

**Memoir of Hate Spin in 2017 Jakarta's  
Gubernatorial Election;  
A Political Challenge of Identity against  
Democracy in Indonesia**

**Leni Winarni**

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta  
Email: leniwinarni@staff.uns.ac.id.

**Dafri Agussalim**

Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta  
Email: dafri@ugm.ac.id.

**Zainal Abidin Bagir**

Univesitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta  
Email: zainalbagir@ugm.ac.id.

**Abstract**

This research attempts to investigate an intermingled relationship of political interest and religious issues, particularly in the Jakarta's Gubernatorial Issues in 2017. Basuki Tjahaya Purnama or Ahok, one of the governor candidate and also the former governor was accused of blasphemy issues after his speech in the Pramuka Island becomes viral. Although this case ended with a court, which ruled that he was guilty and received a sentence of 2 years in prison, this has become an unforgettable fact of Indonesian democracy. The proposed inquiry is how far religious issues influence political tension for based non-religion countries such as Indonesia. By using approach of *hate Spin*, within the combination of hate speech (vilification or offense-giving) and indignation of the offense-taking framework, this paper focuses on the entanglements of a political campaign and religious issues in the election period. This issue is

significant for the reason that the tension of religious and political issues put both democracy and multiculturalism in Indonesia. Indeed, there is still a good opportunity for maintaining diversity through producing tolerance view, and enforcing the law for the actor of hate speech and hate spin.

[Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti hubungan antara kepentingan politik dan isu-isu agama, khususnya dalam kasus Pemilihan Gubernur DKI Jakarta tahun 2017. Basuki Tjahaya Purnama alias Ahok, salah satu kandidat gubernur dan juga gubernur petahana saat itu dituduh melakukan penistaan agama setelah pidatonya di Kepulauan Pramuka menjadi viral. Meskipun kasus itu berakhir di pengadilan, yang memutuskan bahwa ia bersalah dan menerima 2 tahun masa tahanan, tetapi bagaimanapun peristiwa ini akan menjadi fakta yang tak terlupakan dalam demokrasi di Indonesia. Maka, pertanyaan yang diajukan dalam penelitian ini adalah sejauh mana isu agama mempengaruhi tensi politik di negara-negara yang tidak berbasis agama seperti Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan pelintiran kebencian '*hate spin*', yang merupakan kombinasi antara ujaran kebencian '*hate speech*' (fitnah atau hasutan) dan ketersinggungan dari keterhasutan, artikel ini menfokuskan pada keterkaitan antara kampanye politik dan isu-isu agama saat pemilu. Isu tersebut sangat penting, karena ketegangan antara isu agama dan politik menempatkan persoalan demokrasi dan multikulturalisme dalam waktu yang bersamaan di Indonesia. Namun demikian, tentu saja masih ada kesempatan yang baik dalam menjaga keberagaman dengan mengembangkan sikap toleransi, dan upaya penegakan hukum bagi pelaku ujaran kebencian dan pelintiran kebencian.]

**Keywords:** Politic of identity, religion, hate spin, and democracy.

## Introduction

The tensions of intolerances have been going down globally even before the tragedy of black September (9/11) in America. Particularly in Southeast Asia regions such as Indonesia, various riots, violence and turmoil intermingled with religious issues then challenged a new paradigm

of relationship between politics and religion. That becomes significant since these countries are neither fully “secular” nor fully based on particular “religion”. Indeed, these regions also featured through ‘melting pot’ community in which multi-races and religions takes place.

Through various races, ethnicity and religions, Indonesia may become the most diverse region in the worldwide. Besides loading huge assets for the richness of culture and ethnicity, this diversity could also as a trigger of conflict. Concerning this issue, C.A Fisher as a British historian said that Southeast Asia, where Indonesia is part of it, could repeat the history of Balkanization in the World War I in Europe. He also mentioned that the Southeast Asia was Balkans of Asia, even it was more complicated region compared to Balkans of Europe.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Thanat Koman, one of the founders of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), in his article published in *Foreign Affairs*: “...*In term of power politics, Southeast Asia became more or less Balkanized, as eastern Europe had been on the eve of World War I. Each nation following its own generally understood. There was neither unison nor a lingua franca...*”<sup>2</sup> Through the complexity, both of them were depicting Southeast Asia as the most challenging region, including Indonesia.

In addition to the rapid invention of the technological information that provided plenty ‘grey area’. An unintended consequence is that a leading phenomenon for ‘digital conflict’ is also increasing. The conflict featured with the hate speech, hoax, and intolerant issues between-among groups that made the conflict worsen. As a global phenomenon, *hate speech* is crucially threatening Southeast Asia region that extremely diverse.

Through considering a wide impact of *hate speech*, this paper will examine how a hate in a small group could bring religious issue and hate to the big number of group population and dominated politically, in particular 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial election. But before we focus on that issue, I will provide briefly explanation how the phenomenon like in Indonesia also occurred globally in recent years. This could be an

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Fisher, “Southeast Asia: The Balkans of the Orient? A Study in Continuity and Change,” *Geography* Vol.47, No.4 (1962), 347.

<sup>2</sup> Thanat Khoman, “Which Road for Southeast Asia?,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (1964), 629.

assumption that the world connectedly in polarization that conical in a primitive human being primordialism.

This paper stands on the idea of Cherian George's work entitled 'Hate Spin This paper stands on the idea of Cherian George's work entitled 'Hate Spin The Manufacture of Religious Offense and Its Threat to Democracy'. Within this idea, George explained that the hate spreads among groups does not start from the community. Indeed, the community did not aware that it is as a hate speech bringing religious issue.

Further, this paper is scaling up on the recent issue of religion and politics especially in the election campaign in Indonesia. Investigating Indonesia is significant for several reasons. First, although Indonesia is non-based religion but religious norm influenced strongly within the constitution. Second, Indonesia is in effort to establish a democratic state after militaristic regime. Indonesia is defending the democracy in the post Soeharto's regime.

This study also attempts to reveal the uprising phenomenon of relationship between politics and religion. This intermingled relationship was frequently becoming invisible boundaries to merge a religious identity as a political tool that marginalizing the other. By seeing a case that Christian in Indonesia are religiously minorities as well as Chinese in Indonesia. Therefore the issues are not only the boundaries of politic-religion, but also extended into democracy, multiculturalism and diversity issues by distorting the political and religious agendas on the other side.

While, main data used in this paper is qualitative data taken from social media where hate speech were spreading rapidly and massively. The secondary data are literature review from various sources. Through examining George's idea about hate spin, this paper attempts to show how misinterpretation can be a big mess for diversity, threats to national integration, freedom, and increasing the number of intolerance.

### **The Waving of Hate Spin and Challenge to Democracy**

The term of 'democracy' might start the debate itself. Looking through in the past of colonialism era, we can see that the west has

introduced and popularized the use of the term that is not familiar to their colonies. In the beginning of this millennium, we hear the concept of 'new world order' that made the world constructed under the United State's hegemony.

In another side, it makes the world conceding that this superpower state not only leads the world but also make the world accept democracy, in particular on countries that are considered as tyrants and out of the mainstream. Moreover, the debates that democracy is equal with the religious values still barely found a common ground. Every religion has their values in regard democracy. Adopting democracy in the eastern might not acceptable for some groups because they assume democracy originated from the west and do not suit with their values.

After all, democracy has become a model of the western modernization, but it is also possible that the values of democracy have already existed in the eastern world but they do not know what is the right term to call it. In this sense, democracy has its own norms or the term '*there is no cure of all*', it may be the right words to describe democracy.

Scholars from the age of Plato until nowadays, for centuries, has been formulated the right row model of democracy. In accordance with topic of the subtitle, there are two characteristics of democracy that relatively relevant to explain the terms of hate spin and democracy: the freedom of speech and the implementation of the general election within the state. Democracy guarantee freedom of speech, but on the other side, the state regulates it, in particular a harmful speech that could bring chaos in the society. Therefore, freedom of speech has often debates because it is related to human rights. The problematic is there is of grey area between freedom of speech and hate speech.

In the global level, we see that Donald Trump's campaign in the 2016 United States Presidential election was harm minority. Sides stated, "...attitudes about immigration, feelings toward black people and feelings toward Muslims became more strongly related to voter decision-making

in 2016 compared to 2012.”<sup>3</sup> The successful of primordial identity campaign in the 2016 United States Presidential election showed that hate speech could be used as a strategic to achieve interest. The dangerous effect is not pointed on hate speech itself, but how it is turn to hate spin that create offendedness among human diversity.

Hate speech is one step to entering hate spin situation. Its resonance effects may not be as spectacular like the terrorism that spread fears over the world through they action, but hate speech have a long-term impact to certain group. The discrimination and marginalization perceived by certain group, in particular minority, it is possible last between generation and even centuries. The worst effect of hate speech was occurred in the largest genocide history of human kind like anti-Semitic in World War II, Rwanda, and Bosnia. While, in the multicultural state like Indonesia, hate speech is serious problem and need law enforcement, but in a view case, in particular related to religious and political issues, it is needs a deeply analysis since religion could be us as a political tools.

In 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial election, the conflict might not start from blasphemy issue, but poor relation between the former governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok, and the hardline of Islamic groups like Front of Islamic Defender (FPI). FPI from the beginning condemn Ahok since he become Joko Widodo’s running mate in 2012 Jakarta Gubernatorial election. Therefore, the conflict in the name of Muslims majority versus Ahok in the past Jakarta Gubernatorial election may actually be a conflict between FPI and Ahok.

While, according to George, “*Hate spin is a technique of contentious politics that involves the strategic use of offense-giving and offense-taking. Hate spin exploits democratic freedoms by harnessing group identities as a resource for anti-democratic action*”.<sup>4</sup> If ‘hate speech’ is the main provocative, then hate spin is a booster to make more controversial. This may because the outsider

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<sup>3</sup> Steven Shepard, “Study: Views on immigration, Muslims drove the white voters to Trump.”<https://www.politico.com/story/2017/06/13/trump-white-voters-immigration-muslims-239446> (accessed December 15, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> Cherian George, *Hate Spin The Manufacture of Religious Offense and Its Threat to Democracy* (MIT Press, 2016).

takes an advantage from the mess situation and in the same time, some groups mobilize the society to take part or play role.

Hate speech considered as a new phenomenon in social and political science. However it is a huge problem due political groups or groups with political agenda use the issue to provoke particular group for hating each other. Cherian George, with his research for several years in many countries, has proposed arguments that hate spin is an extended form of hate speech. Based on the published year in 2016, his research is relatively new and the offered an innovative concept to understand hate spin deeply.

According to George, the role of political entrepreneurs is very significant in creating hate spin. They take advantage of the emotional situation of the others parties that provoked by hate speech in order to achieve their own political agenda or interest. George explains that their role is like two sides of a coin. In the other side, the actors of hate spin, could be the parties who become victims of the offendedness vice versa. George explains that political entrepreneurs can come from political parties, religious organizations, businessmen, and even government officials

In addition, George explains the following impact of hate speech are: *“Recall that in classic hate speech, the eventual harm-exclusion or violence-is inflicted on the same group that was targeted by the vilifying expression. In contrast, when bloggers and journalist are attacked or films and operas are censored because they are deemed offensive, the tables are turned. The professed victims of insult retaliate with a force far greater than any measurable harm instigated by the original expression...if conventional hate speech is strategic offense-giving by those who are intolerant of diversity, this other type of aggression comprises indignant offense-taking; the latter is about playing the provoked victim, with malicious intent.”*<sup>5</sup>

Further, George in his book chapter entitled ‘Indonesia: Democracy tested amid Rising Intolerance’ describe how Indonesia was in the crisis of tolerance in which the phenomena of anti-christian, anti-Ahmadiyah, blasphemy issues and law were skyrocketing. All of these phenomena are rooted on the ‘unholy marriage’ of religious and political issues. To take a

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 4.

sample, this research then narrated the current issues of *hate spin* toward Basuki Tjahaya Purnama well known as Ahok that attract public attention. Ahok is a former Governor of Jakarta in the period of (2014-2016). Beside as a Christian, he is ethnically Chinese that put him as ‘double minorities’ in the context of Indonesia.

Ahok’s case spread out for quoting a statement in his political campaign uploaded in the You Tube by Buni Yani. As the video became viral, plenty of Islamic organization such as Front of Islamic Defender (FPI) and Indonesian Ulama’ Council (MUI) demanded him for religious blasphemy issues. Along with religious issues, Ahok and Djarot Saiful Hidayat were in political campaign for gubernatorial Jakarta election 2017. The climax of the conflict is a sentence of two years in prison for Ahok.

### **Pilkada DKI Jakarta in the Circle of Hate Spin**

On 27 September 2016, Basuki Tjahaya Purnama well known as Ahok, probably has no intention to do a religious blasphemy. The issue came from his political oration during his visiting work to Pramuka Island, Kepulauan Seribu. That was Buni Yani who recorded the oration and uploaded on Youtube. Added in that video is inaccurate transcript. The video then went viral with a provocative comment.

Further, A provocative comments also posted in Buni’s s facebook on Friday, 6 October 2016. Here is the transcript in the uploaded video: *“Blasphemy?”...”Ladies and Gentlemen (Muslim voters)...were lied by Al Maidah...and will go to hell (you also) were fooled”...”It seems there will be something wrong with this video”.*<sup>6</sup>

According to Ahok’s supporter, eliminating the word ‘*dipakai*’ has caused a commotion among the society. Indeed, Ahok, through his instagram account, apologized that he has no intention to insult the Qur’anic verses or doing religious blasphemy. What he did is only expressing his idea about bad people politicizing the holy verses, whether

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<sup>6</sup> Herianto Batubara, Buni Yani Akui Salah Transkrip Ucapan Ahok Soal Surat Al Maidah Ayat 51. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3337570/buni-yani-akui-salah-transkrip-ucapan-ahok-soal-surat-al-maidah-ayat-51> (accessed November 15, 2016).

they are the Qur'an, the Bible, or any other book (Mardani, 2016).

Previously, Provincial Government of Jakarta has uploaded a full version video of Ahok's speech in Pramuka Island in 28 September 2016. There was no such a compliment about the video until nine days later Buni Yani edited the transcript and uploaded in his facebook. In the same day, the national daily news, *Republika*, was published a rubric entitled "*Video Ahok: Anda dibohongi Al Quran Surat Al Maidah 51 Viral di Medsos*" (video Ahok: you are misled by Quran Chapter of Al Maidah 51 become viral in the social media). Then, *Jawa Pos* published an article "*Sebut Warga dibohongi Al Quran, Ahok Besok Dipolisikan*" (said the citizen misled by Quran, tomorrow Ahok will be reported to the police).

In the short time, the issue became viral and the citizens were angry for religious blasphemy. Within the same day, Novel Chaidir Hasan or Novel Bamukmim from *Front Pembela Islam*-*'The Front of Islamic Defenders'* (FPI) reported Ahok to *Badan Reserse Kriminal*-*'The Criminal Investigation Agency'* (Bareskrim) of the Headquarters of Indonesian National Police. His indict was based on Buni Yani's transcript. As 7 November 2016, there were 14 reports about the cases using the same evidence.

Although Ahok has made a clarification through his instagram account, but the public opinion has already massed up. Most of social media created to spread the issues are twitter, facebook, whatsapp, and blogs. All of them are reporting that Ahok has dishonored the Al Qur'an based on the transcript of Buni Yani's version.<sup>7</sup>

This issues compounded through a *fatwa* (non-binding law) of Majelis Ulama Indonesia-Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) stated that Ahok indeed has done for a blasphemy to Al Qur'an, specifically on the Al Maidah 51, as well as dishonoring an Ulama' in 11 October 2016. Through the accumulation of cases, the situation became worse and the tension among Muslim society was completely messy.

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<sup>7</sup> Ini Kronologi Lengkap Kasus Tuduhan pada Ahok Menista Al-Qur'an dan Agama Islam. <https://www.detik-metro.com/2016/12/ini-kronologi-lengkap-kasustuduhan.html> (accessed June 15, 2017).

FPI is the most strict Islamic mass organization against Ahok since he was a vice governor candidate to accompany Joko Widodo on the gubernatorial election in 2012. The problem raised is that Ahok is a non-Muslim and majority of Jakarta community is Muslim. Indeed, based on the strict Islamic teaching, a non-Muslim is not allowed as a leader of Muslim community. Based on this idea, FPI becomes the most aggressive group attacking Ahok.

The sequence of protest comes up from Habib Rizieq, the leader of FPI. Along with the others Islamic mass organizations, he leads a demonstration in front of City Hall of Jakarta on 14 October 2016. He was uttering a provocative statement “Kill Ahok! Kill Ahok!”<sup>8</sup> and made the demonstration went to chaos. In the 4 November 2016, the demonstration of anti-Ahok occurred again which involved around 75,000-100,000 people including Habib Rizieq and some member of Dewan Perwakilan rakyat-House of Representative (DPR) such as Fahri Hamzah and Fadli Zon. They were demanding a justice for religious blasphemy done by Ahok.

As the demonstration held, they also demanded to meet with Indonesian president, Joko Widodo. Unfortunately, Joko Widodo was not in the Merdeka palace. Jusuf Kalla, a vice President of Indonesia, met the representative of mass and he promised to resolve this issue within next two weeks. In the beginning, the demonstrations held peacefully, but it turned into chaos at night.

The mobs clashed with the police and caused some riots within cities. Reported from the riot in front of the palace are 8 wounded apparatus, 3 police cars burned, and 18 cars damaged.<sup>9</sup> The others demonstration demanding Ahok to get him into prison for religious blasphemy is also held in 2 December 2016 and 11 February 2017. Various demonstrations held were using the jargon of ‘*aksi bela Islam*’-the action to

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Esty, Rusuh 4 November, Polri: 21 Kendaraan Rusak dan Dibakar, 8 Aparat Luka Berat. <http://news.detik.com/berita/d-3338192/rusuh-4-november-polri-21-kendaraan-rusak-dan-dibakar-8-aparat-luka-berat>. (accessed July 28, 2017).

defend Islam'. Interestingly within that action is some politicians and some of his political rivals for gubernatorial elections.

Further within the demonstration in 2 November 2016, are Amien Rais as a former leader of Partai Amanat Nasional-Party of National Mandate (PAN), Fahri Hamzah and Fadli Zon, as figures leaders of DPR. The last two figures are well known as a member of parties that opposed the Government under Joko Widodo. Fadli Zon was a member of political parties of Gerakan Indonesia Raya-Indonesia National Movement (Gerindra), and Fahri Hamzah was a political member from Partai Keadilan Sejahtera-Party of Prosperous Justice (PKS).

Clearly, their involvement brought such a political speculation that religious blasphemy issues have a political motive to criticize the government. the reason behind is that Ahok was close to Joko Widodo. Another political reason is that PAN and Gerindra are nominated Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno as the candidate for gubernatorial election in Jakarta 2017. Otherwise, in 11 February 2017, Anies Baswedan and Sandiaga Uno reported to attend the demonstration in the Mosque of Istiqlal and did a morning prayer (*shalat Shubuh*). What these political leaders did for Morning Prayer is still unclear whether it is religious or political motive. Since the atmosphere of demonstration is not only for Jakarta, but also Muslim in Indonesia in general.

### **Could religion issue influence the political perspective? The analysis of pilkada DKI Jakarta**

The issue of religious blasphemy within gubernatorial election campaign brought a strong assumption to have a political motive. This is due many surveys said that Ahok is the strongest candidate for Jakarta governor. In addition, Ahok has a high performance and well capability for handling issues in Jakarta unresolved by the former Governor in the previous period. Based on the people likeness, this achievement put him as the most favorite candidate in Pilkada DKI 2017 by many surveys.

In 2015, the Populi Center Institute published a survey results based on the levels of popularity and electability of a number of figures. Ahok at

that time occupied the top position with 95.8 percent.<sup>10</sup> In addition, based on telepolling conducted by PDB (*Pusat Data Bersatu*-Unit of Data Center) showed about 70.8% of the people in Jakarta satisfied with his performance.<sup>11</sup> Yet, a next year then, since the case of blasphemy arose, his electability has plummeted dramatically. Based on the survey results published by LSI (*Lembaga Survei Indonesia*-Survey Institute of Indonesia), the electability of Ahok-Djarot declined significantly after Ahok was announced as a suspect by Bareskrim for blasphemy case on November 15, 2016. Ahok was considered as a suspect under section 156 of Article 156 a -The Criminal Law Article 28 paragraph 2 of Law Number 11 Year 2008 about Information and Electronic Transactions.

LSI compared a survey result from July to November 2016. According to LSI, in July 2016, Ahok-Djarot electability was around 49.6%, then at 31.4% in October 2016. While in November his electability plummeted to the level of 24.6%. After officially considered as a suspect, Ahok electability is significantly crashed down to the number of 10.6%.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, according to the survey result conducted by LSI on 17 February to 3 March 2017, Ahok can gradually improve his electability after the election debate. The debate aired on the national television, and raised his electability to the level of 53.3%.

In the first round of election, Ahok succeeded as a winner for almost 43%, Anies Baswedan-Sandiago Uno got 40%, and Agus Yudhoyono-Sylviana Murni got 17%. However in the second round on April 19, 2017, Anies-Sandi came out as the winner of Pilkada through 58% and Ahok got only 42%. If we analyze a series of events toward to the Pilkada, it is clear that there is a relation between the allegations of a blasphemous

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<sup>10</sup> Nabilla Tashandra. Survei Populi Center: Popularitas Ahok Hampir 100 Persen. <http://megapolitan.kompas.com/read/2015/12/12/17264261/Survei.Populi.Center.Popularitas.Ahok.Hampir.100.Persen> (accessed June 15, 2017).

<sup>11</sup> Ferdinan, Survei PDB: 70,8 Persen Warga Jakarta Puas Kinerja Ahok. <http://pilkada.metrotvnews.com/read/2017/03/07/668041/survei-lsi-masyarakat-mulai-memaafkan-ahok> (accessed June 17, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Martaon, Anggi Tondi. Survei LSI:Masyarakat Mulai Memaafkan Ahok. [metronews.com. http://pilkada.metrotvnews.com/read/2017/03/07/668041/survei-lsi-masyarakat-mulai-memaafkan-ahok](http://pilkada.metrotvnews.com/read/2017/03/07/668041/survei-lsi-masyarakat-mulai-memaafkan-ahok) (accessed June 17, 2017).

case and Ahok's electability as a candidate for the Governor of Jakarta. The data showed that basically people's perspectives on Ahok changed after blasphemous case. Regardless that Ahok is well known as strict figure, but the likeness of him is still high. His electability went down for overlapping between politics and religious issues.

### **A Different Perspective Triggered a Polarization?**

The issue of *Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antar Golongan* - ethnicity, religion, race and inter-groups (SARA) has often used as a tool to influence the voters during the elections across Indonesian region. In some cases, many scholars argue that religious issues were used for political interests and political power. Therefore, within religious issues, the notion of religion is only a tool utilized for gaining political power.

In the case of Ahok, some scholars gave plenty different perspectives to see whether Ahok is doing blasphemy or not. Syafii Maarif well known as Buya Syafii, a Muhammadiyah figure, he did not see Ahok's case as a blasphemy, but purely the issue of politics.<sup>13</sup>

According to him, if we saw a full version of video, Ahok did not say clearly that Al Maidah is untruth. However, there were also other opinions from religious figures, such as Chairman of the MUI, KH Ma'ruf Amin, stating that Ahok indeed has done for religious blasphemy. Amin then presented as first witness for the eighth session of allegations of religious blasphemy by the Public Prosecutor on 31 January 2017. Followed him is the testimony of Habieb Rizieq in the court saying that Ahok had indeed insulted the Quran and therefore is also Islam. Further, Rizieq has also explained that choosing a non-Muslim as leader is not allowed in Islam.

Following an upheaval situation, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia organized an International Symposium on Religious Life on 5-7 October 2016, invited a professor from Al-Azhar

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<sup>13</sup> Syafii Maarif: Ahok Tidak Mengatakan Al Maidah itu Bohong, <http://news.liputan.com>, <http://news.liputan6.com/read/2646190/syafii-maarif-ahok-tidak-mengatakan-al-maidah-itu-bohong> (accessed June 26, 2017).

University, Egypt, Gamal Farouq Gibril, which during the conference he answered a question about the law of choosing a non-Muslim leader. Gibril replied that it should be distinguished whether choosing a religious leader or the leader of governmental affairs. His statement is also reported in *Gatra*, a national magazine on the online version on 5 October 2016. Nevertheless in this case of understanding the meaning of Qur'anic verses, each scholar could be vary. It is depending on the interpretation of the verses and the history of why the verse was revealed, including Al-Maidah verse 51, about how a Muslim chooses a leader.

Here the verse of Al-Maidah 51: *“O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.”*

Regardless the theological debate, a significant phenomenon socially is the increasing number of black campaign against Ahok's in social media. In addition, there has been an unavoidable Muslim polarization during Jakarta election, between those who support and anti-Ahok. Within political perspective, this paper argues that unclear situation between religion and politics had created a powerful tool to influence society, created a chaos and mobilize the mob. Unfortunately, ‘unholy marriage’ between religion and politics also created a religious hate speech that potentially segregated the communities. Shortly, this paper shows that religion becomes a political commodity during political election. These were involving the figures of clergy, priests, monks to do a campaign on behalf of God to choose the candidate leaders.

### **How Hate Spin Works in the Jakarta's Gubernatorial Election**

Concerning on the hate spin issue, it is clear to see a fomentation of hate agenda influenced political stability. Hate speech produced during the election has produced a long standing conflict. Regardless that Ahok really did a blasphemous speech or not, this paper concerned on how hate speech become hate spin within Islamic community. Surely, Ahok is not only in the confrontation with FPI, but also a Muslim community in

general. Religious hatred issue is the most sensitive issue during political agenda such as gubernatorial election.

Buni Yani in the context of hate spin considered as the most responsible actor for the spreading of hate speech. Yani, by intention has initiated to upload the video with a provocative statement. By the framework proposed by George, hate spin is known as vilification/offense-taking. In one side, hate speech is the trigger of conflict, but the act of offense-taking is aggravated into indignation-offense taking or triggering the anger of others. The offence taking then produced a hate speech to influence the other. Unfortunately, mobs anger addressed to the object of hate speech and the person spreading the hate speech consider as innocent. Indeed, frequently the provoked group was not taking into clarification from the object of hate speech.

In the case of Ahok, the provoked groups are those who do not attend or hear the speech of Ahok on Pramuka Island directly. According to the chronological order, people who hear the speech on the island do not problematize the speech. They feel no hurt or any offended feeling to the speech. Indeed, when there should be anger, people on the Pramuka Island supposed to be the first community reported Ahok to the police, and that was not FPI.

Further, there are two sides of hate spin, offense-taking and offense giving. These sides evoke incitement and provocation used by political actor to mobilize the supporters and attack the political rivals. The alleged existence of the political actor had clarified by Ahok's legal team in which the issue was intended to spoil his reputation and intercept Ahok's chance to win the elections. Indeed the presented witnesses were still in affiliation with the other candidates for governor of Jakarta.<sup>14</sup> Besides, according to Humprey, the chairman of Ahok legal team said that the witnesses presented in the court were affiliated with FPI and their testimonies were

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<sup>14</sup> David Oliver Purba, Pengacara Ahok Diminta Tak Kaitkan Persidangan Ahok dengan Agus-Sylvi. <http://sains.kompas.com/read/2017/01/12/22111131/pengacara.ahok.diminta.tak.kaitkan.persidangan.ahok.dengan.agus-sylvi> (accessed June 17, 2017).

tendentious.<sup>15</sup> The assumption comes up is whether this group exploited by political actor or only a group taking an advantage from an upheaval political situation. Regardless for assumptions, a clear one is that hate speech works effectively to segregate the plural society.

The produced hate spin involved religious issue can be obviously seen in the public debate. Religious element often presented by his competitor subtly by attacking his personality. In the context of Indonesia, SARA is a good commodity to create a complete political meltdown and chaos. Primordial issue is the problem of all countries around the world, religious or secular including America in which as George said that hate spin also occurred in secular countries as the United States.

Another aspect that we can analyze as the problem of hate spin is how Ahok electability declined significantly during the election campaign. This followed with some huge demonstration demanded him to be jailed. Interestingly at the demonstration on 12 November, Joko Widodo appeared in the crowds, and made the protest well known as the action of 212. Political speculation and huge mass mobilization initiated by FPI at that time considered as an attempt to bring down the government. The issue arose as the demo was funded by a number of national figures with certain agenda of some political actors.

However, there are also some parties who were sincerely coming to defend Islam, and have no political agenda. This is how offense-giving works. It emphasized a phenomenon in which a people is doing something not because a person supposed to do, but because of provocation. The impact of this framework is that politicization of religion has worked as the wishes of the political entrepreneurs. The offense is mixed up by attacking political opponents through presenting religious issues. Within this idea, the boundaries between the real conflict and politicization become unclear.

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<sup>15</sup> Bisma Alief Laksana, Pengacara Ahok: Semua Saksi Penodaan Agama Rupanya Terkait FPI. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3383641/pengacara-ahok-semua-saksi-penodaan-agama-rupanya-terkait-fpi> (accessed July 28, 2017).

A clear example from offense giving is the issue about grandma Hindun who passed away at the age of 78 years and abandoned to be prayed by her neighborhood. This is for the reason that she had chosen Ahok in the first round of the elections and considered as an infidel. It is clear that according to Islamic law that Islamic status has nothing to do with political choice. Indeed, Jakarta at that time was as a victim of political incitement. The justification that choosing a non-Muslim for Muslims leader automatically became *Kafir* is groundless. Indeed, the campaign election, the rivals are taking benefit from the issues of SARA. As quoted from the Facebook page of Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno.<sup>16</sup>

In other cases, offense-giving also worked ahead of the second round elections, where religious issues become more dominant than any other issues. On the contrary, the issues about Ahok's achievements in Jakarta are covered by SARA issues. The issue about SARA got various reaction from many Indonesian scholars. Such as Sumanto Al Qurtuby for the example, he is an Indonesian who becomes an assistant professor of Anthropology at King Fahd University, Saudi Arabia, he stated in his article: "*... Pilkada Jakarta becomes congested actually because there is a group of political elites, religious figures and businessmen who eager to control Jakarta With a variety of motives and interests of course. Political groups want to control the running of the government according to their tastes. The businessmen, of course, want their wares smoothly and no one inhibits their business. While a group of religious elites, especially the Muslim elite, wants Jakarta to be a city that implements religious or Islamic norms or standards as they imagine ...*"<sup>17</sup>

Political discourses are not free from religious issues in which both of them inter-related and complementing each other. However, crafting religious issue for political interest for the wining of majority ballot is completely irresponsible, tyrannical, and undemocratic.choosing a political leader is a right as being a human being. Nevertheless, a person is free to choose whoever perceived as the better candidate. However,

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Anies-Baswedan-Sandiaga-Uno-1042598749191329/>

<sup>17</sup> Sumanto Al-Qurtuby, Manipulasi Agama dalam Pilkada Jakarta. <http://www.dw.com/id/manipulasi-agama-dalam-pilkada-jakarta/a-38379477> (accessed July 2, 2017).

particular religion has a teaching for choosing those in the same religion. Regardless religious teaching sensitivity, this paper argues that both religion and politics could work together since both of them are playing in the shared sphere. The problem is going in the utilization of religious issues for political interest that disadvantage the other. Within this merged point, the notion of democracy is really tested, especially in the context of a diverse community such as Indonesia.

## **Conclusion**

Hate spin is an orchestra played by politician and political entrepreneur. George mentioned a pinpoint for hate spin is that group influenced by incitement (offense-taking) do not aware that they are as part of provoked group (offense-giving). The provoked groups are having no interest on the political agenda, such as what happen in the gubernatorial election of Jakarta. They were an ordinary people who have no advantage for political upheaval.

According Prasetio Edi Marsudi, leader of the winning team Ahok-Jarot, quoted from detiknews (2016), stated that there are organized parties to provoke residents to refuse the campaign Ahok-Jarot in their settlements. Another, example of polarization that occurred during the 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial election was the rejection of the body of the late Grandma Hindun because she chose Ahok in the first-round election. This evidence shows that the political polarization in Jakarta has increased, in particular in the period of campaign.

The brief explanation of the Ahok case, we can underscore some viewpoints. First, based on the theoretical framework of hate spin, there is a gap between the time when Ahok speech in Kepulauan Pramuka on 27 September 2016 and the Provincial Government of Jakarta had uploaded the full version on 28 September 2016, but the video has just viral nine days later after Buni Yani uploaded in his facebook on 6 October 2016 and added the transcript.

Secondly, Buni Yani probably has no intention do hate speech until his uploaded became viral in social media. This issue triggered a religious

sentiment, while in the same time the gubernatorial election will be held in Jakarta. The Islamic groups from the hardline and anti-Ahok was exploited the issue because they have a different agenda or interest. And some member of opposition involved in the event of 212 is symbolized that there are the political entrepreneurs

Third, in the case of the use religion as instrument in political interest like the Ahok case, political polarization cannot be avoided. Moreover, it has entered into the realm of social life. Society is constrained by their visceral emotions and primordial in order to defend their faith. In contrast, the political entrepreneurs use this situation as instrument to achieve their interest.

Fourth, though from the case of Ahok we could see how hate spin work, but identity still considered as the significant factor. According to Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC), the level of satisfaction of Jakarta citizens toward Ahok's performance is very high by 76 percent from a total of 446 respondents. In fact, he still lost the election. Identity may be not the only factor to answer the question why Ahok lost in Jakarta gubernatorial election 2017.

Fifth, identity may influences people to determine their political choice. Though George mentions it in his book, but it is not became a core of his focus. For example, someone who has watched the video of Ahok's speech in Kepulauan Pramuka and previously been sympathetic to Ahok, may not complain to the video. In addition, the political identity of parties who are not affiliated to Ahok will not complain if the person in the video is not Ahok. In this case, there is connectivity between identity politics and hate spin. Therefore, identity factors can open for further research, in particular with the use of constructivism perspectives.

Indeed, probably they have only a religious motive. They were unaware that their energy was utilized by political entrepreneur. To scale up the tension, the entrepreneur played religious issues within political motive, such as connecting gubernatorial election with crusade war and Jihad. Through presenting the case, the laws for both hate speech and hate

spin should be reinforced for reducing a negative impact of religious hate speech.

Analyzing hate spin issue connected to the religious and political issues are complex, since these issues could be a tool for gaining a political power. Through religious issue is primordially sensitive. An intersection of religion and political activism is the nature of global society. In the secular countries such as Europe and America, religious issues are still playing a significant role. However, manipulating religious issues for gaining political power is an evil part of political activism that disadvantages the other. Indeed, in the context of plural society such as Southeast Asia, this evil part could lead into instable religious diversity.

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