Negotiating Salafī Islam and the State: The *Madkhaliyya* in Indonesia

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Abstract

The focus of this article is on the *Salafiyya-Madkhaliyya* in Indonesia, which takes its name from Saudi scholar Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī. After an account of how they emerged and developed in Indonesia, the relationship of the Madkhalīs with the state, which is based on a "*fiqh* of obedience", is analyzed. It is argued that, while this legal underpinning necessitates that they give total loyalty to the ruler (*walī l-amr*, or *ūlū l-amr*), the Indonesian Madkhalīs are unable to entirely follow this principle. The Madkhalīs have had to come to terms with the fact that Indonesia follows a democratic system, which, in fact, prevents the comprehensive accommodation of their Salafī principles. The resulting ambiguities prove difficult to solve. It is argued here that the negotiation between Madkhalī Salafīs and the Indonesian state is characterized by the constant efforts of the former to tackle those ambiguities.

Keywords

Introduction

This article discusses the relationship of local Salafīs with the state in Indonesia. It focuses on the *Salafiyya-Madkhaliyya*, or, in Roel Meijer's terms, "Madkhalism", a transnational Salafī current inspired by the thought and writings of Rabīʿ b. Hādī al-Madkhalī (b. 1350/1931), a renowned Salafī scholar from Saudi Arabia. The Madkhalīs are among those Salafīs who claim to disengage

themselves from practical politics and focus merely on Islamic outreach (*da'wa*), purification (*taṣfiya*) and education (*tarbiya*). The Madkhalī current has spread widely not only in the Middle East, from where it originates, but also in Muslim communities elsewhere in the world, leading Roel Meijer to conclude that "Madkhalism has become a transnational phenomenon without a real base in Saudi Arabia".[1] By "no real base", Meijer seems to imply that Madkhalīs have a weak connection with the state of Saudi Arabia. Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī, central inspiration to the current, is a member neither of the *Lajnat al-Dāʾima li-l-Buḥūth al-ʿIlmiyya wa-l-Iftāʾ* nor of the *Hayʾat al-Kibār al-ʿUlamāʾ*, the two most prestigious state-controlled religious bodies in Saudi Arabia. Nonetheless, his influence on the Salafī interpretation of Islam is evident almost everywhere in the Muslim world.

Meijer's statement is interesting, since the centrality of Saudi Arabia in whichever Salafī current is presently hardly denied.[2] Yet, in line with Meijer's above assessment, my own analysis of how the *Madkhaliyya* has taken hold in Indonesia, and to what extent it has grown roots in Indonesian society, will show that the *Madkhaliyya*, as a transnational phenomenon, is not only without a real base in Saudi Arabia; it also has no strong base in Indonesian society. The relationship of the Madkhalīs with the state is replete with ambiguities that are often difficult to grapple with. While they claim to be completely independent of the state in extending their *da'wa* and in gaining a strong foothold in wider Indonesian society, this is factually hard to sustain. The doctrine of "obedience to the ruler" – the *walī l-amr* – which they hold as a core principle of their Salafī interpretation has often forced them to accommodate political agendas that require them to seriously compromise on their Salafī principles. The resulting ambiguous positions have also contributed to their relatively weak position vis-à-vis other Salafī currents that maintain much clearer positions pro or counter those political agendas of state authorities. Because they lack a real base in Saudi Arabia, and therefore lack sustained support from there, the Madkhalīs' religious authority is easily challenged by other Salafīs in

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1   Roel Meijer, "Politicising *al-jarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl:* Rabīʿ b. Hādī al-Madkhalī and the Transnational Battle for Religious Authority", in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, ed. Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), 375-99; here 382.

2   It should be noted that al-Madkhalī – as former head of the *ḥadīth* Department of the *International Islamic University of Medina* (IIUM) – was never a marginal figure in the global Saudi *da'wa*. See Michael Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith: Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2017), 106f. and 175-77. For arguments why the view that "Salafism" radiates unidirectionally from Saudi Arabia is highly debatable, see the introduction to this special thematic issue.

Indonesia. While Meijer focuses on the transnational dimension of "Madkha-lism", this article provides a complementary in-depth study of one concrete regional context.

This study is aimed at helping us to better comprehend the "politics" of the one Salafī current scholars have frequently framed by its reluctance to engage in politics. Academics have variously labelled this current as "purist" (Wik-torowicz),[3] "purist-rejectionist" (Pall)[4] and "quietist" (Wagemakers) in their at-tempts to capture its distinct political views.[5] Thus, "Madkhalism" (as termed by Meijer above) or *Madkhaliyya*, as it shall be called here, in an attempt to avoid the use of yet another "ism", is not only a specific version of the Salafī interpretation of Islam in general; it also refers to a distinct Salafī political posi-tion. Like other Salafīs commonly classed as "quietists", Madkhalīs take a loyal stance towards prevalent political structures; yet, other than them, they very proactively promote or – to use Wagemakers' words – "propagate" uncondi-tional loyalty towards the rulers. In this article, such propagation is understood as a form of the Madkhalīs' negotiation with the state.

A Brief Account of the Madkhaliyya in Indonesia

Madkhalīs identify themselves neither by this label nor explicitly as followers of Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī, just as those commonly called "Wahhābīs" refuse that exonym and prefer to be called *muwaḥḥidūn*, *ahl al-tawḥīd*, or *salafiyyūn* in-stead.[6] Thus, as with the latter, the label "Madkhalī" was given to them either

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3 See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29:3 (2006), 207-39; here 217-21.

4 See Zoltan Pall, *Lebanese Salafis between the Gulf and Europe: Development, Fractionalization and Transnational Networks of Salafism in Lebanon* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 26.

5 Joas Wagemakers modified "quietists" into three types: "aloofists", who remain aloof from politics; "loyalists", who refrain from politics but give support to rulers' policies; and "propa-gandists", who not only are tacitly loyal to the prevalent political establishment but also ac-tively propagate this loyalty. See Joas Wagemakers, "Revisiting Wiktorowicz: Categorising and Defining the Branches of Salafism", in *Salafism after the Arab Awakening: Contending with People's Power*, ed. Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone (London: Hurst / New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 7-24, here 16. For a discussion of Wagemaker's categories, see, again, the introduction to this special thematic issue.

6 Madawi Al-Rasheed, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007), 2 and 22; see also Nabil Mouline, *The Clerics of Islam: Religious Authority and Political Power in Saudi Arabia*, trans. Ethan S. Rundell (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 8.

by their rivals, as a polemical one, or by scholars of "Salafism", as an analytical one.[7]

While, according to Deliar Noer, Wahhābī thought was somewhat present in the archipelago prior to Indonesia's independence in August 1945,[8] the rise of Salafī Islam proper is inseparably tied to the return of Indonesian graduates from Islamic universities in Saudi Arabia, prominent among them the International Islamic University of Medina (IIUM) and the Imām Muḥammad b. Saʿūd University of Riyadh (IMIU), in the mid-1980s. Most of these students had been sponsored by the Institute for Islamic Sciences and Arabic (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab di Indonesia*; LIPIA), an outpost of the IMIU in Jakarta, in cooperation with the Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*; DDII).[9] Upon their return, these graduates actively propagated their understanding of Salafī Islam among Indonesian university students through study circles (*ḥalaqa*) and public sermons. In a next step, they established Islamic schools similar to the traditional Islamic boarding school, the so-called *pesantren*, thus adapting their initially alien religious persuasion to the Indonesian context. In this environment various factions emerged, based on doctrinal difference. Perhaps the most significant of these disagreements was over the issue of armed violence and the relationship of the adherents to these various interpretations of Salafī Islam to the Indonesian state.

A major trigger for this development was the collapse of General Suharto's so-called New Order regime in May 1998[10] and the subsequently greater public exposure of the adherents to Salafī Islam. In 2000, finally, a Salafī paramili-

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7   See, e.g., Meijer, *Politicising al-jarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl*, who establishes "Madkhalism" pressumably as an analytical term; ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ al-Nāshī, *al-Marjaʿiyya al-salafiyya bayn al-taʾṣīl wa-l-tawzīf wa-l-taʾwīl al-salafiyya "al-madkhaliyya" unmūdhajan* (Qairouan and Tunis: Manshūrāt Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya, 2014), who, pressumably with a polemical objective, proposes the terms "al-salafiyya al-madkhaliyya" or "madākhala".

8   See Deliar Noer, The *Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur et al.: Oxford University Press, 1978). This claim, however, is largely based on circumstantial evidence only: Noer claims that, for instance, organizations like the *Muhammadiyah*, founded in 1912, and *Union of Islam* (*Persatuan Islam*; established in 1923), had been inspired by reformist ideas of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. For the two organizations, see below.

9   The DDII was established in 1962 by former prominent *Masyumi* leader Muhammad Natsir (Muḥammad Nāṣir; d. 1993) and associates, after the Islamic *Masyumi* party had been banned by President Soekarno in 1960. See Carool Kersten, *Islam in Indonesia: The Contest for Society, Ideas and Values* (London: Hurst, 2015), 2f., 74-79 et passim.

10   See Katharine E. McGregor, *History in Uniform: Military Ideology and the Construction of Indonesia's Past* (Singapore: NUS Press 2007); Judith Bird, "The Pot Boils Over – Indonesia in 1998", *Asian Survey* 39:1 (1999), 27-37.

tary section of *Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah* (FKAWJ) was established under the name of *Laskar Jihad*, led by Salafist pioneer Ja'far Umar Thalib (Ja'far 'Umar Thālib; b. 1381/1961).[11] In the first years of the 2000s, Indonesia witnessed a skyrocketing popularity of *Laskar Jihad.* Established only in 2000, it was heavily invested in the civil war between Christians and Muslims in Ambon, Moluccas, and became one of the most important actors to legitimize the violence as a defensive *jihād*. Very soon, however, following the release of a *fatwā* from Rabī' al-Madkhalī in 2002,[12] its popularity waned, and it dissolved soon afterwards.

Its dissolution, however, only marked the beginning of a new phase, when a Salafī group of Yemeni origin within *Laskar Jihad* split into two distinct groups that competed with each other over public recognition as the "true Salafīs" (*Salafi sejati*) in Indonesia. Tied in with this development, Rabī' al-Madkhalī became the core reference point through which one of these two groups sought religious legitimacy: it is this group that, in the following, I shall refer to as "Madkhaliyya". It was led by former high-ranking members of *Laskar Jihad*, such as Luqman Ba'abduh (b. 1391/1971), Ayip Syafruddin (b. 1386/1966) and Muhammad Umar as-Sewed (b. unknown), who all argued that, under Ja'far Umar Thalib's leadership, *Laskar Jihad* had perverted the "true Salafī method" (*manhaj salafī*). Therefore, they claimed authority for redressing this deviation and, subsequently, for bringing Salafī Islam back to its "proper" form.

Thus, also the Indonesian Madkhalī Salafīs are led by some Yemeni Salafīs whose centre was the *Dār al-Ḥadīth* in Dammāj, Yemen, founded and led by Muqbil b. Hādī al-Wādi'ī (d. 1422/2001). After the demise of al-Wādi'ī, his

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11   For a comprehensive study of *Laskar Jihad*, see Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 2006). Thalib, born in Kota Malang, claims Ḥaḍrāmī ancestry and was, in the late 1980s, associated with Pashtun Salafist Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṣāfī – nom de guerre, Jamīl al-Raḥmān (killed 1412/1991) – who, in 1990, had proclaimed the short-lived *Islamic Emirate of Kunar*. See the contribution of Hartung to this special thematic issue. Already the FKAWJ was established by him, officially inaugurated in Solo on 14 February 1998. It had evolved, however, from the *Jama'ah Ihya al-Sunnah*, an earlier organization founded by Thalib and exclusive devoted to Salafī religious *da'wa*, ultimately aiming at the correct implementation of Islamic *sharī'a* throughout Indonesia. See Noorhaidi Hasan, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia", *Indonesia* 72 (2002), 145-69, here 146f.

12   See idem, *Laskar Jihad*, 211. Unfortunately, the author does not corroborate this statement any further, and I strongly assume that he owes this piece of information to one of his informants. My attempt to find the text of the *fatwā* in the so-far most comprehensive collection of Rabī' al-Madkhalī's decrees and epistles (al-Shaykh Rabī' b. Hādī 'Umayr al-Madkhalī, *Majmū' kutub wa-rasā'il wa-fatāwā l-'allāma al-mujāhid al-shaykh Rabī' b. Hādī 'Umayr al-Madkhalī*, 15 vols. [Cairo: Dār al-Imām Aḥmad, 1429h]), yielded no result.

students became embroiled in – still largely unresolved – internal conflicts, and, as a result, some of them founded their own respective centres of learning outside Dammāj, such as in Ma'rib.[13] The conflicts among al-Wādi'ī's students had a substantial impact on the fracture among the Yemeni Salafīs in Indonesia. Eventually, those led by Luqman Ba'abduh, who claimed to strictly follow the teachings of al-Wādi'ī, sought new patronage from al-Madkhalī in Saudi Arabia. The turn from al-Wādi'ī to al-Madkhalī appears strange only at first sight. After all, regardless of their differences, both al-Wādi'ī and al-Madkhalī shared a strong affinity with what Stéphane Lacroix calls the "neo-*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*" and their historical connection with the *Jamā'a al-Salafiyya al-Muḥtaṣiba* (JSM).[14] The "neo-*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*" referred to here was a movement led by Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1420/1999), its name consciously chosen for its historical resonance with its namesake during the later 'Abbāsid period. It was to signify a break with both Wahhābī Islam, considered to be too strongly influenced by the Ḥanbalī *madhhab al-fiqh*, as well as the *Saḥwa*, a Saudi religio-political reform movement strongly impacted by former activists of the Egyptian *Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (MB). Established in the 1960s, the JSM turned into a radical faction of the "neo-*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*" that grouped around Juhayman al-'Utaybī (executed 1400/1980), the leader of the occupation of the *ḥaram* in Mecca in late 1979.[15]

Like other Salafīs, Madkhalī Salafīs, too, claim to have neither a distinct structural organization nor hierarchy. There is indeed no central leader; yet, seniority and hierarchy are clearly established. It revolves around former leaders of *Laskar Jihad*, including the above-mentioned Luqman Ba'abduh, Ayip Syafruddin, and Muhammad Umar as-Seweed. Elsewhere I have therefore called this group the "Luqman Ba'abduh network",[16] after its central leader Luqman Ba'abduh, director of the *Ma'had*[17] *As Salafy* in Jember, East Java.

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13   For details on the demise of al-Wādi'ī and the subsequent internal conflicts, see Laurent Bonnefoy, *Salafism in Yemen: Transnationalism and Religious Identity* (London: Hurst / New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 69-78.

14   See Stéphane Lacroix, *Awakening Islam: The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 102.

15   Further on the "neo-*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*" and JSM, see ibid., 81-103; and idem, "Between Revolution and Apoliticism: Nasir al-Din al-Albani and his Impact on the Shaping of Contemporary Salafism", in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (London: Hurst / New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 58-80, here 68-72 and 74-76. On al-'Utaybī and the occupation of the *ḥaram* in Mecca, see idem and Thomas Hegghammer, "Rejectionist Islam in Saudi Arabia: The Story of Juhayman al-'Utaybī Revisited", *IJMES* 39 (2007), 103-22.

16   See Sunarwoto, "Salafi *Dakwah* Radio: A Contest for Religious Authority", *Archipel* 91 (2016), 203-30, here 206.

17   I use the term "ma'had" (from Ar. *ma'had*) intentionally here, instead of *pesantren* (from Skt: *śāstrī*), which has been well known especially in Java. While, in Indonesia, both terms

Ayip Syafruddin of the *Ma'had Darussalaf Al Islamy* in Sukoharjo, Central Java, is another important figure within this network, as is Muhammad Umar as-Seweed, director of the *Ma'had Diyaussunnah* in Cirebon, West Java. The conflict between them and another network around Dzulqarnain M. Sunusi (b. 1396/1976), former *muftī* for *Laskar Jihad*, was fuelled by the competition over religious authority, with further deteriorating financial consequences.[18]

It is interesting to see how the Madkhalī movement came into salient shape in Indonesia. Initially, conflicts occurred only between followers of Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī and non-Yemeni Salafīs. Between 2013 and 2014, for example, Luqman Ba'abduh and IIUM-graduate Firanda Andirja (b. 1399/1979) of *Radio Rodja* were involved in heated debates stirred up by Andirja's critical comments on Rabʿī al-Madkhalī. According to him, al-Madkhalī's method of preaching is not in line with the officially acknowledged senior *'ulamā'* of the *Hay'at Kibār al-ʿUlamāʾ* and *Lajnat al-Dāʾima li-l-Buḥūth al-ʿIlmiyya wa-l-Iftāʾ*, such as ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz (1420/1999), Ṣāliḥ b. ʿUthaymīn (d. 1421/2001), Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-ʿAbbād (b. 1353/1934), and Ṣāliḥ Fawzān al-Fawzān (1354/1935). In response to the critics, Luqman Ba'abduh wrote a series of articles in the Indonesian Madkhalī magazine *Fawaid*, in which he repeatedly stressed that Rabʿī al-Madkhalī is one of the senior *'ulamā'* "whose knowledge and method's credibility in defending *tawḥīd* and the [Prophetic] *sunna*, and combating *bidʿa* and the *ahl al-bidʿa* is beyond doubt".[19]

Indeed, the fact that Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī was, and still is, a member neither of *Hay'at Kibār al-ʿUlamāʾ* nor of the *Lajnat al-Dāʾima* does not at all mean that he is not a senior *'ulamā'*. However, being outside the official religious establishment, even more so after his retirement from his teaching post at the IIUM, means that Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī cannot claim to be close to the Saudi political regime. This, in fact, is why, by contrasting him with those senior *'ulamā'* well acknowledged by the Saudi political establishment, rivals of the Madkhalīs in Indonesia, such as Andirja, can easily attempt to undermine the seniority, and thus religious authority, of Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī.

Initially, this and similar controversies were staged in Javanese print media that were distributed across the entire archipelago. Besides the mentioned *Fawaid*, on the benefits of Islam, the Indonesian Madkhalīs run *Asy Syariah*,

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refer to an Islamic boarding school, the former is more frequently used among Salafis in their daily talks and religious sessions. There is a strong tendency among them to emphasize the supremacy of Arabic over non-Arabic terms. For a brief note on the term *pesantren*, see Fredrick Mathewson Denny, "Pesantren", *EI²*, XIII: 295-99.

18   See Sunarwoto, *Salafi* Dakwah *Radio*, 208-10.

19   Luqman Ba'abduh, "Menepis Tipu Daya Firanda, Membela Ulama Sunnah", URL: <www.darussalaf.or.id/manhaj/menepis-tipu-daya-firanda-membela-ulama-sunnah/> (accessed 8 November 2017).

their oldest platform, as well as *Qonitah* for females, *Qudwah*, on Islamic exemplary stories, and *Tashfiyah*, on purification. Yet, new media technologies, especially social media like blogs, Facebook and Instagram, play a significant role in carrying Madkhalī positions in disputes such as the one between Ba'abduh and Andirja to a much wider audience. Moreover, they play a crucial role in their respective *da'wa* and are one, if not the, key to its success. The most important and widely received blog in this regard is "For the Seeker of the Truth" (*Tuk Pencari Al Haq*).[20] In addition, the Madkhalī activists also use local radio stations across Indonesia, as well as globally accessible online radio channels, as a medium for spreading their distinct understanding of Salafī Islam.[21]

Still, like other non-militant Salafīs, the Madkhalīs are very active in their *da'wa* through the more traditional channels of education and preaching. They run Islamic schools (*ma'had-ma'had*) both inside and outside of Java, the exact number of which throughout Indonesia is unknown; however, it appears that the Solo region, my primary research site,[22] is home to most of them. There, we find at least twelve Madkhalī schools, including *Darussalaf* and *Ittiba'us Sunnah* in Sukoharjo, the *Darus Salaf Al-Islamy* in Sragen, *Ittiba'us Sunnah*, *Ibadurrahman* and *Ar-Ridho* in Klaten, *Riyadhul Jannah*, *Darussalam As-Salafy*, *Al-Kautsar* and *Imam as-Syafi'i* in Wonogiri, and the *Daar el-Abroor* in Boyolali and *Al-Ausath* in Karanganyar. In general, all these schools are very modest, and, thus, do not represent *ma'had* or *pesantren* in the proper sense. I have repeatedly visited some of them, and shall now describe two of them in greater detail.

The first school is *Darussalaf*, led by Muhammad Idral Harits (b. unknown) and Ayip Syafruddin. Currently located in an unfinished building with very poor facilities and dirty surroundings in Sukoharjo, it has several classrooms without chairs, which requires students – against Indonesian conventions – to sit on the floor. Before it was moved to this plot in 2012, *Darussalaf* was located on a piece of developed land where a mosque and several buildings were already there. It is said that the land was endowed by a wealthy local to Ja'far Umar Thalib, the then-commander of *Laskar Jihad*, who in turn entrusted it to some of his students. However, especially immediately before the dissolution of *Laskar Jihad* in 2002, conflict between these former students, who had meanwhile established the *Ma'had Darussalaf* on this endowment, and Thalib

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20   See URL <www.tukpencarialhaq.com> (accessed 3 December 2018).

21   Elsewhere I have discussed the important role of radio stations for Salafīs, including Madkhalīs. See Sunarwoto, *Salafī* Dakwah *Radio*, 210-28.

22   The Solo region here refers to what is currently called "Soloraya" (lit.: Great Solo), which consists of seven regencies – Solo, Sukoharjo, Klaten, Boyolali, Sragen, Karanganyar, and Wonogiri.

arose, which caused the donor to revoke his bequest and forced the school to move to its current place, only about one kilometre to the south.

Despite its existence for fifteen years and counting, however, development of the *Ma'had Darussalaf* has been very slow. It has less than 200 students, some 112 of whom are local, the other 82 from outside the Solo region. Remarkably, at *Darussalaf* both secular and religious subjects are taught. Secular subjects are usually taught by more advanced students or teachers who have been educated at secular schools. Yet, there is no systematic or professional recruitment of faculty, which, according to one teacher of *Darussalaf*, is due to a lack of financial support, making it impossible to hire fully trained teachers for secular subjects.[23]

The second school to be discussed in greater detail is *Ittiba'us Sunnah* in Klaten.[24] It was founded in 2007 by Danang Widagdo, alias Abu Fikri (b. unknown), a graduate from the *University of the Eleventh March* (UNS) Surakarta, who simultaneously attended Islamic study circles held at *Darussalaf* in Sukoharjo. *Ittiba'us Sunnah* is a small Salafī *ma'had*, which, compared to *Darussalaf*, appears in much better shape. Like its older counterpart, *Ittiba'us Sunnah* runs classes not only on Islamic subjects but also on secular ones, such as mathematics, history, and Bahasa Indonesia. However, it does not follow the national curriculum or the "Smart Indonesia Programme" (*Program Indonesia Pintar*), a national programme to improve the welfare of the poor and vulnerable launched by the Indonesian government which, among others, aims at increasing the number of students who are able to continue, and ideally complete, their education at both primary and secondary levels. Despite the possible inspiration of its founder by the *Darussalaf*, the *Ittiba'us Sunnah* nonetheless adopted its curriculum from the *Ma'had As Salafy* in Jember, which is led by Luqman Ba'abduh. The number of students is still below one hundred,[25] which suggests that the progress of the school is, same as the *Darussalaf*, rather slow.

The core reason for this might well be doctrinal, as both schools are trying their best to live up to the "purist Salafī standard", which requires them to be – ideally – entirely independent from the state. As such, they have opted not to accept *Operational Aid for Schools* (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah*; BOS), a

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23   Personal communication with Ustadh Abu Zulkifli Amin of *Ma'had Darussalaf*, Sukoharjo, 9 September 2017.

24   I would like to thank Anas Aijuddin, PhD student at UIN Yogyakarta, for providing me with the information on this school. On 4 November 2017, I briefly visited the school myself and was able to corroborate this second-hand information.

25   I asked one teacher of the school about concrete figures, but, beyond a rough estimate, he could not provide them with precision.

special programme for providing financial aid to students launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2005. Yet, while the funds are entrusted to secular schools and *pesantren*s to distribute them among their students through various programmes, it requires the schools to implement the Nine-year Compulsory Education Initiative (*wajardikdas*). This, however, is seen by the Madkhalīs as an infringement of Islamic education by the Indonesian government, which is why the BOS is consequently to be rejected. This attempt at aloofness from political affairs in the widest possible sense is indeed a crucial marker for the Madkhalī positions in the field of education, as proven by the contrast to Salafī schools in Indonesia that follow other interpretations.

The *Ma'had Al-Ukhuwah*, founded in 2002 by Aris Sugiantoro, a former student of Ibn ʿUthaymīn, for instance, has been less reluctant to submit to the requirements stipulated by the government to enjoy the benefits of the BOS. Consequently, it has been able to utilize these funds to improve its general infrastructure: its buildings, including also a mosque named after Ibn ʿUthaymīn (*Masjid Salihul Uthaimin*), are well maintained and feature modern facilities like a language laboratory. Moreover, and also in stark contrast to the two discussed Madkhalī schools, its current number of students is 1,450. As the *Darussalaf* and *Ittiba'us Sunnah*, the *Ma'had Al-Ukhuwah* also teaches Islamic as well as secular subjects. Yet, other than them, it professionally organizes education on various levels, ranging all the way from kindergarten, via primary, to senior high schools. The teachers are recruited from university graduates through a standardized selection process. This all, in fact, is equally the case with other non-Madkhalī Salafī schools throughout Indonesia, as also the case of the *Ma'had Imam Bukhari*, with its 1,450 students coming from all over Indonesia, impressively testifies.

Yet, the reluctance of the Madkhalīs to submit to government stipulations for their own ends implies neither "aloofness", or "political quietism",[26] nor an explicit general rejection of government authorities. As noted by Bonnefoy, they do also get caught up in politics:[27] as with Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī himself, his faithful Indonesian followers affirm of political rule and demand uncondition-

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26   Despite its common use, the term "political quietism" should, if at all, be employed only with great caution. The Salafis' apolitical stance towards politics does not prevent them from being engaged with political issues. For a critical comment on the term, see Jan-Peter Hartung, "Making Sense of "Political Quietism" – An Analytical Intervention", in *Political Quietism in Islam: Sunni and Shi'i Thought and Practice*, ed. Saud al-Sarhan (London: I.B. Tauris, 2019), 15-32. Also, see the introduction to this special thematic issue.

27   Laurent Bonnefoy, "Salafis in Yemen: Caught in the Revolution?", *Transcript* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012), URL:<http://carnegieendowment.org/files/012412_transcript_yemen1.pdf> (accessed 9 December 2017).

al obedience. Legal core argument in this regard is the Qurʾānically derived concept of obedience "to those charged with authority", the *walī l-amr*. A discussion on this concept and how it plays out in the Indonesian context provides us with a clear example of how Madkhalīs get gradually reeled into political affairs to quite a considerable degree.

Doctrinal Underpinnings: The Concept of *walī l-amr*[28]

The concept of *walī l-amr* is rooted in the Q 4:59, which commands Muslims to obey, besides God and His Messenger, "those charged with authority among you" (*wa-ūlī l-amr minkum*).[29] Muslim scholars have from early on been in disagreement over the interpretation of what and who is meant in the Qurʾān by *ūlū l-amr*, or *walī l-amr*.[30] Some of them have interpreted it as rulers (*umarāʾ*), under the condition that they do not encourage their subjects to disobey God (*maʿṣiyya*). Others, prominently among them Salafī core reference author Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), have interpreted it even as referring to all rulers, whether they are just or tyrannical.[31] Yet, he also included the *ʿulamāʾ* in the meaning of *ūlū l-amr*,[32] because of their authority in religious matters. Moreover, in the Ismāʿīlī and Imāmī Shīʿī traditions, *ūlū l-amr* usually refers to the infallible Imams (*al-aʾimma al-maʿṣūmūn*).[33]

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28   This concept has been discussed, to different extents, in many studies. The most comprehensive of them appears to be Roswitha Badry, *Die zeitgenössische Diskussion um den islamischen Beratungsgedanken (šūrā) unter dem besonderen Aspekt ideengeschichtlicher Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1998). Also, see Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam. An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 149-50 and 242-63; Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 138f. and 154-56.

29   It reads, "O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you ..." Unless stated otherwise, all translations from the Qurʾān in this article are by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qurʾān* (Beltsville, MY: Amana Publication, 2004).

30   The terms *ūlū l-amr* and *walī l-amr* are, by and large, considered to be synonymous. Still, *walī l-amr* already points to a rather concrete (human) entity, while the former term, as in the Qurʾān, provides greater latitude for interpretation.

31   See, for instance, Abū ʿAbbās Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya, *K. al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿiyya* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1426/2005), 138.

32   See ibid., 135-7.

33   For a short discussion on this see, for instance, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, 12 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947), v: 180-81; Lambton, *State and Government*, 232 and 252. For a more comprehensive discussion on this subject in both classic and modern Qurʾānic exegeses, see Asma Afsaruddin, "Obedience to Political Authority: An Evolu-

The doctrinal basis of the relationship of the Madkhalīs with the state is very much defined by their emphasis on the obligation to obey a *walī l-amr*, which, for them, equals the obligation of the *ʿibādāt*. After all, according to Q 4:59, obedience to the *walī l-amr* is equal to obedience to God and His messenger, since, beyond political leadership, he has very much a religious responsibility in guiding the community towards salvation by ensuring the implementation of, and obedience to, God's rule over his dominion.[34] The whole issue also affects the doctrine of *jihād*, because – and this is the position endorsed by all canonical Sunnī legal traditions (*madhāhib fiqhiyya*) – only the *walī l-amr* has the right to declare legitimate *jihād*. More recently, however, what I call here the "*fiqh* of obedience to a ruler" had been strategically employed as a doctrinal tool to depoliticize people after a forced change of government, as was the case in the newly established kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the 1930s: then, people we discouraged by political and religious office holders from actively participating in politics; with reference to Q 4:59 they were confined to unconditionally obeying the effective laws and the actual ruler as its highest authority.[35] This, in fact, is a point emphatically stressed by Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī in his controversial defence of various meanwhile ousted potentates in the MENA region, including former presidents Muʿammar al-Qadhāfī in Libya and Ḥusnī Mubārak in Egypt.[36] His adepts across the world appear to follow him in this and wholesomely embrace his emphasis on unconditional loyalty to a present ruler as an Islamic obligation. In this, they differ substantially from other Salafīs in Indonesia, as will be discussed in more detail further below.

Debating the "*Fiqh* of Obedience to a Ruler" in the Indonesian Context

In the Republic of Indonesia, the "*fiqh* of obedience to a ruler" has played an important role among Muslims in shaping their political viewpoint right from

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tionary Concept", in *Islamic Democratic Discourse: Theory, Debate, and Philosophical Perspective*, ed. M.A. Muqtedar Khan (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 37-60.

34   See, for instance, Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 21-23.

35   See Madawi Al-Rasheed, "The Minaret and the Palace: Obedience at Home and Rebellion Abroad", in *Kingdom without Borders: Saudi Arabia's Political, Religious and Media Frontiers*, ed. eadem (London: Hurst / New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 199-219, here 204.

36   See Rabīʿ b. Hādī al-Madkhalī, *Kalimat ʿan al-iḥdāth wa-l-muẓāhirāt wa-l-khurūj ʿalā l-ḥukkām* (17 Rabīʿ I 1432). URL: <www.djelfa.info/vb/showthread.php?t=517064> (accessed 27 November 2018).

its inception in 1945, and it remains persistent well into the present. In 1954, the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), an association-turned-political party of conservative *ʿulamāʾ* in Indonesia founded in 1926,[37] declared Sukarno, first president of the Republic of Indonesia (r. 1945-67), as the de facto interim holder of power (*walī l-amr bi-shawkat al-ḍarūrī*) and bestowed thus his presidency, as well as the new republican system, with full legitimacy.[38] This position is maintained by the NU up to now.

Its historical main competitor, the *Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah*, or, short, *Muhammadiyah*, founded in 1912 by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (d. 1341/1923),[39] took an opposing position, which emerged over the question of who was entitled to decide the date of the opening and closing of the Ramadan fasting.[40] Previously, the inconsistency in this matter in government decisions had been severely criticized by organizations as diverse as the NU and the modernist *Persis*, who agreed that an unambiguous decision should be made on the authority of the government, represented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Menteri Agama di Indonesia*) as the *ūlū l-amr* which Muslims are to follow. As elaborated by Yunahar Ilyas (b. 1956) of its Central Board, the *Muhammadiyah*, while not, as accused by its opponents, having dismissed the Qurʾānic prescription of "obedience to a ruler" at all, questioned whether or not the Ministry of Religious Affairs could really be considered *ūlū l-amr*. Instead, Ilyas maintains that *ūlū l-amr* refers not to the political authorities, whose authority he sees as limited to social affairs, but rather to the *ʿulamāʾ* as custodians of all religious matters.[41] Because it is a purely religious matter, the decision over the beginning and end of the Ramadan fasting should be made exclusively by the *ʿulamāʾ*, not by some government body. Yet, as the degree of organization among them differs quite substantially, Ilyas seems to restrict this authority to the respective *iftāʾ* sections of those scholarly bodies organized in the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, established in 1975, prominently among the *Majlis Tarjih dan Tajdid* of the *Muhammadiyah* and the *Lajnah Bahsil Masaʾil* of the NU.[42] Their potential disagreements would still be well within the frame of permissible differences in their respective interpretation of the accepted Prophetic *aḥādīth*

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37   On the history of the NU, see, for instance, Carool Kersten, *History of Islam in Indonesia: Unity in Diversity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 119-22.

38   See Mochtar Naim, *The Nahdlatul-Ulama Party (1952-1955): An Inquiry into the Origin of its Electoral Success* (unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University Montreal, 1960), 97.

39   Concisely on its history, see Kersten, *History of Islam in Indonesia*, 109-15.

40   See ibid., 123f.

41   See Yunahar Ilyas, "Ulil Amri dalam Tinjauan Tafsir", *Jurnal Tarjih* 12:1 (2014), 43-50, here 44-8.

42   See ibid., 44.

on the start and end of the Ramadan fasting.[43] Still, the *ʿulamāʾ* possess the proper exegetical tools to derive their opinions from the authoritative religious texts, which government authorities lack, and are therefore to be the only legitimate *ūlū l-amr* in Indonesia and beyond.[44]

For Salafīs generally, the notion of *ūlū l-amr* appears equally applicable to *umarāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ*. This view can be traced back to former Grand Muftī of Saudi Arabia and major Salafī reference figure Ibn Bāz, who played a decisive role in narrowing the interpretation of *ūlū l-amr* in Q 4:59 to princes and scholars alone.[45] While this interpretation clearly reflects and sustains the Saudi political system, the prominent role of Ibn Bāz for Salafīs of whatever persuasion ensured the eminence of this view beyond the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Thus, for example, Abu Hamzah Yusuf (b. unknown), an Indonesian Madkhalī Salafī teacher, opined that the *walī l-amr* is he who holds authority in both religious and worldly affairs, further specifying that this authority needs to be held over a substantial territory.[46] Thus, he concluded, since leaders of an organization (*jamaʾah*) possess no territorial authority, they cannot legitimately be called *walī l-amr*.[47]

It is important to acknowledge that, in Indonesia, this view on the "*fiqh* of obedience to a ruler" is actually shared by Madkhalī and non-Madkhalī Salafīs alike: virtually all of them emphasize unconditional loyalty to the Indonesian government. However, they differ over the context-bound conditions for the legitimate application of the concept of *ūlū l-amr*. The Madkhalīs in Indonesia, meanwhile highly critical of their former teacher Jaʾfar Umar Thalib, disagree with him, among other things, on whether or not the Indonesian government can legitimately be considered as *ūlū l-amr*.

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43   The disagreement is mainly caused by the different method the two organizations have applied in determining the start and the end of Ramadan. The NU applies the *rukyah* (Ar. *ruʾya*) method, which means that the determination is based on a new crescent moon sighting, while the *Muhammadiyah* uses a *hisab* (Ar. *ḥisāb*) method, which is based on astronomical calculation. For a further discussion on this disagreement, see, for example, André Möller, *Ramadan in Java: The Joy and Jihad of Ritual Fasting* (Lund: Department of History and Anthropology of Religions, Lund University, 2005), 261-65; and Nadirsyah Hosen, "Hilal and Halal: How to Manage Islamic Pluralism in Indonesia?", *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 7:1 (2012), 1-18.

44   See Ilyas, *Ulil Amri*, 46.

45   See ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbdallāh b. Bāz, "Bayān ḥuqūq wulāt al-umūr ʿalā l-umma", in *Majmūʿ fatāwā wa-maqālāt mutanawwiʿa*, ed. Muḥammad b. Saʿd al-Shuwayʿir, 24 vols. (Riyadh: Dār al-Qāsim, 1420h), IX: 93-102, here 94; also highlighted in Al-Rasheed, *The Minaret and the Palace*, 204f.

46   See Abu Hamzah Yusuf, "Mengenal Waliyul Amri", *Asy Syariah* 3:95 (2013), 13-15, here 14.

47   See ibid., 15.

For Thalib, the government of the secular Republic of Indonesia[48] cannot, by definition, be regarded *ūlū l-amr* in the religious sense. Therefore, Thalib draws a differentiating line between "*ūlū l-amr*" and "*ūlū l-amr minkum*": the first refers to all rulers regardless of their religious background and the ways in which they have gained their power; the second, however, contains an explicit reference to the Muslim community out of which the *walī l-amr* has to come and to which his government refers. Moreover, for Thalib this position can only be claimed by those Muslim rulers whose government is based solely on the Qurʾān and Sunna of the Prophet as interpreted by the *salaf al-umma*. Because, for Thalib, a democratic system is essentially un-Islamic, the Indonesian government, even if headed by a nominal Muslim, cannot be considered *ūlū l-amr minkum*. Perhaps the most significant consequence of this line of thought, which reflects well the ideological background of *Laskar Jihad*, is that Muslims are free to engage in armed defensive *jihād* without prior endorsement by the government. In one of his sermons, he states, "There is no textual evidence (*dalīl*) which states that we do *jihād* only with the prior permission of the government."[49]

For the Madkhalīs, in turn, the only requirement for a person to legitimately claim the *wilāyat l-amr* is that he is a Muslim, regardless of whether or not his rule is guided by *sharīʿa* principles. This is emphatically affirmed by Muhammad Afifuddin As Sidawy (b. unknown), a Madkhalī Salafī teacher in Gresik, East Java, with reference to Q 4:59. By arguing this, Afifuddin considers the Indonesian ruler – and here he blatantly refers to the current president, Joko Widodo (better known as "Jokowi") – an *ūlū l-amr minkum*, since the president is a Muslim;[50] a religious alignment of his politics is not a requirement that can unequivocally be derived from the Qurʾānic passage. Consequently,

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48   In article 29.2 of chapter XI of the Indonesian Constitution of 1945, which has not been subject to any of the so far four amendments, it is decreed that "[t]he State guarantees all persons the freedom of worship, each according to his/her own religion or belief (*Negara menjamin kemerdekaan tiap-tiap penduduk untuk memeluk agamanya masing-masing dan untuk beribadat menurut agamanya dan kepercayaannya itu*). See *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945*, URL: <http://jdih.pom.go.id/uud1945.pdf> (accessed 5 December 2018).

49   The statement was made in response to his critics, who said that it is necessary to have permission from the government to do *jihād*. See Ja'far Umar Thalib's recorded sermon, "Kajian Islam 'Al Wala' wal Bara', Sesi Tanya Jawab'", at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-pquEV6X-Y> (accessed 16 December 2018).

50   See Muhammad Afifuddin as-Sidawi, "Kewajiban Seorang Muslim kepada Pemerintah", recorded sermon delivered at the mosque as-Shohabat Temanggung, Central Java, 21 May 2017. URL: <www.audiokajian. com/audio-kewajiban-seorang-muslim-kepada-pemerintah/> (accessed 8 November 2017).

unconditional loyalty to the Indonesian president and the government institu-
tions constitutes an individual legal obligation (*farḍ ʿayn*), and also *jihād* can
only be legitimately conducted if proclaimed by him.[51]

Obviously, the bone of contention is what constitutes a Muslim, and, by in-
ference, whether a current head of government is considered one. For Afi-
fuddin and more senior Indonesian Madkhalīs like Luqman Baʾabduh and
as-Seweed, although Muslim-ness is a basic requirement for a ruler to be le-
gitimate, its flawed manifestations do not invalidate the necessity to obey him.
Following the above-mentioned *fatwā* of Ibn Bāz, Qomar Suaidi (b. 1977), a
Madkhalī teacher in Temanggung, Central Java, asserts that failure to rule on
the basis of divine law does not automatically turn a Muslim into an unbe-
liever (*kāfir*). It only represents minor unbelief (*kufr*) or "unbelief without un-
belief" (*kufr dūn kufr*), a famous phrase attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687), a
Companion of the Prophet.[52] This is so unless he either believes that, first,
other laws are better than God's law, or, second, that other laws are equal to
God's law, or, third, that the application of laws other than God's is allowed,
while believing that God's law is superior to others.[53]

Meanwhile, militant Salafists follow very much in the footsteps of Jaʾfar
Umar Thalib's argument, and consequently refuse to acknowledge the Indone-
sian government as *ūlū l-amr*. In a whole section of its book *Syubhat Salafi*, a
team of authors commissioned by Surakarta-based *jihādī* publisher *Jazera* –
the "Tim Jazera"[54] – deals exclusively with the question of who can legitimate-
ly be called *ūlū l-amr*. Tim Jazera states that "an *ūlū l-amr* who Muslims must
obey is *ūlū l-amr* according to the *sharīʿa* terminology, not *ūlū l-amr* in the lin-
guistic sense".[55] Providing ample reference to a wide range of Qurʾānic exe-
getes, they conclude that, first, the *ūlū l-amr* must be a believer and dispense
justice in society; second, obedience to the *ūlū l-amr* is not absolute, but con-
ditional on the Islamicity of factual governance; and, third, an *ūlū l-amr* whose

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51　See Ruwaifi bin Salimi, "Jihad Bersama Penguasa", *Asy Syariah* 4:13 (2014), 2-8, here 4.

52　This is a famous interpretation of Q 5:47 "… If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what
　　Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel", frequently attributed
　　to the Prophet's companion Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687). See, for instance, Aḥmad b. ʿAbd
　　al-Ḥalim b. Taymiyya, *Sharḥ ḥadīth Jibrīl ʿalayhi al-salām fī l-islām wa-l-īmān* (Dammām:
　　Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1423h), 402.

53　Qomar Suaidi, "Kapan diperbolehkan memberontak?", *Asy Syariah* 1:6 (2004), 318-22.

54　*Tim Jazera* consists of three writers appointed by Jazera Publisher in Surakarta. The
　　publisher is part of the larger publisher named Arafah Publisher. As International Crisis
　　Group (ICG) has noted, Arafah Publisher (with its sub-publishers) is one of the important
　　jihādī publishers in the Solo region. See ICG, "Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Publishing
　　Industry", *Asia Report* 147 (Singapore and Brussels: International Crisis Group 2008), 4f.

55　Tim Jazera, *Syubhat Salafi* (Solo: Jazera 2011), 231.

rule is not exclusively based on the *sharīʿa* must be disobeyed and cannot therefore be called *ūlū l-amr* in its proper sense. While the Madkhalīs had initially grown out of the circle around Thalib, his position in this particular matter aligns him somewhat with *jihādī* Salafists, despite his endeavours to explicitly dissociating himself from those, as well as non-Salafis.[56]

In the next step, I will investigate the implications of this debate on the *wilāyat l-amr* for the potentially given possibility of a non-Muslim head of government in Indonesia, as well as for the related centuries-old legal question whether or not Muslims can rightfully live under rule that is not exclusively informed by the injunctions of the *sharīʿa*.[57]

Non-Muslim Rulers

Implicit in the position of the Indonesian Madkhalīs, that being nominally Muslim is a sufficient enough criterion for a political authority to be entitled to unconditional loyalty, is the question whether Muslims are bound to rebel against a non-Muslim political authority. This goes much farther than just implying the possibility of a Hindu as head of the Indonesian government. Rather, it touches on the crucial issue of how to position oneself towards a nominal Muslim ruler who has – explicitly or implicitly – forsaken Islam and is therefore to be regarded as an apostate (*kāfir murtadd*), a matter hotly debated in Salafī circles all over the world.

Abu Hamzah Yusuf referred to Shaikh Muḥammad b. Hādī al-Madkhalī (b. 1357/1938) in this matter, who in turn decreed that Muslims are compelled to rebel against a non-Muslim ruler, as long as they have the power and ability to overthrow him, and as long as it does not lead to schism within the Muslim community.[58] Still, Yusuf emphasizes that it is not easy to declare a ruler or his government infidel. Before this can actually happen, Yusuf stresses that three things need to be ascertained: one is that the unbelief of a ruler is declared

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56 In his interview with *Tempo online* in 2011, for instance, Thalib condemned Usāma b. Lādin and ʿAbdallāh ʿAzzām for their militant orientation. See "Kesaksian Jaʿfar Umar Tholib tentang Usamah", *tempo.co* 3 May 2011, URL <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/331 905/kesaksian-jafar-umar-tholib-tentang-usamah/full& view=ok (accessed 15 December 2018).

57 This, in fact, is the legal discussion around *taqsīm al-dār*, with its two early categories *dār al-islām* and *dār al-ḥarb*, with occasionally additional categories. See for instance, Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, 359-64 et passim.

58 See the recorded MP3 file of the decree by Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī's younger brother Muḥammad b. Hādī al-Madkhalī (b. 1385/1965), at URL: <https://www.ajurry.com/vb/attachment. php?attachmentid=15446&stc=1 &d=1319873223 (accessed 15 December 2018).

based neither on mere assumption nor on any minor sin (*ṣaghā'ir*), such as be-
ing oppressive to people, drinking alcohol, or gambling. Second, the apostasy
of the ruler needs to be established without any ambiguity or the requirement
of further interpretation. Under these two conditions, the declaration of the
ruler as infidel (*takfīr al-ḥākim*) can already take place. Still, a rebellion against
such a ruler is – in line with Shaikh Muḥammad b. Hādī al-Madkhalī's decree
– contingent on the third condition, namely the strength of the Muslim com-
munity and, thus, the prospect of success without the possibility of negative
repercussions that jeopardize its integrity.[59] Senior Madkhalī representatives,
like Abu Hamzah Yusuf, Luqman Ba'abduh, Muhammad Afifuddin as-Sidawi,
and Abu Nasim Mukhtar, keep emphasizing that, in the current Indonesian
context especially, these three conditions are not given, which makes rebellion
against the ruler illegitimate.[60] If this is the case, then the pertinent question
remains whether or not a different kind of action is required from Muslims if
they do not wish to endanger their own fidelity. After all, *fuqahā'* since the
foundational period have made strong cases for the obligation to migrate to
the *dār al-islām* (*hijra*) whenever the strength for the successful conduct of
jihād cannot be ascertained. For the Madkhalīs, however, the matter appears
tied to a more fundamental question – namely, whether or not the *dār al-islām*
in form of a distinct form of governance, is actually required at all, or whether
a Salafī religiosity can be maintained regardless of the political framework.

Do Muslims Need an Islamic State?

In his contribution to *Salafism after the Arab Awakening*, Roel Meijer challeng-
es the idea that Salafism is a form of "Islamism", aiming at establishing an Is-
lamic state. Following Asef Bayat, Meijer rather suggests that Salafism is "a
form of post-Islamism".[61] This notion, introduced in 1999 by political scientist

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59   See Abu Hamzah Yusuf, "Pemerintah yang Kafir", *Asy Syariah* 3:95 (2013), 22-24.

60   See ibid.; also Luqman Ba'abduh, "Sikap Seorang Muslim Terhadap Pemerintah", URL:
     <https://archive.org/details/SikapSeorangMuslimTerhadapPemerintah-AlUstadzLuq
     manBaabduh> (accessed 26 December 2016); Ahmad Afifuddin as-Sidawi, "Kewajiban
     Seorang Muslim kepada Pemerintah" (24 Shaʿbān 1438/21 May 2017), *audiokajian.com*,
     URL: <http://www.audiokajian.com/rekaman-kajian/audio-kewajiban-se orang-muslim-
     kepada-pemerintah/> (accessed 16 December 2018); Abu Nasim Mukhtar, "Meniti Jalan
     Salaf dengan Taat Kepada Pemerintah" (13 Rajab 1439/31 March 2018), *audiokajian.com*,
     URL: <http://www. audiokajian.com/rekaman-kajian/audio-meniti-jalan-salaf-dengan-
     taat-kepada-pemerintah/> (accessed 16 December 2018).

61   Roel Meijer, "Conclusion: Salafis and the Acceptance of the Political", in *Salafism after
     the Arab Awakening*, ed. Cavatorta and Merone, 219-39; here 221. On Asef Bayat's concep-

Olivier Roy,[62] accounts for the fact that Islamist organizations especially in Egypt and Algeria had desperately resorted to random violence, losing much public support. As a result, other expressions of Muslim religiosity came more to the fore, prominent among them Salafī circles. Indeed, Salafīs are known for their very critical stance towards Islamist movements, such as *Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr* (ḤuT), highly prominent in Indonesia as *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI),[63] or the MB as an inspirational force for Islamists wherever, for their aspiration to establish an Islamic state. Even if not by definition inclined to militancy, both organizations apply other forms of social and political action, such as protest marches, in opposition to the government, which, for the Indonesian Madkhalīs, these forms of resistance are in contradiction to their understanding of Islamic ethics.

However, their doctrine of unconditional obedience to the government authorities does not imply that the Madkhalīs do reject the normatively informed concepts of an Islamic state or a caliphate. In fact, Salafīs of all persuasions, including the Madkhalīs, have their own conception of the caliphate and the Islamic state. Their distinct understanding of these political categories is rooted in the concept of "*dawlat al-tawḥīd*", or "*dawlat al-tawḥīd wa-l-sunna*". According to Al-Rasheed, the concept was coined by *jihādī* Salafists Fāris al-Shuwayl al-Zahrānī (executed 1437/2016) and ʿUmar Hādī, a.k.a. "Lewis ʿAṭiyyatallāh" (killed ~1426/2005) in reference to Saudi Arabia: the term "*dawlat al-tawḥīd*" was introduced for glorifying the so-called "First Saudi state"[64] as an ideal Islamic polity, which was destroyed in 1818 by Ottoman troops. For

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tualization of "Islamism" and "post-Islamism", see his *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movement and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 1-15.

62 See Olivier Roy, "Le post-islamisme", *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 85-86 (1999), 11-30.

63 See, for example, Muhammad Iqbal Ahnaf, "Between revolution and reform: The future of Hizbut Tahir Indonesia", *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 2:2 (2009), 69-85. In 2017, the HTI was banned by presidential decree for sowing sedition in Indonesia. Still, its activists remain a public force and, together with other activists, often hold rallies advocating Islam as a comprehensive political system superior to any human-designed one. Consequently, their recent appeal to have the ban revoked was rejected by the Jakarta State Administrative Court.

64 In the official narrative of Saudi Arabia, the history of the kingdom is divided into the succession of three distinct Saudi states. The "First Saudi State" refers to the period 1744-1818, the second to the period 1824-91, and the third beginning in 1932. Yet, while we have to be aware of the fact that the first two "states" were, in fact, much more in the form of a traditional Bedouin polity than a "state" in the modern sense, historians on Saudi Arabia have willfully embraced this official Saudi terminology. See, e.g., Madawi Al-Rasheed, *Contesting the Saudi State*, 26 and passim; and James Wybrandt, *A Brief History of Saudi Arabia* (New York: Facts On File, 2004), 118-43.

Shuwayl and ʿAṭiyyatallāh, the term "*dawlat al-tawḥīd*" cannot by applied to the Saudi polity after this, especially not after 1932, when, as they saw it, the newly established kingdom of Saudi Arabia developed amicable relationships with infidel foreign states, particularly Britain, and soon "the West" in general.[65]

Madkhalīs in Indonesia, however, extend the applicability of the term also to the current Saudi state. In his book *Mereka adalah Teroris* ("They Are Terrorists!"), Luqman Baʾabduh discusses this matter in quite some detail. This work actually is a critical response to *Aku Melawan Teroris* ("I Fight Terrorists!") by Imam Samudra (executed 2008), one of the Bali bombers of 2002, who severely criticized the kingdom of Saudi Arabia for, according to him, having jailed upright *mujāhidūn* and *ʿulamāʾ* critical of the regime.[66] According to Baʾabduh, this kind of critique stems solely from Samudera's negative sentiment towards the Saudi state, a *dawlat al-tawḥīd*, which, in his view, is historically deeply rooted in the highly problematic stance taken by the *khawārij*.[67] This label is prominently employed in intra-Salafī polemics against those with Islamist leanings, thus the Salafists, and constitutes only a symbolical reference to the historical *khawārij*, employed also by the official religious establishment in Egypt and Saudi Arabia for portraying or undermining their rivals who rebel against legitimate authority.[68] Because of its current fundamentally polemical use, the label remains widely undefined; also, Baʾabduh never even remotely substantiates this label. However, it is clear that, by employing it, Baʾabduh aims at delegitimizing competing interpretations of Salafī Islam by Salafists like Imam Samudra or suspected mastermind of various bombings in Indonesia Abu Bakar Baʾasyir (b. 1357/1938).[69] In formulating the concept of the Islamic state (*Daulah Islamiyah*), Baʾabduh differentiates it from an unbe-

65   Madawi Al-Rasheed, "The Local and the Global in Saudi Salafism", *ISIM Review* 21 (2008), 8f.; eadem, "The Local and the Global in Saudi Salafi-Jihadi Discourse", in *Global Salafism*, ed. Roel Meijer, 301-20, here 308-10.

66   See Imam Samudra, *Aku Melawan Teroris* (Solo: Jazera, 2004), 92.

67   Luqman Baʾabduh, *Mereka adalah Teroris! Sebuah Tinjauhan Syariʾat* (Malang: Qaulan Sadida, 2005), 358f.

68   See Daniel Lav, *Radical Islam and the Revival of Medieval Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5f. As for the context of the modern Egyptian politics, the discussion on the Kharijite has been made extensively in Jeffery T. Kenney, *Muslim Rebels: Kharijites and the Politics of Extremism in Egypt* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

69   For Baʾabduh's extensive use of this polemical term, see his *Menebar Dusta Membela Teroris Khawarij* (Malang: Pustaka Qaulan Sadida, 2007). It is certainly noteworthy that in Terrorism Studies the term "neo-Kharijism" is used for Islamically sustained militancy. See, e.g., Juan Carlos Antúnez and Ioannis Tellidis, "The Power of Words: The Deficient Terminology Surrounding Islam-related Terrorism", *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 6:1 (2013), 118-39, here 121.

lieving state (*Daulah Kafirah*). According to him, the distinction between them is

> the condition of its people, not that of the legal system applied and not the dominant security system of the state. Some scholars said that an Islamic state is a state with a Muslim majority and Islamic symbols like call to prayer [*azan*], communal prayer, Friday prayer, 'Īd prayer are performed.[70]

The quote clearly highlights that the priority is given to the establishment of a (truly) Muslim community over the establishment of an Islamic state. In line with this, there are only two defining criteria for an Islamic state: one is the Muslim majority, the other the public display of Islamic symbols. In other words, an Islamic state can only be realized in a Muslim majority community, and not in a Muslim minority context. For Ba'abduh and other local Madkhalīs, Indonesia, in essence, is an Islamic state,[71] since Islam is the majority religion and Islamic symbols exist everywhere. Furthermore, Ba'abduh maintains that an Islamic state, or Islamic caliphate, can only be established by, first, returning to the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Sunna as understood by what he calls the *Salaful Ummah*; second, by realizing such purified faith in a complete manner (*kaffah*); third, by upholding the propagation of *tawḥīd* and, thus, improving the morals of the *umma*; and finally, by learning the sciences of Islam from the original sources and credible references, which are the scholars of the Sunnī creed (*Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah*).

According to Ba'abduh, an Islamic state cannot be established through party politics, a coup d'état, or a revolution. Conversely, it can only be brought into existence through the sincere internalization of Islam based on the right understanding of the *Salaful Ummah*. Following al-Albānī, Ba'abduh maintains that the establishment of an Islamic state should start from the commitment of every single Muslim to Islam. In this regard, al-Albānī said: "Establish the Islamic state within your hearts, so it will exist in your land."[72] For the Indonesian Madkhalīs, the establishment of an Islamic state is not their prime objective. Still, they are not entirely opposed to the idea of establishing a caliphate,

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70   Luqman Ba'abduh, "Khilafah di Atas Manhaj Nubuwwah", *Asy Syariah* 13:16 (2014), 315-19, here 314.

71   Ibid.

72   Taken from an Indonesian translation of al-Albānī's letter from 12 December 1991 to the youth of the *Front Islamique du Salut* (FIS) in Algeria. URL: <http://salafy.or.id/blog/2003/09/04/surat-syaikh-al-albani-kepada-pemuda-fis/> (accessed 6 February 2018).

yet offer their own conception of it, as "Caliphate according to the Prophetic Principle" (*Khilafah 'ala Minhajin Nubuwwah*). According to Ba'abduh, this is

> a caliphate which is based on *tauhid* and *dakwah* [Ar.: *da'wa*] of *tauhid*, whereby the Prophetic Sunna and the call to the Sunna is established. All kinds of polytheism [*diperanginya kesyirikan*] are combated to the extent that there will be no devotion to anything other than Allah. All kinds of reprehensible innovations either in creed, devotion or social interaction [*muamalah*] are combated. The Islamic Law [*syariat Islam*] is implemented by every Muslim before the government does. The government always gives priority to religious sciences, far from being trapped in philosophy and the use of reason. People obey the government and perform jihad together with the government.[73]

Yet, in contrast to HTI, for the Madkhalīs the establishment of the caliphate is of subordinate importance. This is vividly mirrored in Ba'abduh's statement that "[e]ven if a state or government is not in the form of a caliphate – be it a kingdom or republic or parliamentary [system] or the like – as long as it still fits in with the criterion and definition of an Islamic state, it still can be considered an Islamic state."[74]

In 2015, the Madkhalī magazine *Qudwah* published an article by Qomar Z.A. on "The Anti-Terrorist State of Monotheism" (*Negeri Tauhid Anti Teroris*),[75] in which the writer defends the Saudi state's stance on terrorism that, according to him, was grossly misunderstood by many. Blending out the complex relationship between the Āl Sa'ūd and the religious scholarship in the kingdom, Qomar Z.A. stresses two important contributions of the Saudi state to the world: the first is safe-guarding and disseminating the *'aqīda* of *tawḥīd*; the other, its active endeavour to prevent this *'aqīda* from being distorted by radical interpretations that might threaten the integrity of the Muslim *umma*. For realizing the former objective, Qomar Z.A. argues that the Saudi state had given the freedom to the *'ulamā'* to radiate an *'aqīda* based solely on the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Sunna. Yet, and this is because Qomar Z.A. establishes a clear hierarchy between state and *'ulamā'*, the state oversees the appropriateness of the *da'wa* and subsequently checks any extreme interpretation under the pretence of terrorism. For this reason, he writes, "It [i.e. the Saudi

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73   Luqman Ba'abduh, *Khilafah di Atas Manhaj Nubuwwah*, 313.

74   Ibid., 314.

75   Qomar Z.A., "Negeri Tauhid Anti Teroris", *Qudwah* 3:3 (2015), 4-8.

government] does not protect terror perpetrators, even if they are Saudi citizens such as Usāma b. Lādin".[76]

This position of the Indonesian Madkhalīs was reaffirmed on the occasion of King Salmān of Saudi Arabia's visit to Indonesia in early 2017, which spurred heated public debates about, among other matters, the role of Saudi Arabia in spreading radicalism and terrorism. As a contribution to these debates, the *Asy Syariah* magazine brought out a special issue on "Saudi Arabia: Between Deceitful Slander and Its Real Role" (*Arab Saudi: Fitnah Dusta vs Kiprah Nyata*). In his contribution to this volume, Abu Amr Ahmad Alfian of the *Ma'had As-Salafy* in Jember, East Java, states that

> [t]he Saudi state is an Islamic state, the main guardian of the propagation of God's Oneness [*tauhid*] and the Sunna. The Saudi state has succeeded in bringing prosperity to all people, providing security in all regions, and [it is] the only state in the world that has consistently implemented Islamic Law [*syariat Islam*] amid the modern world.[77]

Such staunch defence of the Saudi Arabian government against all sorts of allegations, especially that of exporting religiously grounded militancy, points to potential ambiguities in the Indonesian context, ambiguities that result from the latent conflict between the concept-turned-doctrine of *ūlū l-amr* so central to the Madkhalī world view and the form of government they ultimately favour. After all, what if the existing state of Indonesia infringes other religious principles that the Madkhalīs hold dear?

Their preferred strategy appears to be to confine their absolute loyalty to the obedience to God (*ṭāʿa fī llāh*) and remain patient in case the political authorities are considered disobedient to God (*maʿṣiyya fī llāh*). Yet, this strategy seems to not always yield the desired results, which, at times, requires some adjustment to the Madkhalī principles in the ever-changing context of Indonesian politics and wider societal affairs. In the following, I will show how this dilemma plays out on three select issues: the democratic system of the governance, educational politics, and internal security politics, epitomized in the "fight against terrorism".

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76   Ibid., 8.
77   Abu Amr Ahmad Alfian, "Arab Saudi, Daulah Islam Pengibar Panji Tauhid dan Sunnah", *Asy Syariah* 118:10 (2017), 28-32.

Solving Dilemmas

1   *Democracy*

It is important to recall that, for the Indonesian Madkhalīs, the "*fiqh* of obedi-ence" is essentially linked to their concept of the "*dawlat al-tawḥīd*", which they perceive the kingdom of Saudi Arabia to be. Therefore, it is not applicable to a state run on democratic principles, such as Indonesia. In this matter, Salafīs of whatever persuasion, including the Madkhalīs, share the view with Islamists such as the most popular Sayyid Quṭb (executed 1386/1966),[78] or the ḤuT/ḤTI, that parliamentary democracy is an un-Islamic political system, because the establishment of governance is based not on religious precepts but on popular choice based on a human-made framework. Yet, Salafīs, and especially those of a Madkhalī inclination, distinguish parliamentary democracy from *shūrā*. In the former, the majority becomes a source of authority, while in the latter the authority is based on *sharīʿa*,[79] and Luqman Ba'abduh has therefore consis-tently declared democracy to be a form of disobedience to God.[80] Yet, the disobedience of the government, which would logically follow from that decla-ration, must – in line with the Madkhalī understanding of *ūlū l-amr* – not be publically expressed, neither through protest rallies nor publications. The In-donesian Madkhalīs, of course, are well aware of this doctrinal dilemma, and, subsequently, they have constantly endeavoured to find a way out of it. One attempt is to reject participation in the democratic process: asked for a ruling (*hukm*) on parliamentary elections, Ba'abduh responded with regard to par-ticipation in elections to the national (*pemilu*) as well local governments (*pilkada*). According to Ba'abduh, because participation in elections in Indone-sia is a right, not an obligation, people have the freedom to abstain from voting without having to fear any kind of disciplinary sanction. This reasoning solves the Madkhalīs' dilemma: on the one hand, they can escape disobedience to the ruler, since there is no obligation to fulfil. On the other hand, they do not vio-late the Salafī principle on the unlawfulness of democracy, since they do not participate in the elections.[81]

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78   See, for instance, Masdar Hilmy, *Islamism and Democracy i@n Indonesia: Piety and Prga-
        matism* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), 46-9; Zamzam Nurhuda,
        "Ideology of Sayyid Qutb and [the] Movement of *Tarbiya* in Indonesia: A Linguistic Ap-
        proach", *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 154 (2017), 113-17.

79   A special issue on the differences between *shūrā* and democracy was published in *Asy
        Syariah* magazine 1:6 (2004).

80   See "(Ust Luqman Ba'abduh) Pemilu", URL: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=56B5qE1hc5w>
        (accessed 24 September 2017).

81   See Luqman Ba'abduh, "Bolehkah Ikut Pemilu Atau Pilkada", URL: <www.youtube.com/
        watch?v=_SMO HlleHxE> (accessed 24 September 2017).

2   *Education and the National Curriculum*

The Madkhalīs are also faced with difficulties in negotiating their religious orientation with the national curriculum, which is the official standard that has to be followed if the degrees awarded by an educational institution are to be fully recognized. The responsibility for this curriculum is held not solely by the Ministry of National Education, but also by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and while the latter is in charge of all religious subjects, the former brings in an abundance of secular subjects, many of which fit well into the Madkhalī – and wider Salafī – world view. "Civic education" (*pendidikan kewarganegaraan*; PKn), for instance, is not considered suitable by them, since it teaches nationalism, which, in their eyes, contradicts the concept of universal Muslim solidarity.

For Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal (b. 1984) from Yogyakarta, the wider implications of the national curriculum impact such important legal matters as defensive *jihād*, as he discusses in his article "Defending Islam, or Defending the Land?".[82] Deliberately employing here a popular slogan to express Indonesian nationalism, he argues that Muslims are foremost compelled to defend Islam, not the "land" (*tanah air*). Interestingly, though, he is not entirely opposed to "defending the land" (*membela tanah air*), provided that the "land" is not the Republic of Indonesia, but "the Land of Islam" (*tanah air Islam*) – implicitly touching here on the classical legal division of *dār al-islām* and *dār al-ḥarb*. Against nationalistic opponents, who would sustain the Islamicity of national patriotism by referring to the popular, though weak, *ḥadīth* "Love of the land is [part] of the [Islamic] faith" (*ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*),[83] Tuasikal posits Ibn ʿUthaymīn's discussion of the self-same *ḥadīth*. According to the Saudi scholar, the phrase "defending the land" in this *ḥadīth*, which he classifies as fabricated (*palsu*), is ambiguous. Yet, depending on the underlying intention (*niat*), it can well serve to distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims: while the latter intends to merely defend the land, which can refer both to national territory or private landed property, the former intends to exclusively defend the Land of Islam.[84]

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82   See Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal, "Membela Islam ataukah Membela Tanah Air?", URL: <https://muslim.or.id/14648-membela-islam-ataukah-membela-tanah-air.html> (accessed 25 September 2017).

83   For the classification of this *ḥadīth* as weak (*ḍaʿīf*), see Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat aḥādīth al-ḍaʿīfa wa-l-mawḍūʿa wa-atharuhā al-sayyiʾ fī l-umma*, 14 vols. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1412/1992), I: 110.

84   See Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal, *Membela Islam*; c.f. Ibn ʿUthaymīn, *Sharḥ Riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥin min kalām sayyid al-mursalīn*, 6 vols. (Riyadh: Madār al-Waṭan li-l-Nashr 1426/2005), I: 66.

Luqman Ba'abduh even turned to graphic polemics when arguing against the national curriculum that non-Madkhalī Salafī institutions in Indonesia have chosen to adopt. When asked about it in a Salafī workshop (*dawra*) held in 2013 in Balikpapan, Kalimantan, Ba'abduh responded that all components of the curriculum, both those devised by the Ministry of National Education and those under the responsibility of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, are fraught with "bad things" (*kemungkaran*), including superstitions, polytheism (*syirik*), and forbidden innovation (*bid'ah*). For illustration, Ba'abduh pointed to some social science textbooks issued by the Ministry of National Education which contained discussions of tourist attractions in Bali, of visitations to shrines (*ziarah*) to gain *baraka*, and of the legend of the Javanese goddess Dewi Sri, who is believed to give fertility to the soil. The curricular components devised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs contain speculative Islamic theology (*ilmu kalam*), philosophy, and mysticism (*sufisme*).[85]

Interestingly, and against the common view of the Madkhalīs as apolitical and unconditionally supportive of the state, as *walī l-amr*, they maintain a much more uncompromising stance on the national curriculum than their non-Madkhalī Salafī compatriots. While clear rejection of all controversial subjects has led the Madkhalīs to not following the national curriculum at all, non-Madkhalī schools, such as the above-mentioned *Ma'had Al-Ukhuwah*, have adopted the national curriculum. Yet they, too, acknowledge that subjects such as those critically highlighted by Ba'abduh contradict Salafī principles. According to Aris Sugiantoro, director of *Ma'had Al-Ukhuwah*, an attempt to solve this dilemma was made by providing students with special briefings before taking their exams: while they would still have to answer the exam questions in accordance with the official textbooks to be used in class, they are emphatically instructed to deny the truth of any answer that contradicts the Salafī world view.[86]

3   Anti-Terrorism

Since early 2000, especially after the Bali bombing by the militant *Jemaah Islamiyah* in October 2002, the Indonesian government has attempted to combat terrorism by establishing special counter-terrorism units, like the *National Agency for Combating Terrorism* (BNPT) and *Densus 88*, which run various

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85   See the recorded excerpts of Ba'abduh's sermon at this *daurah*, URL: <http://forumsalafy. net/tanya-jawab-bersama-al-ustadz-luqman-baabduh-daurah-balikpapan/> (accessed 25 September 2017).

86   Interview with Aris Sugiantoro, Sukoharjo, 9 September 2017.

de-radicalization programmes. Likewise, public campaigns against terrorism have also been launched by various Muslim organizations like the NU and *Muhammadiyah*. Because Salafīs and Salafists are grossly considered supporters or even perpetrators of militant activities, non-*jihādī* Salafīs object to any identification of their *da'wa* with violence or terrorism and demand sound differentiation. In fact, they regard their scholarly as well as polemical engagement with the "neo-Kharijites" as a genuine contribution to mainstreaming the counter-terrorism discourse initiated by the Indonesian government in the early 2000s. Salafīs affiliated with the Rodja radio station in Bogor, West Java, for example, repeatedly cooperated with the BNPT when they invited Middle Eastern Salafī *'ulamā'*, like 'Alī Ḥasan al-Ḥalabī (b. 1381/1960) from Jordan, to Indonesia to explain the dangers of terrorism and militant groups like the *Jamā'a Islāmiyya* of Egypt, *al-Qā'ida*, and *DĀ'ISH*.[87]

The Madkhalīs are even more extensively involved in the national anti-terrorism campaign than Salafīs of other persuasions. In this context belongs the publication of Luqman Ba'abduh's above-mentioned book *Mereka adalah Teroris*,[88] which generated critical responses not only from the Indonesian *jihādī* Salafists, but also from Salafīs not inclined to violent means. IIUM graduate Muhammad Arifin Badri (b. unknown), a renowned Salafī teacher from Jember, strongly criticized at length Ba'abduh's book for, among other things, his polemical use of denigrating terms for his fellow Salafīs who he himself had previously been active with in *Laskar Jihad*. Badri suggests that Ba'abduh's accusation against his former compatriots of activities similar to that of the HTI and the MB is, in fact, only an attempt to cover up the fact that Ba'abduh himself had formerly been a leader in the *Laskar Jihad* and wholeheartedly participated in such activities. Moreover, Badri – equally polemical – objects strongly to the use of the term "terrorist" in the title of Ba'abduh's book, stating

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87   See Syaikh Ali Hasan al-Halabi, "Mewaspadai Bahaya Gerakan Sempalan ISIS", sermon delivered in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, 26 March 2015. URL: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=al8vRxLwOdM> (accessed 9 December 2017). The issues of radicalism and terrorism were also frequently addressed in the *daurah*s and other events, under headers such as "The Prevention of Radicalism Based on the Salaf Understanding" (*Menangkal Radikalisme Berdasarkan Pemahaman Salaf*), "Islamic Guidance for the Prevention of Radicalism to Maintain the Integrity of the Nation and State" (*Tuntunan Islam dalam Menangkal Radikalisme untuk Menjaga Keutuhan Bangsa dan Negara*), or "Islamic Solutions for the Prevention of Radicalism and Moral Decadence of the Nation" (*Solusi Islam dalam Menangkal Radikalisme dan Dekadensi Moral Bangsa*). In addition, the Madkhalis have established the dedicated web radio station *Anti Terorisme Radio Online*.

88   See note 67 above.

that it gives the impression of Ba'abduh imitating unbelievers in discrediting his own co-religionists through the label "terrorist".[89]

In their stance on Muslim radicalism and militancy, the Indonesian Madkhalīs are in league with the NU and other Muslim organizations. Yet, this is as far as their commonalties go, as those organizations under the umbrella of the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* clearly argue within the national framework, indicated by the NU slogan "The Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia is Non-Negotiable!" (*NKRI Harga Mati!*). In contrast, Madkhalī scholar Usamah Mahri (b. unknown) emphasizes that nationalism cannot be the cure for radicalism. Instead, the only appropriate method would be argumentative proof (*hujjah*) derived from the authoritative texts, and faith.[90] This way, they attempt to solve the dilemma of being involved in the government's de-radicalization programme on the one side, while simultaneously dismissing any identification with a nationalist agenda as opposed to the Salafī *'aqīda* as well as *manhaj*.

Concluding Remarks

After an initial episode of sustained violence associated with Salafī Islam in Indonesia, the followers of controversial, yet highly influential, Saudi scholar Rabīʿ al-Madkhalī have succeeded in establishing themselves more firmly within society by confining the means of their *da'wa* to public education and extensive use of all available media. In line with their Saudi reference authority, their relationship with the state authorities is substantiated by a "*fiqh* of obedience" that crystalizes in the concept of *ūlū l-amr* and which they, other than the non-Madkhalīs, interpret as necessitating unconditional obedience to the ruling establishment.

This rather unique position within the entire Salafī spectrum causes a number of dilemmas, resulting foremost from the democratic political system of the Republic of Indonesia, which opposed the overall Salafī political vision. To solve these dilemmas while, at the same time, not compromising their religious principles, including the unconditional obedience to the *walī l-amr*, they have to argue pragmatically. Their argument for abstaining from the

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89   See Luqman Ba'abduh, *Mereka adalah teroris*, URLs: <https://arifinbadri.com/62-ban tahan-untuk-luqman-baabduh-dan-koreksi-buku-mereka-adalah-teroris-bag-1.html>; <https://arifinbadri.com/68-bantaha n-untuk-luqman-baabduh-dan-buku-mereka-adala h-teroris-bag-2.html>; <https://arifinbadri.com/bantahan-untuk-luqman-baabduh-dan-buku-mereka-ada lah-teroris-bag-3-selesai/> (accessed 3 December 2018).

90   The recording of this sermon is available under the URL: <http://bit.ly/1QK9TsB> (accessed 25 September 2017).

democratic practice of election, for instance, has forced them to emphasize the right to vote, which does not compel them to participate in a practice they reject, while, at the same time, maintaining their dogmatically sustained general obedience to the state.

Also in the matter of submitting to the national framework of education, expressed in the national curriculum, which combines religious subjects with secular ones, they have had to find a creative solution to work around the fact that they fully reject large parts of the content to be taught. For one, they have deliberately opted out of government benefits for the educational institutions, which, in turn, has had significant repercussions on the social mobility of their graduates. Neither are their schools financially in a position to provide for a more conducive infrastructure, including the maintenance of buildings and the systematic hiring of faculty, nor do their graduates have a feasible chance to pursue a higher education, in Indonesia or abroad. Other than for Salafīs of other persuasions, their controversial position in Saudi Arabia also excludes them from seeking further education in the universities there. As a result, alumni rarely find employment in either the governmental or the private sector, which, over the short and long term, will have a significant impact on the socio-economic position of Indonesian Madkhalīs in general. This situation is in sharp contrast to their non-Madkhalī counterparts, which, because they have implemented the national curriculum and, subsequently, received government benefits, are generally in a much better state, as the above examples of the *Ma'had Al-Ukhuwah* and *Ma'had Al-Bukhari* indicate.

In line with the promotion of total loyalty to the state, Madkhalī Salafīs in Indonesia actively support the government's anti-terrorism and de-radicalization campaigns, but do so in reference not to the national framework but to the welfare of the universal Muslim *umma.*

The stance of the Madkhalī Salafīs towards politics is by no means apolitical, and, thus, hardly ever "quietist". As such, they are distinct from those who Wagemakers labels as "aloofist quietists"[91] and who are entirely indifferent towards political affairs in the widest possible sense. Rather, their political activism is posited vis-à-vis the politically organized Salafīs as well as Islamist organizations the like HTI and MB. That makes them, in Wagemakers' framework, "loyalists" as well as "propagandists", but whether these two categories can rightfully be subsumed under the label "quietists" should perhaps remain open for debate.

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91   See Wagemakers, "Revisiting Wiktorowicz", 16.

Acknowledgements