

The Rise of Muslim Elite Schools: A New Pattern of "Santrization" In Indonesia

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ملخص

تطّلع هذه المقالة ظاهرة جديدة بظهور المدارس الإسلامية النموذجية سواء كانت المدارس ذات الصبغة الدينية أو المدارس العامة أو المعاهد الدينية الأمر الذي يمثل أسلمة المجتمع الاندونيسي. ومن ضمن تلك المدارس مدرسة الأزهر الإسلامي التي أنشأها البروفيسور حامكا (الحاج عبد الملك كريم أمر الله) ومدرسة إظهار الإسلام والتي تنبثق من المدرسة الأولى ومدرسة مادانيا العامة والتي يشرفها العاملون في مؤسسة بارامادنيا ومدرسة انسان حديكيا التي أنشأها العلماء من مجمع بحوث وتطبيق التكنولوجيا.

وبجانب المدارس العامة هناك مدارس دينية تطور نفسها لتكون مدارس نموذجية، منها مدرسة "قمباعونان" والتي كانت معملا لكلية التربية بجامعة شريف هداية الله الإسلامية الحكومية بجاكرتا والمدرسة الابتدائية الحكومية بمالانغ بجاوى الشرقية التي كانت مدرسة للتدريب العملي لطلبة معهد المعلمين الدينية. وقد أنشأت وزارة الشؤون الدينية أيضا ٥٧ مدرسة اعدادية دينية نموذجية و ٣٥ مدرسة ثانوية دينية في عدد من المحافظات.

ويعتبر ظهور تلك المدارس النموذجية الراقية بمثابة أسلمة المجتمع الاندونيسي حيث أن التلاميذ الذين يلتحقون بتلك المدارس من الطبقة المتوسطة لارتفاع الرسوم الدراسية فبالتالي يحمل هؤلاء التلاميذ ما حصلوا من المدارس من العلوم والوعي الإسلامي إلى بيوتهم الأمر الذي يدفع أولياء الأمور في كثير من الأحيان إلى تنمية علومهم وسلوكهم الإسلامية.

Abstrak

Makalah ini menyoroti gejala baru kemunculan sekolah Islam unggulan baik yang berbentuk madrasah, sekolah umum maupun pesantren sebagai kecenderungan baru "santrinisasi" masyarakat Indonesia. Di antara sekolah tersebut adalah Sekolah Islam Azhar yang dibangun oleh Prof. Hamka dan Sekolah Islam Izhar yang merupakan pecahan dari sekolah pertama, SMU Madania yang dikelola oleh para aktivis Yayasan Paramadina, dan SMU Insan Cendekia yang dibangun oleh para ilmuwan dari Badan Pengembangan dan Penerapan Teknologi (BPPT).

Di samping sekolah umum, sejumlah madrasah juga mengembangkan sekolah unggulan. Di antaranya adalah Madrasah Pembangunan tingkat Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN) 1 Malang, Jawa Timur yang semula merupakan "sekolah pelatihan swasta" bagi para siswa Pendidikan Guru Agama ditingkatkan menjadi madrasah unggulan. Kementerian Agama juga akan membangun 57 model Madrasah Tsanawiyah dan 35 model Madrasah Aliyah di berbagai propinsi di Indonesia.

Kemuculan sekolah unggulan ini ikut meningkatkan "santrinisasi" masyarakat Indonesia. Karena mahal biaya pendidikan, kebanyakan siswa berasal dari keluarga "kelas menengah." Mereka akan membawa pengetahuan dan kesadaran keislaman ke rumah yang pada gilirannya dalam banyak kasus mendorong orang tua murid untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan dan aktivitas keislaman mereka.

In the last two decades at least there have been trends of Islamization or re-Islamization among Indonesian Muslim. A more popular Indonesian term used to describe this trend is "*santrinisasi*" (from santrization) englicized form of Javanese term "*santri*" meaning "those who come from *pesantren*", or more commonly "those who are of strict and practicing Muslims" as opposed to "*abangan*", nominal Muslim.¹

Observers both from within and without sometimes call this "santrinisasi" as "kebangkitan Islam (Islamic revival)" in Indonesia. There is still continuing discussion, of course, on the kind, extent, and implications of recent "santrinisasi" or "kebangkitan Islam", for instance whether it political or cultural. Despite that, there are some indications which are often cited by observers to indicate contemporary "santrinisasi" or "kebangkitan Islam" such as the increase of number of mosques and other places for

Islamic rituals; phenomenal growth of Indonesia hujjaj (pilgrims) to Saudi Arabia; the rise of new Islamic organizations or institutions like the All-Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), Islamic bank (Bank Muamalat), Islamic Insurance (Asuransi Takaful), etc.

There are several factors with, according to some observers, have contributed to the recent *santrinization* of Indonesian society. Chief factors, among others, are growing genuine attachment of Islam as a result of *da'wab* (preaching) activities, improved economic condition, increasing number of Muslim "middle class" and spreading influence of Islamic revivalism at the global level (Azra, 1996, 1996b, Nakamura, 1993; Hefner, 1993).

In addition to these factors, "santrinization", seems to have also been accelerated through educational institutions, particularly Islamic ones which have a long history in Indonesia. Traditional Islamic education institutions, locally known as, *dayab* and *rangkang* in Aceh, *surau* in West Sumatra, *pondok* or *pesantren* in Java have had played a great role not only in the transmission of Islamic learning, but also in the continued Islamization of the archipelago, especially during the Dutch colonial role up to early 20th century.² These institutions in the second decade of the twentieth century were supplemented by new and relatively modern educational institutions such as madrasah and Islamic schools which were to certain extent modelled after Dutch school (Cf. Azra, 1996b).

Despite severe problems faced by Islamic education in general, all of them survived changes that took place after Indonesia gained independence on August 17, 1945. Not only that, Islamic education continued to expand in the post-independence period; madrasahs and pesantrens were slowly consolidated. Then followed the establishment of Islamic tertiary level of education which was later known as the IAIN (State Institute for Islamic Studies), initially in Jakarta and Yogyakarta and, by the seventies, in almost every capital city of Indonesian provinces.

Such observer as Nakamura (1993) has discussed briefly on the role of Islamic higher education's, i.e., IAIN in the santrinization process of Indonesian Muslim society. Thus far, however, there is no discussion on the role of lower level of Islamic educational institutions in the santrinization process. This paper is an initial attempt to delineate and discuss the santrinization process by way of Islamic primary and secondary educational institutions.

Islamic Schools and Madrasahs

Before going too far, it is better to delineate from the outset some kind of distinction among Islamic schools in contemporary Indonesia. The first group are Islamic schools that are modelled after public schools (*sekolah negeri*) that are under auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC). Like other public schools, the *sekolah Islam* consists of six years of primary education, institutionally known as SD (*Sekolah Dasar*) Islam, and three years of junior secondary education, known as SMP (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*) Islam. Then comes three years of senior secondary education, known as SMU (*Sekolah Menengah Umum*, or SMU, formerly is called *Sekolah Menengah Atas*, or SMA) Islam.

As they, according to National Education Act 1989, must follow the public school system, the content of these Islamic schools adopt fully the curricula that are formulated and issued by the MOEC. Thus, basically there is no difference between the *Sekolah Islam* and public (state) schools. What differentiates them is, among other things, a special emphasis on religious teaching; they have more subjects relating to Islam and, consequently have longer hours devoted to the teaching of this religion. Public schools have also religious teaching in their curriculum; in fact religious teaching is compulsory in Indonesian national education system that should be taught from kindergarten to university levels. But the hours devoted to religious teaching are very limited; only two hours per week.

The second groups are madrasahs. Despite the fact that "madrasah" simply means "school", in Indonesia the very term specifically refer to "Islamic [religious] school". The madrasah system in the archipelago, beginning to develop in the early decades of the 20th century, originally focused almost exclusively on the study of Arabic language and Islamic studies, such as the Qur'an, hadith, fiqh, Islamic history and other Islamic subjects. Before long, madrasahs gradually adopted some features of modern educational system and modern subject such as mathematics, geography, and other general sciences were included in their curriculum.

Like schools under MOEC, there are public and private madrasahs; all of them are under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA). Like public schools and the *Sekolah Islam*, the madrasahs consist of three levels of education; Madrasah Ibtida'iyah (elementary, 6 years), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (junior high school, 3 years) and Madrasah Aliyah (senior high schools, 3 years).

In accord with the Indonesian National Education Act of 1989, madrasahs must also implement the national curriculum 1994 that was issued by the MOEC. Therefore, since the promulgation of the Act, madrasahs are basically equivalent to schools. There are only little differences between madrasahs and public schools. What makes the former distinctive is their special emphasis on Islamic religious subjects; these what make them "more Islamic" vis-a-vis other schools. In addition, MORA with the help of experts of Islamic education seeks to include what they call "Islamic nuances" in all subjects included in the curriculum. For this purpose, MORA has gathered experts of Islamic education to write textbooks of each subject with "Islamic nuances".³

Both Islamic schools and a great number of madrasahs as one might expect are privately run mostly by Islamic foundations (*yayasan*). This is important to point out, since in contrast to number of public schools that are mostly state owned, around 80 per cent of madrasahs belong to private sector, or more precisely to Islamic foundations (*yayasan*). For instance in 1991/92 there are about 22,200 Madrasah Ibtida'iyah (885 public and 21,300 private); 7,000 Madrasah Tsanawiyah (746 public and 6,300 private), and 3,025 Madrasah Aliyah (456 public and 2,596 private) (ADB, 1992: 4-5, MORA, 1996).

The Rise of Islamic Elite Schools

One of the most striking, contemporary developments in the phenomena of "santrinizasi" of Indonesian Muslim society is the rise of Islamic elite schools which are known as "*sekolah Islam*" (Islamic schools). In the initial state of their development they are mostly known simply as "*sekolah Islam*"; so it would seem that they are not different from the earlier "Islamic schools" mentioned earlier. But since early nineties, some of the schools begin to declare themselves formally or otherwise are recognized by many Muslims as "*sekolah unggul*", or "*sekolah Islam unggulan*" (Islamic schools of excellence). Still another term used to describe these schools is "SMU Model", or "Model (Islamic) Senior High Schools".⁴

These "*sekolah Islam*" or "*Sekolah Islam Unggulan*" or even "*sekolah model (Islam)*" which are very distinctive, could be argued as Islamic "elite schools" for several reasons. The first reason is that the schools are elite in academic terms; in some cases, only the best students can be admitted to these schools through a highly competitive entrance

examination. The teachers who teach in these schools had also been selected competitively; only those who are qualified can be employed. The schools have also much better and more complete education facilities such as libraries, laboratories, workshops, computer rooms, mosques, and sport facilities. All of these make them much better academically in comparison not only with other Islamic schools but also with public schools owned by government.

Because of that, these Islamic elite schools in general are expensive if not very expensive. In addition to admittance fee, and monthly fee, parents have also to pay a large sum of money that could be variously called "contribution fee" or "development fee". In addition, parents have to pay fees for food and dormitory, if the schools are boarding schools. Therefore not all Muslims parents could afford to send their children to these schools. As a result, students of these schools mostly come from better off or elite families or the so-called "Muslim middle-class" that, thanks to Indonesia's improved economic conditions, began to form since the early eighties at least.

The predecessor of the contemporary elite schools is perhaps Azhar Islamic schools situated within the complexes of the Azhar Grand Mosque of Azhar in Kebayoran Baru, an elite neighborhood in South Jakarta. The name of the school was a remembrance of al-Azhar University, Cairo, when Shaykh al-Zahar visited Jakarta. Founded in the early 60s by the late Prof. Hamka, who was awarded a honorary PhD degree by the Azhar University and in the late 1970s became chairman of the National Council of Indonesian Ulama, the Azhar Islamic schools towards the end of the 1980 were becoming a model of similar schools that were established in the early nineties.

Nowadays, the Azhar Islamic schools have branches not only in Jakarta, but also in a number of cities, such as Cirebon, Surabaya, Sukabumi, Serang, Semarang, etc. There is also a number of schools which are affiliated with the Azhar system. The Azhar schools in Jakarta generally consist of Kindergarten, Primary schools, and high schools. And there is little doubt that the Azhar Islamic schools of Kebayoran remain the best and most prestigious compared with other al-Zahar schools in other places.

The schools are both academically and socially very prestigious. The Azhar Islamic school seems to be much better academically compared with other great number of Islamic schools in Jakarta and throughout the

country. The curriculum of the school are the ones issued by the MOEC. However, as one might expect, the schools put a special emphasis on the teaching of Islamic religious subjects. Since the Azhar schools do not adopt the boarding system, all teaching process is conducted in formal school hours that are longer compared with other schools.

Not only that, the Azhar schools are the most expensive compared with other Islamic schools. As a result, only the rich and the famous can afford to send their children to the Azhar. Even though the Azhar Islamic schools also admit a certain number of children coming from poor families.

In line with the growing popularity of the Azhar, there is also a number of other Islamic elite schools developed, not only in the Jakarta area, but also in some outlying provinces of Indonesia. The most important among such school are the Izhar School at Pondok Labu, Jakarta, the SMU Insan Cendekia, Serpong, the Madania school in Parung, a sub-urban to the south of Jakarta.

The Izhar Islamic School, another elite school in Pondok Labu, South Jakarta, precisely because its name reminds one of the Azhar schools. Indeed, the Izhar school was originally a branch of the Azhar school in Kebayoran Baru. Conflicts that erupted between functionaries of the two schools ended in court; and the "Azhar Pondok Labu" was ordered by the judge not to use the name al-Azhar; and as a result in 1992 the school got a new name "al-Izhar".

Owned by the Yayasan Anakku, development of the Azhar Pondok Labu schools appears to have been closely related by prominent figures in the government cycle. The school initially began with the inauguration ceremony in 1987 which was also attended by the then Minister of Education and Culture, Prof. Dr. Fuad Hassan. The first school in operation beginning in academic year 1987 was Kindergarten and in the following year a primary school was also inaugurated. The schools soon gained popularity. And soon enough conflict erupted between the Azhar Pondok Labu and its mother, the Azhar Kebayoran Baru which finally led to the change of its name, as mentioned above. This change seems to have not affected the school very much, it even expanded by the opening of a junior high school in June 1992 by the then Minister of Research and Technology, Prof. B.J. Habibie. And in August 1995, the Izhar Senior High School was inaugurated by the Minister of Education and Culture, Wardiman Djojonegoro.

Another important Islamic elite school is the SMU Madania located in Parung, a village between Jakarta and Bogor. This senior high school was established by the Madania Foundation which was created by the Paramadina foundation, an important Muslim middle class study group led by Nurcholish Madjid, a prominent contemporary Muslim intellectual. Founded on the spirit of Islamic neomodernism, the SMU Madania are financially supported by several prominent and rich Muslims. Therefore, they were able to build school's complexes and facilities in relatively short period.

The SMU Madania opened its door to students in academic year 1995/96. In the first year, it admitted some 70 students; and by the year 2000 the school would have around 480 students. All students and also most of its teachers are housed in dormitories. With its boarding system, the SMU Madania openly declares that it is adoption of the old pesantren systems, in which all students, teachers, and kiyai (pesantren master) live in one single building complex. Indeed the SMU Madania attempts to adopt the so-called unique pesantren cultural system with some adjustments of course. Contents of the SMU Madania, as one might expect, is the enriched MOEC curriculum.

Arguably the most competitive Islamic elite school is the Sekolah Menengah Umum (SMU) Insan Cendekia (lit., "intellect people)" in Serpong, Tangerang, in a suburb of Jakarta. Even though this senior high school was established only two years ago (academic year 1996/1997), it admits students only very selectively. Its entrance examination is highly selective; only straight A graduates of junior high madrasah (Tsanawiyah) could be allowed to join the selection. But grades alone are not guarantee. In addition, they have to pass interviews, physical examination, and some other kinds of testing.

The SMU Insan Cendekia was founded by a group of Muslim scientists, and intellectual who mostly work at the National Institute for the Study, Development and Application of Technology (BPPT) which is used to be led by B.J. Habibie, the former Indonesian president. Therefore, the schools has at least emotional link with the ICMI (all-Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectual). It is not surprising, that the SMU Insan Cendekia is also popular among some Muslims as "Habibie's school".

With these historical background and emotional connection, the SMU insan Cendekia puts special emphasis on producing future scientists

who are also wellversed in Islamic subjects. The founders of the SMU Insan Cendekia realize that Muslims in general, on the one hand, are still behind in the fields of science and technology. On the other hand Islamic schools, madrasahs, and particularly pesantren (traditional Islamic educational institutions) tend to neglect subject of science and technology, and concentrate themselves on Islamic religious sciences instead. With this criticism in mind, the SMU Insan Cendekia aims at producing students who excell in both science and technology, and religion. Therefore, the SMU insan Cendekia admits only the best students from Madrasah Tsanawiyah and pesantrens, traditional Islamic boarding schools.

To achieve its goals, the SMU Insan Cendekia adopts the boarding system that has been long an integrated tradition of the pesantren education in general. Thus, like in the pesantrens, students are housed in the school's six hectare complex consisting of classrooms, two-story library; workshops, computer rooms, special building for teachers' training; mosque, separated dormitories for male and female students, and for male and female teachers; multi-purposes building, canteen, sporting ground, etc.

Muslim elite schools do not confine to Sekolah Islam. There begin to rise a number of elite madrasahs. One of the most popular "elite" madrasahs is the Madrasah Pembangunan of IAIN Jakarta. This madrasah, originally conceived as laboratorium school for the Faculty of Islamic Education (Tarbiyah) of IAIN Jakarta, has in the last several years become a favorite madrasah among parents in South Jakarta, even though they have to pay fees that are about ten times of fees that they have to pay in public schools and madrasahs. This Madrasah Pembangunan, consisting of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Madrasah Tsanawiyah, is one of the best education institutions in South Jakarta, not only among madrasahs, but among schools as well. Many of its graduate have been admitted in several good and best schools in the area. Reading *Al-Asbri*, journal of the Madrasah Pembangunan, one is shown various achievements of the students of this madrasah.

Another outstanding example of elite madrasah is the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN) I Malang, East Java. As one can see from its name, this is a primary level madrasah. This madrasah was originally established in 1962 as a "private training school" for students of Islamic Teacher's Schools (Pendidikan Guru Agama, or PGA). In 1979, however the local MORA decided to make it an independent state madrasah. From then on,

the MIN I Malang improved itself. With good cooperation and support of BP3 (Parents-teachers Association), it is now able to offer a quality education.

Now, best known for its academic achievement, the MIN I Malang is the best madrasah in East Java. The MIN I Malang has become a pilot project and a model madrasah in Indonesia and some other countries in the Middle East and Africa. Considering its achievement, it is not surprising that it is a favorite madrasah among Muslim parents in the last several years, even though it is the most expensive not only among madrasahs but also among schools in Malang. Like any other Islamic favorite schools and madrasahs, only well-off Muslim families can afford to send their children to the MIN I Malang.

There is little doubt that success story of these elite madrasahs has in part stimulated MORA to develop "model madrasahs". And there is another important trend. There is a tendency in certain areas in Indonesia that madrasahs get new momentum. Many public schools are closed down because many of their students are moving to madrasahs. All these developments make MORA officials and experts of Islamic education begin to believe that quality of madrasah education can be improved. And that education offered by madrasahs would also be sought by many Muslim parents.

Therefore, the plan to create model madrasahs is in line with the MORA efforts to improve the quality of madrasah education in general. Under the Basic Education Project, Junior Secondary Project and Development of Madrasah Aliyah Project there will be developed "model madrasahs" for each level of education. There will be 57 model Madrasah Tsanawiyah and 35 model Madrasah Aliyah will be developed in the 27 provinces of Indonesia.

Under this plan, a strategically located public (state) madrasah will be equipped with improved facilities, equipment, and instructional materials, and better trained management and teaching staff. This model madrasah will serve as a model school, to show by example the standards to which all other madrasahs, both public and private, should be developed. In addition, model madrasahs are expected to be an educational resource center for surrounding madrasahs. They are also expected to demonstrate the philosophy, concepts, principles, systems, and

procedures for effective teaching and active student learning to ensure better achievements.⁵

Santrization of Muslim Middle Class

The rise and proliferation of Islamic "sekolah unggulan" as well as good madrasahs appear to have far reaching impact and consequences on the future of Indonesian Muslim society. These schools and madrasahs that offer quality education contribute not only to the improvement of Islamic education in Indonesia, but also the santrization of Muslims society.

The process of santrization can be described as having taken place in a two way process. In the first place, pupils or students of the schools to a large extent have undergone "re-Islamization". As pointed out above in addition to studying general subjects, they learn Islamic subjects, from how to read the Qur'an, or how to do prayer properly and correctly, to the fundamental Islamic creeds. The process of implanting Islamic teaching and practices is, of course, more intense in the schools or madrasahs which have boarding system.

In the second place, the pupils or students in turn bring Islam that they have studied at schools to their home; in many cases, they even teach their parents who often know only little about Islam, for instance, how to pray, how to perform other Islamic rituals and the like. The parents, in many cases, felt ashamed of their ignorance of certain Islamic teaching and practices. As a consequence, in order not to disappoint their children, they began to study Islam either by themselves or by inviting a private teacher to teach them about Islam.

Thus, a new pattern of re-Islamization or santrization emerges among Muslim middle class, not only among their children but also among their parents. This new pattern of santrization is somewhat unique. Traditionally, santrization is generally supposed to have carried out mainly by Muslim missionary (*da'i*) through *da'wah* (preaching) activities. The *da'wah* is, as a rule, undertaken through pulpit in mosques, or in any other places where Muslims carry out religious activities. There has been some dissatisfaction, and even criticism, to this type of oral *da'wah*. Therefore in recent years a new type of preaching activities emerge, which puts more emphasis on action rather than on words only. This new type of *da'wah* is popularly known as *da'wah bi al-bal*, preaching through action.

Santrization analyzed in this paper seems to be different from the two types of da'wah mentioned above. The process of santrization through Muslim elite schools could be argued as a kind of silent or rather, an "organic da'wah". There is no formal preaching from the pulpit of course.

Why do Muslim parents send their children to these Islamic schools and madrasahs ? This phenomenon is a reverse development among Muslim parents. In the past, many well-off Muslim families sent their children to missionary schools, either Catholics or Protestant, which from the Dutch time were and now still are known for their good quality. Even among Muslim parents there was some kind of pride of being able to have their children educated in missionary schools. This sentiment is voiced, for instance, by Surtiah, principal of the MIN 1 Malang; she points out that in the past a Catholic school was the first choice among Muslim parents. But now, Muslim parents have the MIN 1 as a good alternative to get quality education for their children.

That is the main reason for Muslim parents to send their children to Islamic elite school either "sekolah Islam" or "madrasah". Islamic elite schools that offer a quality provide a sure vista for their children to continue there education to a higher level of education. Students of these elite Islamic schools and madrasahs in general are able to compete with students of good public schools and of missionary schools.

Not only that, Muslim parents who send their children to these Islamic elite schools and madrasahs believe that their children will get a more comprehensive view and understanding of Islam. Many Muslim parents who know little Islam now can assure themselves that their children would have more knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings. More than that, their children are taught how to practice Islamic teachings in their daily life. For instance, they are not only taught to do the obligatory prayers five times a day, but also to lead the prayers themselves, or to be an *imam* of prayer.

Furthermore, Muslim parents in general believe that environment of Islamic elite schools and madrasahs is much safer one in comparison with that of public schools. Students of these elite Islamic schools and madrasahs have never been involved, for instance, in *tawuran* (mass brawl) among students of different schools as commonly happen in public schools. The

environment is even better in the Islamic elite schools and madrasahs that facilitate their students with a boarding system.

With all of this excellence, it is not hard to understand that Islamic elite schools and madrasahs are continually gaining popularity. Thus in contrast with the situation during the Soekarno era during which time many members of Muslims were often ashamed of being known as Muslims, today Muslims are proud of their religion. As Nakamura argues, has and being becoming something to be proud of, something beautiful. And Islamic elite schools and madrasahs are not only a symbol of that pride, but also one of the most important mediums to implant, develop, and preserve that pride in Muslim younger generation.

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Endnotes

¹ The term "santri" and "abangan", and also "priyayi", old Javanese bureaucratic elite are made popular by Clifford Geertz through his *Religion of Java*, 1960 (New York : Free Press). There have been some criticism of his distinctions of Javanese socio-religious belief and practices.

² For a brief history of Islamic education in Indonesia see, for instance, Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*, 1992 (Jakarta: Hidakarya); Delier Noer, 1973, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1990-1942*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press). These books have yet to revised and updated in light of new research on the field.

³ Further discussion on the "Islamic nuances" of madrasah after the promulgation of National Education Act of 1989, see "Merumuskan Mata Pelajaran Umum Bernuansa Islam", *Jurnal Madrasah*, No. 3 Vol. 1, 1997.

⁴ There has been a lot of discussion on the nature and excellence of the "Sekolah Unggulan" and the "Sekolah Model" in general, not only the Islamic ones. Despite differences in the detailed characteristics, it seems that a "Sekolah Unggulan" or "Sekolah Model", should put a special emphasis on the teaching of science and technology. While the (Islamic) Sekolah Unggulan" adds another emphasis on religiosity and piety by way of Islamic subjects (See,

Republika, 18 May, 1996; 22 Nov., 1997; *Pelita*, 20 Aug., 1997; *Media Indonesia*, 20 Aug., 1997; 12 Dec., 1997).

⁵ The *Jurnal Madrasah*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1996, is devoted to discussion on how to develop "madrasah unggul" and "madrasah model". An interesting and comprehensive MORA viewpoints on the government efforts to develop the quality of madrasah education is presented in the same journal by Husni Rahim, "Madrasah Negeri sebagai Sekolah Percontohan Departemen Agama (1946-1987)" (State Madrasah as Exemplary School of MORA).

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