila” in 1985 I was the chairman of the Pekalongan branch of the PII and the PII was one of the few organizations to bravely oppose the policy. Jodi (see Chapter 6), who then joined jihad in Afghanistan, was my high school friend and fellow PII activist during the period. Nizam (see Chapter 4), who then joined jihad in Ambon through Laskar Jihad, was at my junior high school.

It was during this period of revival of Islamic activism that I participated in the Studi Islam Intensif (formerly named Latihan Mujahid Dakwah) program held by the Masjid Salman ITB Bandung, a pioneer of Islamic movements on university campus. I met Sughandi alias Abdullah Uzair, a fellow SII participant, who was imprisoned for his role in terrorist related actions in Palembang when I did my
fieldwork in the ‘terrorist block’ of the detention center of the Jakarta Police Headquarters in October 2009. During the same period in early 1980s I took part in *pesantren kilat* held by LP3K, a movement referred to as the Young DI movement, led by Mursalin Dahlan. Fauzan, who joined jihad in Afghanistan and then became a JI activist, told me that he had also taken part in the same training program when he was in high school in Tasikmalaya (Chapter 5). I was also familiar with the names mentioned by Fauzan in his engagement with LP3K, also cited in some reports by the ICG. The LP3K was a group linked with Abdullah Sungkar, then a DI activist who eventually founded the JI with Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in 1993.

In short, I could have become a jihadist when I was a teenager. So the question is: why did I take a different trajectory in my Islamic activism career unlike my former fellows such as Jodi, Sughandi, and Fauzan? Why did I not become a jihadist? There are many underlying factors of course. Here I will highlight two things: social networks and counter-ideas.

I would say that my involvement with the PII during my adolescence led me to become an Islamic militant activist. Being the local chairman of an organization opposed to the state policy during the Soeharto authoritarian regime was obviously not without risk. It was quite common among us, PII activists, to use terms such as *thaghut* (anti-Islamic) and *Fir’aun* (Pharaoh) to refer to the Soeharto regime, especially in covert sessions. Thus, by being a leading activist of such a radical Islamic movement during the period, I had to prepare myself for questioning, even arrest in the extreme case by government security forces, especially the military. My participation in *pesantren kilat* held by LP3K enhanced my spirit of Islamic militancy by adopting the primacy of the doctrine of jihad as holy war against the *thaghut* regime as the outcome of a series of sessions structured to induce experiences of ‘cognitive opening’ and ‘moral shocks’, either through religious sermons or interactive discussions or viewing the pictures of misery of Muslim fellows in Palestine and Afghanistan.
My decision not to stay involved with the LP3K and became a *jihadi* activist, I think, can be explained by at least two main factors: the multiple social networks and various kinds of other counter-discourse in which I became engaged. So while continuing to engage with LP3K in early post-*pesantren kilat* programs I also maintained my involvement with various kinds of social groups and discourses, including the ‘free group discussion’ with ex PII activists in Pekalongan. It was through this group that I continued to be involved in critical discussions on various Islamic issues and literatures, including controversial ideas by vibrant Indonesian Islamic scholars such as Ahmad Wahib, Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Kuntowijoyo. So I confronted the ‘absolutist and literal ways of thinking’ taught by *jihadi* groups with ‘relativism and liberal ways of thinking’ promoted by liberal Islamic scholars. As a result, while I continued to reject the ‘Asas Tunggal’ policy for its anti-democratic character, I refused to view the state ideology “Pancasila as the opponent of Islam” as was common by PII activists at the time.

Finally, by reflecting personally on my past engagement with radical Islamic and *jihadi* activism, I would simply say that the best way to combat radical Islamic and *jihadi* activism is by employing the twofold strategy of confronting it with other vibrant ideas and promoting multiple social relations and networks.***