

# The New *Santri*

Challenges to Traditional Religious Authority in Indonesia



EDITED BY

NORSHHRIL SAAT

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**ISEAS** YUSOF ISHAK  
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## **SALAFISM, KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN INDONESIA**

*Noorhaidi Hasan*

Over the last decades, Indonesia has seen the growing impact of Saudi transnational proselytization and religious funding. Owing to the generous support by Saudi Arabia, *dakwah* activities focusing on promoting Salafism proliferated, and this is followed by the establishment of Salafi-oriented foundations and *madrasahs* in Indonesia. During the shifting political stance in the 1990s, the Salafis succeeded in establishing an exclusivist version of Islamic activism in Indonesia within the religious authorities. Due to the intensified Salafi campaign, Indonesian Muslims have been increasingly susceptible to the influences of rigid purification of faith that hardly accepts the diversity of religious expression and culture. This new type of Islamic activism also posed a challenge not only to existing religious authority but also to the legitimacy of established Muslim organizations.

The Saudi campaign impacted schools and university education through the production of Salafi-inspired literature. Translated works by 'Aid al-Qarni, Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani, and Muhammad

Salih al-Uthaimin are among the favourite references taught in Islamic schools and colleges. Salafi-oriented publishers are concerned with the production of such literatures, and they work shoulder-to-shoulder with Salafi preachers who have completed their studies in Salafi centres of learning in the Middle East. The Salafis believe that their main mission is to purify Muslim beliefs and practices and to educate them based on “correct” interpretations of the Quran and Sunnah, in accordance with the example set by the pious forefathers (*Salaf al-Salih*). The first is called *tasfiyya* (purification) and the second *tarbiyya* (education).

This chapter explores the practices of knowledge production, religious authority and education among the Salafi circles in Indonesia, and how they have exerted their influence beyond their own circles. More specifically, I will be looking at how doctrinal competition and ideological conflict are reflected in the discourse and literature produced by Salafi authorities. I will also be examining the role played by Salafi preachers and authorities, both in producing literature and in contextualizing and appropriating Salafi messages into the education system. Before tackling these issues, the historical background of Salafism in Indonesia will be examined.

## The Efflorescence of Salafism

The efflorescence of Salafism in Indonesia—evident by the growing number of young Muslim men wearing *jalabiyya* (Arab-style flowing robes) and women wearing *niqab* (a form of enveloping black veil) in public places—might not be isolated from Saudi Arabia’s politics of expanding their geopolitical influence throughout the Muslim world. In the 1970s, because of the skyrocketing world oil prices, which gave considerable economic benefits to Saudi Arabia, the kingdom sponsored a variety of *dakwah* activities all over the Muslim world. The purpose of such activities was to ensure the acquiescence of the Muslim world, boost Saudi rulers’ legitimacy at home, and fulfill Western political projects (Fraser 1997; Kepel 2002, pp. 69–72; Al-Rasheed 2007). In this way, Salafism was exported and spread, together with the Muslim Brotherhood-inspired *Sahwa* ideology. This campaign was later intensified, particularly in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, and the takeover of the Masjid al-Haram by Juhayman al-Utaybiled group that same year (Abukhalil 2004; Al-Rasheed 2008; Lacroix

2011). As a result, networks of loyalty and allegiance were established. Clothed in the language of Islamic solidarity and brotherhood, they worked closely together to dominate the religious landscape of the Muslim world.

Within the context of Indonesia, Saudi Arabia moulded close collaborations with the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII, Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia) and the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences (LIPIA, Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab). Both played a considerable role in recruiting cadres to campaign for Saudi Arabia's ideology, which underwent a change in direction as a result of the political crisis after the Juhayman al-Utaybi's seizure of Masjid al-Haram (Trofimov 2007; Lacroix 2011). Accordingly, the Saudis developed a policy of advertising its commitment to Islam while suppressing radical expressions of political Islam. This policy seemingly became a catalyst for further proliferation of Salafi influence, particularly among youths and university students and staff in that country.

A new variant of Salafism fully supported by the Saudi regime was born out of the concern centred on the need to call for a return to strict religious practices and moral integrity of individuals. Seemingly trivial, superficial issues, such as *jalabiyya*, *imama*, *lihya*, *isbal*, and *niqab* constituted the main themes of day-to-day discussions among followers. The commitment to wear *jalabiyya* for men and *niqab* for women, for instance, is considered to be more important than taking part in political activities. They enthusiastically demonstrated a commitment to religious propagation and a puritanical lifestyle, while refraining from openly discussing politics and excessively applying *takfir* (declaration of an individual as a unbeliever).

Indonesian DDII cadres who studied in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s were inspired by the Salafi movement and organized a systematic propagation method of "quietist Salafism" (Hasan 2007). Upon returning home, they organized workshops (*halqa*) and study circles (*daura*) openly in the areas around university campuses in Yogyakarta. Notable among them were Abu Nida, Ainur Rafiq Ghufron, Ahmad Faiz Asifuddin, Abdul Qadir Jawas, Ja'far Umar Thalib and Yusuf Usman Baisa, to mention but a few names, who soon gained the reputation as the main proponents of Indonesian Salafism. Among the participants in the *halqas* and *dauras* were homegrown-Darul Islam (DI)-inspired Negara Islam Indonesia (NII)'s followers who felt exhausted being active in a

clandestine movement which was under close surveillance of intelligent agents (Hasan 2006). Although some Salafi proponents had fought the war in Afghanistan, they were also involved in the campaigns against NII and other radical organizations deemed to have been trapped into neo-*khawarij*'s libel which were actively spreading animosity and catastrophe among Muslims.

At the end of the 1980s, and in tandem with the proliferation of quietist Salafism, NII began to lose its foothold in Indonesia. NII leaders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, escaped to Malaysia in 1985 to avoid being arrested by security authorities because of their harsh criticism against the Indonesian government, which they labelled as *taghut*. This criticism was especially directed at the government's policies to impose Pancasila as the state ideology. In Malaysia, they recruited followers, expanded networks and further developed their militancy and radicalism. From 1985 to 1990, they succeeded in dispatching some 200 members to Afghanistan to participate in a military training (*i'dad ashkari*) camp at Harby Pohantum, which was founded by Shaikh Rasul Sayyaf (Solahudin 2013, pp. 132–34). The purpose of the training was to acquire military knowledge and skills for *jihad* against the government. In Afghanistan, the militants became acquainted with the jihadi Salafi teachings. Their adoption of jihadism stirred up conflicts in the internal *usrah* network (Pavlova 2007; Solahudin 2013, pp. 144–45). Sungkar led an opposition against Ajengan Masduki, then the DI leader who was deemed to be a deviant joining a Sufi Order. Later in 1996, he established al-Qaeda-linked Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), which was active in promoting jihadist Salafism in Indonesia (Abuza 2003).

In the first two decades of the Salafi expansion, both quietists and jihadists successfully attracted a significant following, especially from the the younger generation of Indonesian Muslims. Islamic study circles and workshops, organized by quietists in spaces close to university campuses, were well attended. Likewise, Islamic study circles organized by the jihadist camp also mushroomed in many Indonesia cities. A number of leading Indonesian Salafi authorities, both from the circle of quietists and jihadists, were born out of this context, including Abu Nida, Ja'far Umar Thalib, Yazid bin Abdul Qadir Jawas, Muhammad Umar As-Sewed, Irfan Awwas, Abu Jibril Abdurrahman, and the infamous Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. It is intriguing in this context to understand why so many young people were so eager to participate in the Salafis' Islamic study circles.

## Knowledge Production

The key success of the Salafis in attracting a strong following can be explained by their ability to instill habitus through a certain mode of knowledge production. As a “system of durable, transposable disposition, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures”, habitus guides someone to action or inaction. It becomes social values embedded and established through the *longue-durée* process of socialization. Habitus constitutes a principle which “generates and organizes practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at the ends and or express mastery of operations necessary in order to attain them” (Bourdieu 1995, p. 52). It appears to be the structuring structure that is received through the actor’s experiences in internalizing the objective structure of the social world.

The Salafis produce religious knowledge in a broad sense to include not only theology, morality, *fiqh* and in general Islamic reasoning, but also all kinds of non-discursive ritualized, performative and embodied forms of knowledge production, such as prayers, rituals and bodily practices that denote worship and religiousness. Taking religion as a form of mediation (Meyer 2006), in understanding religion as a human practice, it is impossible to separate discursive and non-discursive dimensions and to ignore the mutual interactions between discursive and non-discursive dimensions of knowledge production. Moreover, there is an intricate, mutually constitutive relation between the production of religious knowledge and everyday experiences of the Salafis.

In tandem with its ultimate concern with a purification of Muslim beliefs and practices in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah as well as the understanding and example set by *salaf al-salih*, it is understandable that the Salafis put an emphasis on the teaching of *tauhid*, or more precisely Wahhabi doctrine, in their practices of knowledge production (Hasan 2010). Meaning to accept and believe in the oneness of God and His absolute authority, *tauhid* is considered by the Salafis to be the pillar of Muslim creed. Total submission to God entails a person’s sincere determination to implement all of His commands and scrupulously avoid all of His prohibitions. *Tawhid* is taught through the main subject in its curriculum, i.e., Islamic Theology (*Aqida*). For this subject, Salafis read works such as *Al-Qaul al-Mufid fi Adillat al-Tawhid* [The Useful Opinion on the Evidence of the

Oneness of God], which is the summary of the *Kitab al-Tawhid* [The Book on the Oneness of God] by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. In some of the Salafi teaching centres, the Salafis are obliged to memorize this text by heart as a precondition before continuing on to study other books.

Having completed this book, the Salafis are usually obliged to study the *Kitab al-Tawhid* or its annotated commentaries such as *Al Qaul al-Shadid 'Ala Kitab al-Tawhid* [The Authoritative Opinion on Book of the Oneness of God] by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Su'udi. Subsequently they should study *al-Usul al-Thalatha* [The Three Principles] by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab before reading *al-Aqida al-Wasitiyya* [The Middle Faith] by Taqiy al-Din Ahmad ibn Taymiyya or its annotated commentary, *Sharh al-'Aqida al-Wasitiyya* [Explanation of the Middle Faith] by Salih ibn Fauzan Ali Fauzan. Having mastered these primary books students are recommended to read other books, including *Nabza fi al-'Aqida* [Fragmentation in the Faith] by Muhammad Salih al-Uthaimin, *Sharh al-'Aqida al-Thahawiyya al-Muyassar* [Concise Explanation of the Faith According to Al-Tahawi] by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Khamis, and *Minhaj Firqat al-Najiyat* [Method of the Saved Sect] by Muhammad bin Jamil Zainu.

In relation to the teaching of *tauhid*, the Salafis highlight the importance of the doctrine *al-wala' wa-l-bara'* (allegiance to Islam and renunciation of unbelievers), which implies that any Muslim who claims to have faith in Allah must love, help, and defend Islam and other Muslims while at the same time denouncing infidelity, and segregating himself or herself from the influence of infidels (Hasan 2010). Theoretically, this doctrine entails a clear-cut distinction between the world of believers and that of unbelievers. More importantly, it provides the basis for the Salafis to choose living in small tight-knit communities (*jama'a*), a general practice that is expected to protect them from *bid'a* and reinforce their unity in the face of Muslim enemies.

The understanding of fundamental doctrines provides the foundation for the Salafis to study other subjects including Quranic exegesis, the Prophetic Traditions, Islamic legal theory, jurisprudence, and *dakwah* methodology. For Quranic exegesis, they read, among other things, *Usul al-Tafsir* [Principles of the Quranic Exegesis] by Muhammad Salih al-Uthaimin and *Aysir al-Tafasir li Kalam al-'Ali al-Kabir* [The Simplest Exegesis on the Words of the Eminent Supreme] by Abu Bakar Jabir

al-Jazairi. For the Prophetic Traditions, they study *al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyya* [al-Nawawi's Forty Prophetic Tradition Collection] by Imam al-Nawawi or its commentary, *al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyya* by Salih al-Shaykh, as well as *Muzakkirat al-Hadith al-Nabawi* [Treatise on the Prophetic Traditions] by Rabi ibn Hadi al-Madkhali and *Darurat al-Ihtimam bi Sunan al-Nabawiyyah* [Solicitude for the Prophetic Traditions] by Abd al-Salam Abi Barjis Ibn Nasir Abd al-Karim. For Islamic legal theory, the required reading materials include *al-Usul al-Fiqh* [Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence], *al-Usul min 'Ilm al-Usul* [The Principles of the Science of the Principles (of Islamic Jurisprudence)] by Muhammad Salih al-Uthaimin and *al-Waraqat fi Usul al-Fiqh* [Treatise on the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence] by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Juwaini (Hasan 2010; cf. Wahid 2014). This subject is taught to support another related subject, namely, Islamic jurisprudence, in which *Taysir al-Fiqh* [The Simple Version of Islamic Jurisprudence] by Salih bin Ghanim al-Sadlan, *Minhaj al-Muslim* [Method of the Believer] by Abu Bakr Jabir al-Jaza'iri, and *al-Mulakhkhas al-Fiqhiy* [Summary of the Islamic Jurisprudence] by Salih bin Fauzan al-Fauzan are the main required readings. For *dakwah* methodology, the Salafis read *Dakwah al-Du'at* [Islamic Propagation Guidelines for Muslim Preachers] by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and *Al-Da'watu ila Allah* [Islamic Mission in the Name of God] by Ali Hasan al-Halaby al-Atsari.

The system of instruction in Salafi *madrasahs* is conventional in nature. It is based on an informal teacher-scholar relationship. Every morning, at around 8 o'clock, the *ustadhs* will come to the mosque and occupy different positions and spaces. The most senior *ustadh* will usually occupy the centrepiece of the mosque while the other *ustadhs* will sit at the wings. Groups of students sit around them referring to the books held in their own hands while listening to their *ustadhs*. The *ustadhs* read the books and explain the meaning of each sentence while giving illustrations and examples. Sometimes they use small blackboards to make their explanations clearer. Some students make notes in their books while others only listen. In the case of the teaching of Arabic, the students are drilled repeatedly to imitate as fluently as possible the examples of the sentence given by their *ustadhs*. Opportunities to raise questions are given to the students after the *ustadhs* finish their lessons. This activity lasts until the noon prayer. Between the noon prayer and the afternoon prayer, students have lunch and then take a rest. After the afternoon prayer, they will come back to undertake the same activity. This afternoon activity ends around one hour before the



sunset prayer at 6 o'clock. Between the sunset prayer and the evening prayer at 7 p.m. the students read and memorize some parts of the Quran, prescribed by their *ustadhs*.

Some Salafi *madrasahs* offer special programmes (*takhassus*) called *Tadrib al-Du'at* (training for preachers) and *Tarbiyat al-Nisa* (education for women). These programmes last for a certain period of time, ranging from three months to one year (Hasan 2010; Wahid 2014). The *Tadrib al-Du'at* is designed to produce ready preachers to conduct *dakwah* activities. The subjects taught consist of Islamic theology, Quranic exegesis, the Prophet's traditions, Islamic history, Islamic law, ethics, and Arabic. The *Tarbiyat al-Nisa* is addressed to women and is aimed at forming their personality according to the Wahhabi doctrine. In this programme, participants study Islamic theology and Islamic jurisprudence besides receiving instructions on behaviour, fashion, gender relations, and the methods of taking care of husbands and children. The materials used are selected from the books required in the aforementioned regular programmes. This sort of sandwich programme played a pivotal role in moulding young cadres of Salafi preachers to spearhead the Salafi *dakwah* expansion among students both at senior high schools and universities.

### **Conflict within the Salafis**

The Salafis are a heterogeneous group. The quietists and the jihadists compete in promoting their respective doctrinal positions and ideological standpoints. This conflict is interestingly productive, meaning that to refute each other's camp, they are active in publishing books, periodicals, pamphlets and other printed materials. Production of religious knowledge is situated and contested. Taking Asad (1986)'s notion of religion as a discursive tradition, it follows that perceptions of Salafis about what proper Islamic knowledge entails and what are the appropriate means through which knowledge is communicated are situated and contextual (van Bruinessen 2003). These perceptions are central to the views and debates about the interaction of Salafis with their social environment. Although there is no single, universal standard about what Islamic knowledge entails, it is a crucial prerequisite in understanding what it means to be Salafi and how Muslim subjects are formed. Hence the means, techniques and practices through which knowledge is being communicated is crucial.

Confident with the positive responses they had acquired from the Indonesian society, the quietists strongly rejected *dakwah hizbiyya* promoted by the jihadists. In numerous articles in *Salafy*, a periodical published by the quietists, *dakwah hizbiyya* is defined as political fanaticism which lacks appreciation towards the truth Salafi system (*manhaj*). It was opposed to the *dakwah salafiyya* for the following reasons: (1) it deviates from the way of faithful Muslims (*sabil al-mu'minin*); (2) its leader comes perilously close to the sins of *bid'a*; (3) its members are committed to the doctrine of *al-wala wa'l-bara* on the basis of their loyalty to a particular leader rather than to the Quran and Sunnah; and (4) it teaches fanaticism (Hasan 2006, p. 141).

The quietists further argued that the main error committed by the *hizbiyya* groups stems from their loyalty to the followers of *bid'a*. This mistake has led to divisions among Muslims because it teaches fanaticism to each separate group, prompting members to renounce any truth that might belong to the others. Adherence to the *dakwah hizbiyya* was even considered to be one of the distinctive characteristics of polytheists (*mushrikin*). This is because those who support it use Islam as a weapon to create fanatical groups for their own political interests, and the result is that Muslims become fragmented and weak.

The criticism was primarily directed at the activism developed by the Tarbiyya movement, which is better categorized into politico-Salafism, to follow Wiktorowicz (2006)'s terms. Yet the implication of the criticism was extended to include the NII and JI that were also perceived to value political engagement over the purification of the individual Muslim's religious beliefs and practices. The quietists not only accused them of being enmeshed in the sinful acts of *bid'a*, but also condemned them as "Agitators of Religion" (Hasan 2006, pp. 141–42). Another big mistake committed by these groups, according to the quietists, is their ambition to revive the caliphate, which proved to have concentrated all Muslim minds and energies on political interests, which can potentially spark bloody conflicts among Muslims. More problematically, the ambition to establish the caliphate is believed to have encouraged the Muslim Brothers to support the Shi'i-inspired Iranian revolution without paying heed to "all the forms of infidelity of this revolution and the hostility of its proponents to the principle of the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jama'a*" (Hasan 2006, p. 142).

The quietists insisted that one devastating result of the *hizbiyya* has been the spread of a revolutionary spirit among Muslims. They cited

a number of events as examples of catastrophes afflicting the Muslim world in the wake of this trend: the rebellion launched by the Jihad group in Egypt that perpetrated the assassination of Anwar Sadat, the Juhayman al-'Utaybi-led group's seizure of the Grand Mosque, Muhammad ibn Surur al-Nayef Zayn al-'Abidin and 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abd al-Khaliq's criticism of the Saudi Arabian royal family and its religious establishment, and the victory of FIS (Front Islamique du Salut) in Algeria. In their eyes, these events provided more than ample evidence about the dangerous spread of the *hizbiyya* for the Muslim world.

Congruent with its non-revolutionary approach, the quietists developed a moderate stance towards existing rulers. In sharp contrast to the jihadists who believed that a ruler cedes his legitimacy through any infraction of the divine law and must be therefore removed, they maintained that Muslims must obey their legitimate rulers, whether just or unjust, on the condition that they are not commanded to commit any sin. In their opinion, the only available way for Muslim citizens to resist legitimate rulers committing errors and acting cruelly is to advise those rulers to return to the right path.

Interestingly, similar to the jihadists, the quietists also advocated a strict application of the sharia. Submission to the sharia is considered compulsory because it is God's law. But they maintained that this is part of the *tawhid al-uluhiyya*, which entails that all kinds of worship are meant for God alone (Hasan 2006, p. 145). According to their interpretation, to believe that those who do not apply the sharia stray necessarily into infidelity (*takfir*), as implied by the jihadists, is a big mistake. Similarly, while denouncing jihadism, they failed to refrain from mobilizing fighters when skirmishes erupted between Muslims and Christians in Maluku. Under the leadership of Ja'far Umar Thalib who established Laskar Jihad in 2000, they ventured to the frontline to fight jihad against Christians in the islands.

In retrospect, the jihadists answered the quietists' criticism by publishing a number of books, including *Potret Salafi Sejati: Meneladani Kehidupan Generasi Pilihan* [*Portrait of True Salafis: Following the Lives of Chosen Generation*] by Tim Ulin Nuha (2007), *Jamaah, Imamah, Bai'ah: Kajian Syar'i Berdasarkan Al-Qur'an, As-Sunnah, Ijma', dan Qiyas* [*Jamaah, Imamah, Bai'ah: Shari'a-based Study on the Basis of the Quran, Prophetic Traditions, Consensus and Analogy*] by Abu Ammar et al. (2010), and *Syubhat Salafi* [*Salafi Ambivalence*] by Tim Jazeera (2011). Published by

three Solo-based publishing houses linked to the JI, i.e., al-Qawam, Pustaka Arafah and Jazera respectively (International Crisis Group 2008), the books emphasize that the jihadists' understanding of the doctrines is totally correct as it is based on the fundamental sources of Islam, i.e., the Quran and Prophetic Traditions, plus practices of the Prophet's companions and their successors. Abundant quotations from the Quran, the Prophetic Traditions and the epics of the Prophet's companions and their successors are included to convince readers about their interpretation of the doctrines, while delegitimizing that of the quietists. Referring to Muhammad Salih al-Uthaimin, himself an influential Salafi authority among the quietists, they maintain in one book (2010) that those who oppose the righteousness of God's law or prefer to apply man-made law automatically falls into infidelity. The same holds true for those applying democracy as it is diametrically opposed to Islamic system.

### **Fragmented Authorities**

It is of interest to note that while generally depicted as an opposition to *wasatiyya Islam*, the mainstream ideology of Indonesian Muslims, Salafism itself is contested among different authorities and agencies using available modalities and networks. It is in fact the relation between habitus and modalities in the field of contestation that generates practice and appears at the same time as the structuring structure. Within this context we can see the active role played by certain agency to influence or transform the surrounding environment. As a result tensions and conflicts have been always vulnerable, even among the quietists.

Today, there are at least three major active quietist groups led respectively by Lukman Ba'abduh, Dzulqarnain and Abu Turab al-Jawi. Lukman Ba'abduh was deputy commander of Laskar Jihad in Maluku, whereas Dzulqarnain was the head of its *fatwa* section. Abu Turab came to Maluku a little late and was not part of the Laskar Jihad elite group. However, he was able to exert his influence among certain Salafi circles because of his loyalty to Yahya al-Hajuri, the successor of al-Wadi'i in leading Darul Hadith in Yemen. After the death of al-Wadi'i, rivalries and conflicts occurred between al-Hajuri and Abd al-Rahman al-Mar'i al-Adeni. While Ba'abduh sided with al-Adeni, Abu Turab decided to defend al-Hajuri.

Lukman Ba'abduh who built a base in Ma'had As-Salafi in Jember, East Java, managed to draw Muhammad as-Sewed, Ayif Syafruddin, Qamar Suaidi, Abu Hamzah Yusuf and Abdurrahman into his orbit in their competition against Dzulqarnain and his like-minded personalities. Based in Ma'had as-Sunnah in Makassar, the latter built an alliance with Dzul Akmal and Jauhari, the founders of Ma'had Ta'dhim As-Sunnah in Pekanbaru Riau and al-Madinah in Solo, Central Java respectively. They have been active in attacking the manoeuvres of what they called the Lukmaniyun group to rebuild their credential as the true Salafis. Often referred to as RMS (Riau, Makassar and Solo) by their opponents, the Dzulqarnain group even managed to maintain an exclusive access to Fawzan Salih bin al-Fawzan, a leading Salafi authority in Saudi Arabia, who successfully maintained trust and support both from Saudi's religious institutions, such as Haiah Kibar al-Ulama and Lajnah al-Da'imah, and from influential authorities in the Saudi government and universities. Exclusive access to Fawzan Salih bin al-Fawzan is crucial to ensure continued support from Saudi Arabia and, more importantly, their credentials as Salafi authorities in Indonesia.

In contrast to Dzulqarnain, Lukman Ba'abduh and his allies apparently did not succeed in convincing Fawzan Salih bin al-Fawzan to maintain his patronage with them. Their access to Fawzan Salih bin al-Fawzan ended. They were only able to maintain access to Rabi' ibn Hadi al-Madkhali, who has been away from religious and political authority of Saudi Arabia. Al-Madkhali was known as one of the founders of Jamaat al-Salafi al-Muhtasiba (JSM). Both Ba'abduh and Dzulqarnain groups were involved in the competition to claim credentials as legitimate Salafi authorities by crediting their own legitimacy and discrediting the others. The former referred to the latter as the group which was concerned only with MLM, *mutalawwinun*, *la'ibun*, and *makirun* (being chameleons, just making fun, and rebellious in character).

The dynamics of their competition for the credential as the true Salafis reminds us of similar conflicts in the 1990s around the issue of Sururiyya. They used various media channels, including the Internet, to spread their ideas. While the Ba'abduh group set up Tukpencarianalhaq.com, the Dzulqarnain group prepared to launch pelitaalhaq.com. The latter intensified their campaigns by making alliance with Rodja and Yufid TVs as well as radio stations owned by personalities in Persatuan Pengusaha Muslim Indonesia (PPMI) (Sunarwoto 2016). To justify their

support for Rodja and Yufid TVs, they disseminated *fatwas* on the permissibility to display lived photos. They were also not reluctant to wear *peci* (a typical Indonesian black hat). Both lived photos and *peci* remain rejected by the Ba'abduh group.

It is worth noting that despite such a dispute, all proponents of the faction, including Ja'far Umar Thalib, came to actively engage in countering jihadism. Endorsing what Nasir Abbas, former commander of JI, said in his *Membongkar JI; Pengakuan Mantan Anggota JI* [Uncovering JI: Confession of a Former JI Member], Ja'far Umar Thalib strongly criticized the interpretation of Bin Laden on jihad—as a call for killing American and Western civilians—and JI's decision to follow the interpretation. He asserted that Bin Laden did not qualify as a mufti so his *fatwa* should be ignored. According to Thalib, jihad is legitimate only under certain conditions, including the approval from legitimate political authority and only for self-defense mechanism.

Abu Hamza Yusuf came to criticize Imam Samudra, one of the masterminds behind the first Bali bombing who published *Aku Melawan Teroris* [I Fight Terrorists!] (Samudra 2004). In this sort of plea, Samudra asserted that he is the only true jihadist committed to fighting jihad to defend Islam from the attacks of belligerent infidels. Referring to what happened in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq, he believed that what he did in Bali was just an attempt to take revenge against “the real international terrorist, America” perpetrating terror against Muslims across the world. In a pamphlet entitled *Membongkar Pemikiran Begawan Teroris* [Revealing the Thought of the Terrorist Mastermind], Yusuf criticized the whole argument proposed by Samudra in the book. According to him, Samudra had misunderstood the Salafi main doctrines and dishonoured the Salafi authorities. He instead idolized problematic figures, such as Safar al-Hawali, Salman al-Awdah, Osama bin Laden, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. As a result, he fell into a false understanding of jihad.

Lukman Ba'abduh took more significant steps toward condemning the jihadists by publishing a book entitled *Mereka Adalah Teroris* [They Are Terrorists] (2005). In this book, he condemns Imam Samudra as a *Khariji*, which is to say (in Salafi parlance) one who destroys Islam by spreading the doctrine of “excommunication” (*takfir*) and perpetrating terror. He further argues that Samudra's main mistake lies in his tendency to follow the thought of so-called *neo-khawarij* activists, whom he identifies as Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Abul

A'la al-Mawdudi, Sa'id Hawwa and like-minded personalities. These thinkers are blamed to have inspired Safar al-Hawali, Salman al'Auda and Osama bin Laden to perpetrate extremism and terrorism among Muslims. Ba'abduh's argument is challenged by Abduh Zulfidar Akaha, a Muslim Brotherhood activist who wrote *Siapa Teroris, Siapa Khawarij* [Who is Terrorist, Who is Khawarij?] (2006). He is of the opinion that Ba'abduh needs not only more evidence to associate radicalism and terrorism with Banna, Qutb, Mawdudi and other Muslim Brotherhood's thinkers, he also needs to be more careful in judging any opinion and analysing any event.

In response to Akaha's criticism, Ba'abduh wrote another book, *Menebar Dusta Membela Teroris Khawarij* [Spreading Lies, Defending Khawarij-Terrorists] (2007), in which he reiterates his criticism of Imam Samudra and other like-minded individuals as a deviant group that is too quick to apply the doctrine of *takfir* to legitimate rulers and Muslims who hold different views. He loses no time in refuting all Akaha's criticism and data, which he blames to be nothing other than lies and libels, especially to prominent Salafi *ulama*, including Bin Baz, Al-Albani, al-Uthaimin, al-Madkhali, and al-Wadi'i, who struggled to promote the Salafi *manhaj*. In Ba'abduh's opinion, these *ulamas* always sought to guide the Muslim *umma* to understand and practise Islam in accordance with the example set by the pious forefathers. In contrast to Muslim Brotherhood's thinkers, they are believed to have never led the *umma* into extremism and terrorism.

Concern with the negative impacts that Imam Samudra's *I Fight Terrorists!* might engender, another quietist proponent, Dzulqarnain M. Sunusi, published *Antara Jihad dan Terorisme* [Between Jihad and Terrorism] (Dzulqarnain 2011, pp. 323–74). He begins his argument by saying that Islam is a religion of mercy and peace that opposes extremism and terrorism. Jihad is emphasized as a mechanism to defend against infidels attacking Muslims, the original ruling of which requires Muslims to participate collectively (*fard kifaya*). It changes into an individual duty (*fard 'ayn*) when it is under the command of a legitimate ruler or when Muslim combatants are in actual confrontation with their enemies in a battlefield. He further explains that this jihad is totally different from terrorism (*al-irhab*). The latter is perpetrated for the cause of human desires and aimed at instigating harm and catastrophe. Referring to the *fatwas* issued by Saudi's Committee of Senior Ulama (Hiai Kibar al-Ulama), he insists that terrorism is absolutely forbidden in Islam

and its perpetrators must be brought to trial and punished by death. Dzulqarnain further argues that what Samudra did in Bali is absolutely not jihad. It is just an act of terror perpetrated because of his ignorance of the true meaning and ruling of jihad as well as various conditions to meet before fighting jihad. He concludes that killing innocents is a serious offence against the sharia.

## Salafism and Islamic Education

Despite continued competition and conflict among the Salafis, Salafism continues to flourish in Indonesia and extends its influence beyond the Salafi circles, reaching students at senior high schools and colleges. One remarkable impact of the Salafi expansion among students can be seen from the shifting theological discourse in the Islamic literature used in schools and university education from the Ash'arite, which was very popular in Indonesia, to the Salafi theology. According to the Ash'arite doctrine of *tawhid* popularized by Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 935) and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 944), God is one, unique, eternal, existent Being; He is not a substance, not a body, not an accident, not limited to any direction, and not in any space. He possesses attributes such as knowledge, power, life, will; He is hearing and seeing and has speech. This theology is especially popular among Indonesian traditionalist Muslims. The shift occurs when the Ash'arite theology was challenged by the concept of the Oneness of God that refers to the doctrine developed by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328). This concept divides *tawhid* into three branches: *tawhid 'ubudiyya* (unity of worship); *tawhid rububiyya* (unity of lordship); and *tawhid al-asma wa'l-sifat* (unity of Allah's names and attributes).

More and more books used for Islamic education courses at schools and colleges are adopting the concept of the so-called *Tawhid 3*. For example, the textbook for Islamic education courses used in Islamic University of North Sumatra, Andalas University of West Sumatra, and Muhammadiyah University of Mataram. The idea to incorporate *Tawhid 3* into Islamic literature used in schools and university education has grown since 2007. The initiator was, among others, Muhamin, a professor of UIN Malang who argued that the teaching of theology among students should touch their hearts and feelings (Suhadi 2018). For him, insights into the Oneness of God as explained in the concept of *Tawhid 3* are essential to provide a foundation for students to have



a correct understanding of their faith that entails in their attitude, behaviour and everyday life.

In our recent research on Islamic literature used in schools and university education in sixteen Indonesian provinces, the topics about purification of faith, the discourse of revitalization of the Prophetic Tradition, and exemplary *salaf al-salih* are imbued in textbooks and Islamic literature spread among students. The popularity of the Salafi books discussing these topics, which lies only behind the so-called popular Islamist and *Tarbawi* literatures, goes hand in hand with the growing acceptance of the ideological books of the Salafi, such as *Kitab al-Tawhid* by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab and *Fath Majid* by Abdurrahman bin Hasan Alu al-Shaykh (Hasan 2018b). These books serve as the main reference used widely by authors of Islamic textbooks for students. As mentioned earlier, *Kitab al-Tawhid* contains the doctrines of monotheism which is strictly defined by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab as belief in the Only Almighty God and consequently rejecting any forms of polytheism (*shirk*) and sufism. The definition of *shirk* in *Kitab al-Tawhid* includes the practice of prayer in accordance with the exemplary practice of the *Salaf al-Salih*. Within this context, submission to religious leaders, seeking blessings of things and asking for help from other than God are considered an anathema to Islam.

The Prophetic Traditions (hadith) also receive particular attention from the authors of textbooks and Islamic literature used in schools and university education. It is not difficult for the authors to explore more about hadith as Salafi teaching centres, campuses and publishers provide abundant references to hadith. Imam al-Shafi'i College for Islamic Studies in Jember, for instance, is known for its focus on the study of hadith. In fact, canonical hadith books such as *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *Nayl al-Awtar*, *al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyya*, *Riyad al-Salihin* and *Bulugh al-Maram*, to mention but a few, constitute the core references and backbone of the Salafi discourse of Islam. These books have been widely read by the participants in Islamic Study Unit (Rohis) and University-based Islamic Missionary Unit (LDK). Among the Salafi publishers active in publishing such books are Solo-based Al-Ghuroba, Zamzam, and al-Qalam, plus Al-Qamar Media (Yogyakarta), Pustaka Umar (Bogor), Pustaka At-Taqwa (Bogor), Darul Haq (Jakarta), and Imam Adz-Dzahabi (Bekasi).

Most of these books belong to the category of canonical works, standard Islamic references used also by traditionalist Muslims. But the

books published by the Salafis include the annotations by Salafi-leading scholars such as Muhammad Salih al-Uthaimin, Nasiruddin al-Albani, and Fawzan Salih bin al-Fawzan. This fact explains the particular element of Salafism embedded in the books. Some Indonesian Salafi proponents have also arisen as the leading annotators, including Yazid bin Abdul Qadir Jawas (Ikhwan 2018). Referring to Salih al-Uthaimin, and Nasir al-Din al-Albani, Jawas in his *Sharh Ahl al-Sunna wa'l Jama'a* (2017) explains about the law of intention in prayer that should not be pronounced. This opinion is intended to refute the followers of the Shafi'ite school of thought. There is no wonder that the Salafi books lie only the third after the popular Islamist and *Tarbawi* books in the map of Islamic literature used in schools and university education in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

The spread of the Salafi influence in Indonesia, which was inseparable from Saudi's ambitious campaign for Wahhabization of the Muslim *umma*, went hand in hand with the rise of a new type of Islamic activism and religious authorities. The story began with the dispatch of a dozen Indonesian students to study in the Salafi teaching centres in the Middle East. Upon returning home, they organized *halqas* and *dauras* and established Salafi *madrasahs* across Indonesia. In so doing they recruited loyal followers and sympathizers into their circles. Salafi teaching centres and *madrasahs* had grown up into small Salafi communities and networks in which Salafi way of life constituted an integral element of the Salafis' habitus and everyday life. The production, development, authorization and dissemination of Islamic knowledge in the networks created specific modes of binding and community building.

Salafis are known for their monolithic Islamic worldview, which undermines the diversity of religion and culture. But the Salafi movement that proliferated in Indonesia is far from monolithic. For the last couple of decades, the Salafis have been divided into various groups that were involved in rivalry and conflict around some doctrinal and ideological issues. Some, especially Salafi Jihadists, remain to oppose the state by developing the doctrine of jihadism, while the others (especially the quietists) have become critical of the doctrine and stood at the frontline to refute the legitimacy of the jihadists' ideological position. But this

contestation is somehow productive. Many Indonesian Salafi authorities have arisen out of this context, publishing books and pamphlets defending their respective positions.

It is of interest to note that the influence of Salafism has expanded beyond the Salafi circles through the role played by Salafi preachers and authorities both in producing the Salafi literature and in contextualizing and appropriating the Salafi messages in schools and university education. More and more books used for Islamic education courses at schools and colleges are adopting the doctrinal and ideological concepts of the Salafis, including *Tawhid 3*, the revitalization of the Prophetic Tradition in teaching Islam and full commitment to follow the exemplary practices set by the *Salaf al-Salih*.

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Just like the Gutenberg revolution in the fifteenth century, which led to the emergence of non-conventional religious authority in the Christian world, the current information technology revolution, particularly through mediums such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, has triggered the re-construction and decentralization of religious authority in Islam. New *santri* (pious individuals) and preachers emerged from the non-conventional religious educational system. They not only challenged the traditional authorities, but also redefine and re-conceptualize old religious terminologies, such as *hijra* and *wasatiyya*. This book explores the dynamics of religious authority in Indonesia with special attention to the challenges from the "new *santri*". It is a rich and important book on religion. I recommend students of religion in Indonesia and other countries to read it.

**Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif**

*Professor Emeritus of History at Yogyakarta State University*

An important and timely volume that addresses the changing nature of Islamic leadership in the world's most popular Muslim country. This book debunks many (mis)perceptions that Indonesia Islam is monolithic. It also redefines dominant characterization of Islam by Orientalist scholars, such as *santri* and *abangan* Muslims.

**Haedar Nashir**

*Chairman of Muhammadiyah*

This edited volume evaluates the new development of Islamic scholarship and authority in Indonesia. Things have changed significantly in recent times that make many observers and researchers wondering: has Indonesia moved from traditional authorities, mainstream Islamic organizations, and the established scholarship to the new actors, movements and platforms? Has the change occurs owing to the democratization and political reforms that took place in the last twenty years or are there other factors we need to take into account? The contributors in this book provide possible answers from many different areas and perspectives. It's a must-read!

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