

**MILLENARIANISM AND ISLAMIC RESURGENCE**  
**Exploring the Intertwining of Religious Belief and Politics in Contemporary  
Indonesia**

Luthfi Makhasin  
Jenderal Soedirman University

luthfi.machasin@gmail.com

**Abstract**

The current Islamic resurgence, simply defined as the return of Islamic beliefs, doctrines, and values as a sources of personal identification manifested in personal, political, cultural, and social life, poses positions Indonesian Muslims in the an enduring struggle to reconcile between religious tradition and modern life. Canonical traditions and classical Islamic texts that prophesied prophesy the imminent coming of *Yaumul Qiyamah* (Armageddon) and their popular reception among Indonesian Muslims reveal how religious texts still have a powerful influence in shaping the way Indonesian Muslims perceive the world and how they deal with it. This paper seeks to address continuing scholarly debate on the interconnection of Islamic tradition and modernity in contemporary Indonesia. It deals particularly with popular books on millenarian topics published in the last 15 years. Millenarian discourse on the imminent coming of Mahdi (the Savior) requires and implies that Muslims to be strongly committed to perform all religious obligations as prescribed in the Shariah (Islamic law). Millenarian discourse on the coming of *Dajjal* (the Deceiver) and the spread of *Fitnah* (Confusion) and *Jahiliyya* (Ignorance) has also becomes an ideological tools to make a demarcating line between Muslim-ness and Kafir-ness, and between the so-called *dar Islam* (House of Islam) and *dar Harb* (House of Unbelievers).

**Key words:** Millenarianism, Islamic Resurgence, Indonesia

## Introduction

Millenarian beliefs has have long been identified as one of the main ideological forces in traditional peasant societies in Asia and Africa (Hobsbawm 1959, Worsley 1968, Burr ridge 1969, Kartodirdjo 1966, 1971, 1973, 1984). There are also those who suggest that millenarian-apocalyptic ideas, though not mainstream, are well-established within the Islamic traditions, stemming from social turmoil and political crisis (Cook 1997, 2002, 2005, Filiu 2011). All of these scholarly studies imply that millenarian-apocalyptic beliefs plays a significant role in driving popular revolutionary and socio-political movements because it they sets promote a high level of religious commitment and offers a coherent and total vision of socio-religious change. The idea of the Mahdi in Islam has been used to rally support for moral purification, armed struggle, economic demands, and political protest (Furnish 1999, 22).

This paper explores millenarianism view as embraced by a Sufi group named Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia. This millenarian view is a distinctively feature of Naqshbandi-Haqqani, and not shared that is not common compared to with other Sufi groups. I argue that millenarian beliefs plays an important role in shaping personal religious piety among Indonesian Muslims. , as well as I also argue that millenarian belief plays a part in in providing a religious basis for symbolic political resistance.

To support the this argument, this paper's elaborates discussion is divided into five sections. First, it introduces the subject by it deals with introduction by elaborating upon current scholarly studies on millenarianism. Second, it examines the method of data collection and analysis adopted in this paper. Third, it gives a brief background about Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia to which this millenarian-apocalyptic belief comes from. Fourth, it explores in details the millenarian views held byas seen among Naqshbandi-Haqqani's Haqqani disciples in Indonesia. Finally, this paper analyses the socio-political significance of this millenarian view as an expression of Islamic piety and symbolic political resistance.

## Method of Data Collection and Analysis Methods

This paper is based on a research project entitled *The Politics of Contending Piety: Sufism and Islamic Social Movement in Indonesia*. Data are was collected through in-depth interviews with respondents in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Batam, and Tangerang. The interviews complete were complemented with library research, particularly to collect primary texts on millenarianism written by Naqshbandi-Haqqani leaders and disciples of Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia. Framing I also adopt framing analysis, a special theoretical approach in social movement theories to find out discover diagnostic and prognostic aspects of social movements, was adopted to better comprehend transcripts of interviews and primary texts.

## Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia

Millenarian-apocalyptic belief has been a signature theme for of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia (Damrel, 2006 122; Habibis 1989, 225, 1990, 605, Atay 1994, 200). Indonesian Muslims get access to this materials from oral transmission, books, and online publication. Naqshbandi-Haqqani uses the terms (such as Jesus Christ, Anti-Christ, Armageddon, etc.) that is not commonly understood among ordinary Muslims because this teaching was initially disseminated to the general audience in the West. This becomes one of some distinctive features of Naqshbandi-Haqqani's religious teaching compared to other Sufi groups in Indonesia.

Among Naqshbandi-Haqqani's Haqqani disciples, this millenarian-apocalyptic belief is attributed primarily attributed to three Sufi masters to whom Indonesian followers pay their veneration, Grand Sheikh Abdullah Faiz (1891-1973), Sheikh Nazim Haqqani (1922-2014), and Muhammad Hisham Kabbani (b. 1945). Naqshbandi-Haqqani itself is an offshoot of Naqshbandi Sufi

movement, the most widespread Sufi group in the Muslim world. The Naqshbandi-Haqqani movement is named after its founder, Sheikh Nazim Effendi Adel al Qubrusi al-Haqqani, a Turkish Cypriot who was born in Larnaca, a region located in the southeastern part of Cyprus inhabited mostly by Greek Cypriots. Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani, as he is known among his disciples, was born on 23 April 1922 in Larnaca and died on 7 May 2014.

In the formative period of his mission between the 1940s and 1960s, Sheikh Nazim Haqqani travelled extensively to conduct religious preaching, and if possible, initiate new disciples across Cyprus, Turkey, Syria and Lebanon, and occasionally visiting Jordania, Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia as well. His uncompromising stance often led to clashes with the political establishment in the countries where he conducted his preaching missions. In his extensive walking tours between the 1940s and 1960s, Sheikh Nazim Haqqani encouraged people to 'leave atheism, secularism and materialism and to come back to God' (Kabbani, 1995:385).

Increasing hostile political and religious environments in the Middle East bring about internal change and shift in social basis. Between 1970s and 1980s, Naqshbandi-Haqqani began to spread among Turkish Muslims immigrants living in Western Europe. During this period, it managed to have permanent basis in London, Paris, Roma, Vienna, and so forth. Since 1990s, Naqshbandi-Haqqani has begun to attract followers in the USA. In 1991, Sheikh Nazim's son-in law, Muhammad Hisham Kabbani even got refugee status and moved from Lebanon to the USA. He established permanent basis in Fenton, Michigan, from where he started global mission to propagate Naqshbandi-Haqqani across the world, including Indonesia.

According to some sources, some Indonesian Muslims living in Europe and North America had known about Naqshbandi-Haqqani since late 1980s. Asniar Sahab was among the first Indonesian Muslims who joined this Sufi group. She was an Indonesian journalist who met and was then initiated directly by Sheikh Nazim Haqqani in London in 1991. In her book entitled *The Spiritual Journey of Celebrities*, she explains that she came to know Sheikh Nazim Haqqani through the help of his friend, Sabar Prayoga, an Indonesian Muslim living in Rotterdam, Netherland (Sahab 2001, 21).

Through personal networks and online dissemination, Naqshbandi-Haqqani has been popularly known among Indonesian Muslims only after 1997 following the coming of Sheikh Nazim's son-in law, Sheikh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, a Lebanese-American Muslims coming from Michigan. Until now, Naqshbandi-Haqqani has about 12 affiliated Pesantren (Islamic boarding school), 3 affiliated social foundations, and more than 100 dzikir centres across Indonesia with around 5,000 active followers across Indonesia. Though small in number, this Sufi group is well integrated into a large Sufi community which claims to have more than 70 millions active followers throughout Indonesia.

### **Millenarian Views and the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Community: The Coming of *Mahdi* and *Dajjal***

Initially, this this millenarian-apocalyptic belief was at the beginning only transmitted orally (*sohbet*). Afterwards, it was disseminated globally through written materials and online publications by Faiz's his deputy (Sheikh Hisham Kabbani) and other disciples. This openly proclaimed millenarian-apocalyptic belief is certainly one of the main features distinguishing Naqshbandi-Haqqani from other Sufi movements in Indonesia. In a translated book entitled *Kiamat Mendekat: Kronika Terobosan Ilmiah dan Peristiwa Akhir Zaman yang Membuktikan Ramalan Nabi*, Sheikh Hisham Kabbani has stated that his master attempted to elaborate an established eschatological view among Sunni Muslims and addressed this distinctive teaching to both fellow Muslims and Westerners people.

Through this book, Sheikh Hisham Kabbani echoed his master in his attempts to provide a textual basis from the Quran and Prophetic traditions (hadiths) as well as compelling scientific evidence that the Muslim community has passed a thousand years in of triumph and currently lives within the five hundred years of decline that will soon be followed by the revival of soon be revived by the Mahdi and Jesus Christ. The emphasis on millenarian belief and the last days departs is based in from the an interpretation of the a hadithProphetic tradition implying that God only granted the Muslim community only fifteen hundred years in this world (Kabbani 2004a, 41), which meansing that less than 70 seventy years are left. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani has written:

For the first millennium of Islamic civilization, the Muslims were favoured by Allah with advancement unparalleled before or after... After its first millennium, a gradual yet definite decline began within the Ummah which has continued until our present time. As the Muslims have wandered away from the way of the Prophet and Allāh's heavenly message of Islam, the divine blessings and support have similarly diminished. Miraculously, the Prophet predicted that this process would take one thousand years and it came to pass. The second prediction in this hadith is that the Ummah will continue further for five hundred more years in decline (2003a, 35).

The contemporary era is therefore perceived therefore as a critical time of preparation for the coming of the last days, in a time in which the Naqshbandi-Haqqani in particular and the Muslim community in general will again play a great historical role, once and for the last time.

Abdullah Faiz reportedly made prophecies that “there would be a war in the Gulf area involving the whole world”, “Germany and England would lead the whole of Europe”, and “in Germany there would be a saint assigned by the Mahdi and Jesus who would raise and train people there in spirituality”. He also prophesied that “there would be a big change in the approach of Arabs to politics, ; one powerful regime was going to change to a better way of government”, “communism would collapse”, and “a peace deal would occur between Israel and Arabia which the United States would broker”. In addition, he also predicted that “in the midst of peace, suddenly there would be an attack and invasion of Turkey by a close neighboring country that would lead to a big war causing a great disaster across the world during which the Mahdi would come forth and Jesus Christ would return on to earth”.

This millenarian belief, as held among Naqshbandi-Haqqani's disciples, is closely related to the notion of the Signs of the Hour. These signs relate to all unfolding events in the past, present, and future that affect humanity and the Muslim *ummah*. Echoing his master, Abdullah Faiz Dagestani, Sheikh Nazim Haqqani believes that the minor Signs of the Hour have already passed and that the major ones are soon to come.

The minor Signs have to do with the widespread moral decadence resulting from weakening weakened religious norms in in regulating people's daily lifelives. The Signs of the Hour are characterised by massive wide-spread injustice, oppression, bloodshed, tyrannical rule, and especially sexual permissiveness, affecting everyone in all walks of life, especially the innocent, those who are not guilty, the poor, and the weak. The minor Signs of the Hour are also related to modern fashion that disregards modesty in clothing , (especially among women), pornography, same-sex relationships, and other forms of sexual permissiveness as being foretold by the Prophet Muhammad (Kabbani 2004a, 113-179). Such minor Signs thus apply practically to present self-examination of the contemporary moral decadence within the Muslim *ummah*.

The major Signs of the Hour include major occurrences: the time when the sun will rise from the West, smoke will cover the whole world, massive earthquakes, and plagues that will affect everyone in the world. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani relates the major signs of the hour to the current

state of countries in the Middle East, about which the Prophet reportedly said that, in the last days, “the barefoot, naked, indigent shepherds compete in building tall structures” and “the barefoot and naked, the deaf and dumb are the kings of the earth” as narrated in Sahih Muslim, and that “...the destitute (*al-buhm*) camel-herders compete in building tall structures” as recorded in Sahih Bukhari. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani has also said that,

... the Prophet (s) said: "*Sawfa tudi'u narun min ardi Najdin yashra'ibbu laha a'naqul ibili bi Busra,*" "Such a fire will come from the land of Najd that camels in Basra will run away from its heat" (Bukhari, Muslim). That happened last year [Iraq war/War]. Prepare yourselves, therefore, not for the best, but for the worst. Dark ages, not progress, [are] is coming ahead. Only after the dark ages will the golden age of Islam come about, which is the age of *Mahdi* (s). In the very near future many events are going to take place around us. Every one of us must be careful concerning his beliefs, the beliefs of his wife and family, and of his children. Satan is not leaving anyone alone. He is trying to change your beliefs and to remove you from the love of saints, of Sufi people, and of the Prophet.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani also related the prophecy of the ‘fire in Hejaz’ to what is happening in Arab countries. He attributed all of these developments to the economic boom in the Gulf countries and, particularly, to the war for oil and the chaotic situation in Gulf areas (Kabbani 2004a, 340). Sheikh Nazim Haqqani and Hisham Kabbani have taught their disciples that the world is heading towards an imminent Armageddon. Sheikh Nazim described this as follows,

Armageddon is the war between East and West, and it is written that the West will win and the East will vanish. The biggest of all wars is between the believers, followers of Jesus Christ, people who have prepared themselves for the savior, and the followers of the Anti-Christ, unbelievers, who are running after this life’s pleasures, following materialistic thoughts, seeking pleasure that their egos are asking for, asking for every freedom. They are people who always come into contact with the devil, falling under his control, and supporting the kingdom of Shaytan. They will be with the Anti-Christ because they are evil in themselves. The devils will carry them to the source of evil and devils, the Anti-Christ (Haqqani 2004, 67).

The coming of Armageddon, —depicted as the great battle between Good and Evil, and between Truth and Falsehood, between believers and unbelievers—, is a constant theme in Naqshbandi-Haqqani’s Haqqani apocalyptic teachings. The great battle is personified by the well-known figures in Islamic apocalyptic literature: the Mahdi, Jesus Christ, the Dajjal/Anti-Christ, and Gog and Magog. The Mahdi and Jesus Christ are always depicted as representing the forces of Good, while the Dajjal (Anti-Christ) and Gog and Magog are badrepresent evil. The Mahdi is described as a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad who was born in the Wadi Fatimah, a green valley on the way from Jeddah to Medina, between 1930 and 1940. He is the fortieth generation in the line of Hasan and Hussein’s descendants.

Sheikh Nazim has further stated that the world has been heading toward a catastrophic situation in which people will be killed *en masse*. Only one out of seven will survive, and the number of women will be 40 forty times higher greater than men. Yet, in many of his *sohbet*, Sheikh Nazim Haqqani changes the details of what when and what will actually happen and when the apocalypse will come, though he is consistent in saying that the new era will come during his life time. In the 1980s, Sheikh Nazim, for instance, associated this catastrophic event with a nuclear war. During the 1990s, he explored this topic in relation to the fear of the coming Y2K bug and its impact on

computer networks across the globe. Currently, he elaborates the last-day scenario in relation to the socio-political dynamics in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Centres and Pentagon on September 11, 2001/11, especially in the Middle East. He pays particular attention to the role that Turkey will play in the global conflict.

Sheikh Nazim has asserted that the Mahdi is already alive now but remains hidden because ordinary people are not ready yet ready to physically see him physically. His first appearance, he holds, was in 1960, when 12,000 saints gathered and gave *bai'at* to him. He The Mahdi, Nazim writes, is now still hidden in a place behind the Mountain of Qaf, in the empty quarters, the Ruba Qali, a desert between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. No one can go there, because of the quicksand, moving sands. The place is protected by genies that send out electricity that can kill intruders or drive them away. He is living with his 99 ninty-nine caliphs and other highly spiritual and powerful people (Haqqani 2004, 67). The Mahdi will eventually appear during the *Hajj-Akbar* in Mecca when people will gather and give *bai'at* to him *en masse* (Haqqani 2004, 64). Sheikh Nazim has given these details about the Mahdi:

He will appear for all people, according to the Lord's Command, in the Great War, Armageddon. There are one hundred and one hindrances which he must overcome before he can appear; ninety-nine of those hindrances have passed. Now only two are remaining. Then there are 7 stations on his way from Damascus to Istanbul- Homs, Hama, Trablus/Tripoli, Halep/Aleppo, Konya, Bursa/Turkiye, and in Istanbul he will take out the flag of the Prophet peace be upon him from the Topkapi Palace. But before that, the Padishah will appear and they will meet in Konya where Mehdi will put on the sword of the Prophet and his coat, the Holy Amanats/The Relic. After Mehdi has taken out the flag in Istanbul, the Anti-Christ will come quickly through Khorasan in Iran, and run to Jerusalem, to go around the whole world from there for 40 days. Muslims are expecting Sayyidena Mehdi and they are waiting also for Sayyidena Isa/Jesus Christ to come from the Heavens. Christians are expecting Jesus Christ to come back from the Heavens, too. But the Jews, because they do not believe in Sayyidena Isa and Sayyidena Muhammad peace be upon them, are still waiting for a prophet from among themselves to appear... There will be a Heavenly Announcement: "The enemy of Allah, dajjal, has appeared. Whoever wants to save himself from him must go to Damascus, Mecca or Medina... so believers will run because dajjal will be after them. They will run like streams to Damascus, and all believers must be there for 40 days.... The *dajjal* will go around the whole world, but 700 Angels, 700 Jinn/beings made of smokeless fire who inhabit the earth with us, and 700 Awliya/Saints from Budala, Nujaba, Nuqaba, Autad and Ahyar will protect Damascus so he won't be able to enter.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Amiruddin, one of Sheikh Nazim's disciples living in Canada, associates the coming of the Mahdi with the finding of the Ark of the Covenant. Quoting al al-Suyuti, Ahmed Amiruddin has written that "the reason he will be known as the Mahdi is that he will show the way to a hidden thing. He will bring the Ark of the Covenant to light from a place called Antioch". He has further stated that the Ark will emerge from the Tabariya Sea through the efforts of Imam al Mahdi and it will be placed before him at the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

The Mahdi will rely on Jesus Christ to defeat the Dajjal because he will not manage to face the Dajjal alone. Sheikh Nazim Haqqani stated this about Jesus Christ's descent to earth during the Armageddon:

After 40 days, Isa alaihi salaam peace be upon him will come down from the Heavens. It will be the time of the fajr/dawn prayer when he comes down in the Omayyad Mosque in Damascus. He is coming down to a minaret of that Dome in the East, under which Sayyidena Yahya, John the Baptist, is buried. Two Angels will protect him with their wings, and bring him down to earth. He will be wearing a green turban, and he will be shining. He has the most beautiful face, rosy and white. His beard is red, and he is sweating. And he has a sword. When he was on earth, he never touched a sword, but now he is coming as a Savior to save people from the hands of the Anti-Christ. His sword is a miraculous sword, a Heavenly sword; it can reach any point to where he sends it. The Lord gave it to him. He is not coming as a Prophet anymore but as a member of the ummah/nation of Sayyidena Muhammad, following his shariat (2004, 65-66).

The *Dajjal* or Anti-Christ is described as an arch enemy of both the Mahdi and Jesus Christ. The *Dajjal* is depicted as a one-eyed man coming from Khorasan who will lead the world to disobey God and His commandments. He will offer a worldly paradise to those who follow him and a worldly hell to those opposing him. Under these circumstances, the most illiterate believer can recognise him because *kafir* will be clearly encrypted marked on his forehead. Like the Mahdi, he is now ready to appear but still remains hidden. Sheikh Nazim has said:

He is now in chains imprisoned on an unknown island that no one can approach because he is saying: "I am your Lord", claiming to be the Lord of mankind, not just a prophet but the Lord... He can't move from there. He is shaitan, the father of all devils. He is giving orders, and he has 30 deputies who are preparing people for his coming.

As revealed in this statement, Sheikh Nazim Haqqani asserts that the *Dajjal* will appear and proclaim himself as the Lord for of human beings. On his appearance, the *Dajjal* will be the main source of confusion and create a rift and discord within and among Muslims. However, before the true Mahdi appears, Sheikh Hisham also asserts that there would be thirty false Mahdi and, by implication, thirty false Dajjal (Kabbani 2004a, 229). Sheikh Hisham Kabbani describes the Dajjal and what he will do to the Muslim believers as follows:

The Dajjal will have powers of the devil. He will terrorize the Muslims into following him, converting them into unbelief. He will conceal the truth and bring forth falsehood. The prophet said that the Dajjal will have the power to show the image of one's dead ancestors on his hand, like a television screen. The relative will say, "Oh my son! This man is correct. I am in Paradise because I was good and I believed in him." In reality that relative is in hell. If the relative says, "Believe in this man, I am in hell because I didn't believe," one must say to the Dajjal, "No, he is in Paradise. This is false." The Prophet said: the Dajjal will say to a Bedouin Arab, "what will you think if I bring your father and mother back to life for you? Will you bear witness that I am your lord? The Bedouin will say, "Yes." So two devils will assume the appearance of his father and mother, and say, "O my son, follow him for he is your lord (Kabbani 2003a, 223-224).

According to Sheikh Nazim Effendi, the coming of Armageddon, in which a deadly clash will occur between the believers and non-believers, is a prerequisite for the coming of a new, much-awaited golden era, under which Muslims would eventually be led by a true spiritual-political leader. Under his leadership, Muslims and all of humanity human beings around the world will eventually embrace and seek deeper spirituality, live in a naturally way, be concerned only with God, and take

no heed of worldly things. The new awaited era is also characterised by justice, peace and by implication the disappearance of oppression, ignorance, confusion, and disunity or division. This last-end-of-days theme therefore projects both a grim scenario of the a coming of massive global conflict, in under which people will suffer terribly, and a positive utopian vision of the a heavenly kingdom on earth afterwards. Sheikh Nazim Haqqani has further stated that the Mahdi and Jesus Christ will support each other during the Armageddon. He has explained that,

Sayyidena Mehdi will offer the place to Jesus to be Imam, but Jesus will refuse. Sayyidena Mehdi will lead the prayer once, and after that Jesus will be Imam... And Sayyidena Mehdi will be with him for 7 years... Jesus will kill the Anti-Christ, break the crosses, and make clear the truth about himself and his mother Sayyidena Mariam/Meryem/Mary the Virgin. He will govern the Heavenly Kingdom on earth for 40 years. In his time, all technology will be destroyed, and everyone will be given miraculous powers so that when you look somewhere and you say: "BismillahirRahmanir Rahim, by Your Divine Permission, Oh My Lord, You honored me to be Your Deputy, I ask of You", and if He gives permission, you may put your step from here to there. After Jesus has killed the Anti-Christ, there will be no more devils...people will live a life like in Paradise, Paradise Appearances, Tajallis/Divinely Visions will come on them...At that time, the purpose of Allah's creation will appear. Isa will marry and have children. When he is going to die, he will be buried in Medina, in the fourth tomb next to the Holy Prophet, Sayyidena Abu Bakr and Sayyidena Omar may Allah be well pleased with them, that is empty now. Then all believers will die by a sweet scent from Paradise. Everything terrible after that will come to the unbelievers who will have started to reappear during Jesus' time...

Soon after the *Dajjal* is defeated, the new awaited era will prevail in which people can fulfil their potential as God's servants. The new awaited era will be led by the Mahdi and Jesus Christ. Under the Mahdi and Jesus Christ, evil rule will eventually be demolished and an Islamic order will be established in which the Mahdi will give constant spiritual guidance. In addition to that, during the time of the Mahdi and Jesus Christ, spiritual people will do miraculous things without the help of modern technology. Sheikh Nazim has further stated that,

After this big war people will be like a candle ready for the match. Sayyidina Mahdi will open the seed of faith in their hearts, opening the hearts of the believers who lived through that war. Common people will be dressed in sainthood and will be granted miraculous powers and lights from Allah Almighty. Awliya will be love springs. People will be perfect servants of Allah, living on prayer and dhikr, and swimming in love oceans. Everywhere you will find the love of the Lord. Creatures will take from you that divine love. We are created for that. The perfection of creation should appear in those days (2004, 68).

Together both will uphold justice and peace over the whole world. The Mahdi and Jesus Christ will lead people into spiritual life and political harmony. Sheikh Nazim even stated that during the Mahdi era, the 73 different sects in of the Muslim community, and as well as religious divergence among Muslims and between Muslims and non-Muslims, will eventually disappear. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani has also said that the caliph is a spiritual leader who will give guidance to political leaders. According to Sheikh Nazim Haqqani, the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age of truth, as people will come to realise their basic existential mission as God's servants. Sheikh Nazim said that the coming of Armageddon is one of the two last unfulfilled prophecies before the last day. According to him, the coming of Armageddon is inevitable, as it must in order to cleanse the world and to draw a distinction



between sincere believers and non-believers. During the Armageddon, no place in the world, except Mecca, Medina, and Damascus, will be safe.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani said that the Mahdi, with the help of Jesus Christ, will act as a *mujtahid mutlaq* (a religious reformer of absolute authority) in the modern era. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani has also said that the title of caliph is reserved exclusively to the Mahdi as a spiritual leader, not as a political leader (2004a, 279). Interestingly, Sheikh Nazim also relates a future scenario for the unity of the *ummah* in accordance with in line with the Mahdi prophecy. For example, he said that under the Mahdi, all people will be united, to the extent that all religious rifts and political divergence will end. He has further proclaimed a utopian vision under the Mahdi and Jesus Christ, in which all human beings will be united. On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani stated that,

The Lord wants to change everything now...[a] new declaration [for the] first time in Islamic history, that 73 sects will now be made one...they are putting a line for ending Tasawwuf (Sufism), from now until end of world because [the] Holy Prophet and Quran never spoke on it...no more Naqshbandi, Qadiri, 40 tariqats, no Tasawwuf (Sufism) or Salafi, Wahabi...nowhere it is saying [does it say] Israel chosen ones, twelve sects (the twelve tribes of Israel mentioned in Surah al-Maidah v. 11-12) no more...from now until [the] end of world we must say we are Rabbaniyoon...no[t] any Tasawwuf, I am not Sufi, I am Rabbani, that is [the] highest honour, this is for Christians, Jews, [the] whole Islamic world, to end all nifaq (treason), that order coming tonight, don't say "I am Naqshbandi, I am Haqqani"...just say I am Rabbani, finish.... O `ulamas! If anyone asks you what is your way, say, "I am trying to be Rabbani," or "I am Rabbani." Finished! La ila aha illa-Llah. That is bombardment on the fortress of Shaytan. Finished! Don't say, "I am Christian," "I am Jewish," "I am Maronite," "I am Orthodox," "I am Catholic," "I am Protestant," "I am Shi'a," "I am this, or that". No! No more using the term "tasawwuf" as it was never used by the Sahabah (r)!...Quran saying only Rabbaniyeen, no more Naqshbandi, no more Tasawwuf (Sufism)...you must be for whole nations...no more fighting between Mutasawwif (Sufis) and Salafis...I am saying first for myself, that I am not Mutasawwif, but trying to be Rabbani (Divine).

By *Rabbani*, Sheikh Nazim refers to those who commit themselves only to serve God and humanity. He therefore proposed a total vision not only for Muslims but expanded this total vision to include the followers of other religions: Jews, Christians and others. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani describes this total vision by referring to a prophecy that in the last days, Islam will enter every house and people will voluntarily embrace Islam, including those in the West (2004a, 253-263).

the Mahdi and Jesus Christ are gone, the world will again descend into moral decadence, leading to total natural destruction which and will also be the end of the times for all believers and the world. The final signs for the Judgement Day will then appear, which includes the emergence of *Dabbah* (the beast) from underground, heavy smoke in the sky, the sun rising from the west, the destruction of Ka'bah in Mecca, and the appearance of Gog and Magog (*Yajuj* and *Majuj*) who will destroy everything in sight (Habibis 1990, 608, Kabbani 2004a, 289-302). The final signs will also include the flooding of Egypt and Cyprus, and the eruption of a volcano near Bursa. Next, there will be a time when the Angel Israfil will blow the first trumpet resulting in the death of all remaining believers. This will be followed by resurrection day, the day when Angel Israfil blows the second trumpet. Between the first and second soundings of Israfil's trumpet, there will be heavy rain lasting for 40 forty days, during which all humans beings will be resurrected rise to life again,

ready for the judgement day, the day when human beings will go to God's court. Only those who did good deeds will go to Paradise, whereas those who carried out bad deeds will receive Hellfire.

Having elaborated in detail on the signs of the hour and the coming of Armageddon, Sheikh Hisham Kabbani ends his account by simply instructing his disciples to recite the verse *Al Kahf* verse and a formula of *dzikr* recommended for avoiding the Dajjal's *fitnah* (Kabbani 2004a, 343-347). By doing this, he uses millenarian-apocalyptic narratives to create a dramatic effect that which is used as a teaching method (Habibis 1989, 221-240, 1990, 603-619, Atay 1994, Damrel 1999, 1/6). This ritual-devotional practice is employed as 'what has to be done'—a practical recipe for anticipating the imminent coming of Armageddon, and the Mahdi and/ Jesus Christ for individual Muslims. In this respect, Naqshbandi-Haqqani is not completely unique compared to other Islamic movements.

### **Islamic Piety and Symbolic Political Resistance**

Millenarian-apocalyptic belief has closely to do with emerging piety growing political awareness among Indonesian Muslims. A millenarian-apocalyptic belief also represents a world-view for dealing with the world and the self-perception of those who play a part in it. Through the prism of millenarian-apocalyptic scenarios, Naqshbandi-Haqqani provides both negative and positive scenarios about the future. Through ambiguous and symbolic narratives of this millenarian-apocalyptic view, Naqshbandi-Haqqani not only offers a distinct world-view, but also attempts to change religious preference, ritual, and behaviour in line with a traditional Sufi religious repertoire.

However, in political sense, the millenarian-apocalyptic belief as embraced by Naqshbandi-Haqqani is quietist rather than revolutionary in nature because this belief is primarily concerned with cultivating self-piety and is disseminated as an instrument for teaching. The motivational framing is not directed to drive broader socio-political changes, but to change personal behavior and religious preference practice. Millenarian view justifies the acceptance of miracles, spirituality, and the quest for religious-spiritual guidance. Using this millenarian-apocalyptic scenario, the Naqshbandi-Haqqani community rejects the a secular world-view, which they consider to puts too much emphasis on the importance of science, and technology, and rationalistic thinking to address all humanity's problems.

The case of Naqshbandi-Haqqani demonstrates that millenarianism remains popular religious belief among Indonesian Muslims. This religious belief derives from the Prophetic tradition transmitted and maintained through generations. It basically foretold huge challenge and salvation Muslims have to face ahead. Though it employing employs different religious terms, Naqshbandi-Haqqani resembles other Islamic movements in its insistence on upholding a utopian vision about Islam and the Muslim *umma* and their role in addressing current socio-political problems.

Furthermore, the Naqshbandi-Haqqani maintains that personally cultivating a good character is a basic foundation requirement for enduring social and political changes. The Naqshbandi-Haqqani consider comes to a diagnostic framing that modern people to have rejected spirituality because of their addiction to technology, and believe that modern science enslaves people who depend on it rather than on their own faculties. In the end, this community tends to simplify the problems by offering spiritual piety as a "magic solution to cure all illness and diseases". This shows that, as a faith-based movement, Sufi collective action involves more emotional attachment than rational calculation.

To sum up, the case of Naqshbandi-Haqqani shows that millenarianism becomes is becoming an integral part of contemporary Islamic resurgence in Indonesia. By turning to old prophecies, people comprehend the current world, their problems and possible future solutions in the future. Millenarianism, as a religious teaching, is thus still powerful enough to project socio-

political changes within contemporary Muslim society. However, millenarianism it also represents a social crisis within Muslim community. , one This crisis is so so severe that Muslim turn to a divinely redemptive solution which is utopian in nature.

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