

From radical labels to moderate Islam: the transformation of the Salafism movement in Indonesia

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Abstract

The contemporary Salafist movement in Indonesia began to develop in the 1970s. In its development, the Salafist movement later gave rise to various factions. One of the results of the dynamic and contestation of these various factions was the emergence of religious moderation movements of Salafists. This article tries to explain the role of The Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (DDII) and the Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic (LIPIA) in the dynamics of the Salafist movement and to trace and describe the dynamics and the religious moderation movements of the Salafist groups, particularly in Jakarta, Indonesia. The research methods used are historical research methods and qualitative methods with a case study approach. The results show that there are adaptations emerging from the contemporary Salafist movement. These

adaptations can be seen in the acceptance of the concept of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia and democracy even within the framework of Sharia and the presence of moderation or anti-violence ideas. This shows the flexibility of the movement which arises from the need for the sustainability of the organization or movement. In addition, cities present different challenges. This then requires an organization to adapt, either in terms of strategy, method, or proselytizing approach.

Gerakan Salafi kontemporer di Indonesia mulai berkembang pada tahun 1970-an. Dalam perkembangannya, gerakan tersebut kemudian memunculkan berbagai faksi. Salah satu hasil dari dinamika dan kontestasi berbagai faksi ini adalah munculnya gerakan moderasi beragama kaum Salafi. Artikel ini mencoba menjelaskan peran Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII) dan Lembaga Studi Islam dan Arab (LIPIA) dalam dinamika gerakan Salafi dan untuk menelusuri dan menggambarkan dinamika dan gerakan moderasi beragama kelompok Salafi, khususnya di Jakarta, Indonesia. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode penelitian sejarah dan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada adaptasi yang muncul dari gerakan kaum Salafi kontemporer. Adaptasi-adaptasi ini dapat dilihat dari penerimaan konsep Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia dan demokrasi walaupun dalam kerangka Syariah dan adanya gagasan moderasi atau anti-kekerasan. Hal ini menunjukkan adanya fleksibilitas gerakan yang muncul dari kebutuhan akan keberlanjutan organisasi atau gerakan. Selain itu, kota menghadirkan tantangan yang berbeda. Hal ini kemudian menuntut sebuah organisasi untuk beradaptasi, baik dari segi strategi, metode, maupun pendekatan dakwah.

Keywords: *Salafi movement; Moderate Islam; Urban Muslim; Al-Sofwah Foundation; Wahdah Islamiyah*

Introduction

One of the factors influencing the dynamics of Islamic movements in Indonesia was the influx of various Islamic movements from the Middle East in the 1980s. These movements are dominated by movements that carry the idea of the rise of Islam. The movement became known as the

puritanical Islamic movement, which is theoretically interpreted as a movement that has an uncompromising belief in absolutism. In many ways, its authority tends to be purist or intolerant of competing for different points of view and views plural reality as a form of contamination of the true truth¹. The embryo of this movement refers to the pre-modernist revivalism movement—a term proposed by Fazlur Rahman—which is represented by the Wahabi movement and neo-revivalism associated with the Salafist community. The two movements of the group- Wahabi and Salafist were then considered to have formed the current puritanical Islamic theology.

The term Salafist was first used by Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridho when it came to building a renewal movement in Egypt. The term Salafist is then referred to as the model of understanding of the earliest adherents of Islam, the Prophet, and companions. The term was later re-popularized by Nashirudin Albani in the 1980s in Medina. The community is known for *al-Jamaah al-Salafiyya al-Muhtasib*². Salafi itself according to Jahroni³ is a word that refers to religious thought that is leaned on the companions or successors of the Prophet who lived in the three good early periods of Islam or *al-salaf al-salih*. This emphasis on the early period of Islam is to show the authenticity of the sources to be used.

The definition of Salafi as a movement according to Nashirudin Albani is a movement to re-purify the teachings of Islam by promoting a campaign of extermination of everything that is considered a heresy. Albani does not use Wahhabism because it is considered that there is a cult impression of

¹Khaled M. Abou Fadl, *Selamatkan Islam Dari Muslim Puritan*, Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2006.

²As'ad Said Ali, *Ideologi Gerakan Pasca-Reformasi: Gerakan-Gerakan Sosial-Politik Dalam Tinjauan Ideologis*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 2012, 105.

³Jajang Jahroni, "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia: From Muhammadiyah to Laskar Jihad" In *Islamic Thought and Movements in Contemporary Indonesia*, edited by Rizal Sukma and Clara Joewono, Jakarta: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007, 105.

the character⁴. In addition, the Salafi movements can be seen from the ideology or *manhaj* they espouse. According to Hasyim⁵, Salafist *manhaj* can be formulated within two principled constraints. One is the purity of the *aqidah* (*tawhid al-rububiyah*, *tawhid al-uluhiyah*, and *tawhid al-asma wa al-sifat*); second is *ittiba*, or following the generation of *al-salaf al-salih*. This is what then underlies that anything different from the Salaf generation, is said to be a heresy.

The consequences of the strict application of these two principles make the face of the Salafist movement in Indonesia different. Radical movements such as *Darul Islam* and *Laskar Jihad* cannot be said to follow the Salafist *manhaj* even though they are influenced by the ideology of *tawhid al-asma wa al-sifat* or the issue of the qualities of Allah. This is because they have another ideology, namely *tawhid mulkiyah*. An ideology related to Islamic rule and the application of Allah's law. The same is happening to Salafist groups influenced by Muslim Brotherhood thought, such as those who later chose to be active in politics. This unifying of Salafi's steps and forms provoked the emergence of different categorizations. Wiktorowicz divided the contemporary Salafist movement or community into three: the purists, the politicians, and the jihadists⁶. Din Wahid is in harmony with Wiktorowicz, who also distinguishes this movement into three; puritans, *haraki*, and jihadists⁷. Hasyim⁸ divides the Salafist group into two major groups: pure Salafists and mixed Salafists or influenced Salafists or modernists Salafists.

⁴As'ad Said Ali, *Ideologi Gerakan Pasca-Reformasi...*

⁵Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan: Geneologi Dan Ajaran Salafi*, Banten: Yayasan Wakaf Darus-Sunnah, 2019, 205-206.

⁶Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Volume 29, Number 3 (2006), 208.

⁷Din Wahid, "Nurturing Salafi Manhaj A Study of Salafi Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia", *Wacana*, Volume 15, Number 2 (2015), 367.

⁸Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan: Geneologi Dan Ajaran Salafi...*

The contemporary Salafist movement in Indonesia itself originated from the desire of M. 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Baz, a disciple of Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, a prominent Saudi cleric, to his students in the *al-Jamaah al-Salafiyah al-Muhtasib* community to expand his influence outside the country of Saudi Arabia in 1980, one of which was to Indonesia⁹. This desire was then manifested in a collaboration with the Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (DDII) through *Rabithah 'Alam Islami* and the construction of the Arabic Language Teaching Institute (LPBA) in Jakarta. LPBA is an institution that is the forerunner of the Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic (LIPIA). This movement then culminated in the reform period. In its development, this movement was then near and identified with the problems of radicalism, extremism, and terrorism. An issue that later made this movement considered to have no role in the religious moderation movement.

The religious moderation movement or Islamic moderation or *Washatiyyah Islam* according to Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi is a view or attitude that always tries to take the middle position of two opposing and excessive attitudes so that one of the two attitudes in question does not dominate in one's mind and attitude¹⁰. The middle ground and balance are two important points of this concept of Islamic moderation. The middle way is defined as consistent practice to always find a middle ground in a difference that arises in every aspect of human life¹¹. As for balance, it means taking a balanced position in faith and tolerance¹².

⁹Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan: Geneologi Dan Ajaran Salafi...*

¹⁰Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, *Fiqh Alwasatīyah Al-Islāmīyah Wa-Altajdid: Ma'ālim Wa-Manārāt*, Cairo: Dar-Al-Syuruq, 2007, 56.

¹¹Ardiansyah, "Islam Wasatīyah Dalam Perspektif Hadis: Dari Konsep Menuju Aplikasi", *MUTAWATIR*, Volume 6, Number 2 (2018).

¹²M. Zaidi Abdad, "Analisis Dan Pemetaan Pemikiran Fikih Moderat Di Timur Tengah Dan Relasinya Dengan Gerakan Fikih Formalis", *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Volume 12, Number 1 (2011), 39-62.

The absence of the role of the Salafist movement in religious moderation can be seen in various studies that discuss radicalism, extremism, or terrorism. A plethora of research studies have discussed this theme, especially after the collapse of President Soeharto in 1998. The year in which the condition of internal and interfaith harmony in Indonesia was at a critical juncture. This condition was then recorded in studies that addressed violence in the name of religion that occurred in various regions with various motivations and conditions that surrounded it¹³. The outbreak of radicalism then encouraged the government to facilitate the establishment of Religious Communication Forums (FKUB) in various regions which were contained in the Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs number 9 of 2006. The establishment of these forums was followed by religious moderation movements, particularly those carried by the two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Since then, religious moderation movements have mushroomed in various corners of the country.

The definition, concept, and movement of Islamic moderation in Indonesia have then become the theme and focus of research that attracted researchers. Starting from research on the definition, principles, and concepts of moderate Islam¹⁴ to research on the various forms of religious

¹³J. Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Moluccan Islands", *Pacific Affairs*, Volume 75, Number 1 (2002), 57-85; Jajang Jahroni and Jamhari, *Gerakan Salafi Radikal Di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2004; H. Jubba, "Reproduksi Kekerasan", *Jurnal At-Ta'fikir*, Volume 4, Number 2 (2012); Zuly Qodir, *Radikalisme Agama Di Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2014; Alexander de Juan, Jan H. Pierskalla, and Johannes Vüllers, "The Pacifying Effects of Local Religious Institutions: An Analysis of Communal Violence in Indonesia", *Political Research Quarterly*, Volume 68, Number 2 (2015); Sumanto al-Qurtuby, *Religious Violence and Conciliation in Indonesia*, Routledge, 2016.

¹⁴Idham, *Moderasi Beragama dalam Masyarakat Islam*, Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019; Mohammad Deny Irawan, "Islam Wasatiyyah: Refleksi Antara Islam Modern dan Upaya Moderasi Islam", *TAJDID: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Volume 16, Number 2 (2018); Haslina Ibrahim, "The Principle of Wasatiyyah (Moderation) and the Social Concept of Islam: Countering Extremism in Religion," *AL-ITQAN: Journal Of*

moderation movements and the challenges that accompany them.¹⁵

The studies that address the Islamic moderate movement above give rise to a form of vacuum about the role of Salafists. Salafists themselves in various studies are considered to have the potential to be able to carry out religious moderation movements. One of them is based on research by Sunarwoto,¹⁶ which states that theology is not a decisive aspect of Salafist sectarianism, but identity, authority, and good citizens. The emergence of a good citizen behavior gave rise to the assumption that there was an opportunity for their role in caring for Indonesia or in bringing a moderate face of Islam to Indonesia. This opportunity will provide knowledge about the dynamics of puritanical Islamic groups, particularly Salafists—a group that has been positioned as perpetrators of acts of violence in the name of religion.

Based on the above background, the purposes of this article are to explain the role of The Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (DDII)

Islamic Sciences And Comparative Studies, Special Issue (2018); Iffaty Zamimah, “Moderatisme Islam Dalam Konteks Keindonesiaan,” *Jurnal Al-Fanar*, Volume 1, Number 1 (2018); Zainun Wafiqatun Niam, “Konsep Islam Wasathiyah Sebagai Wujud Islam Rahmatan Lil ‘alamin: Peran NU Dan Muhammadiyah Dalam Mewujudkan Islam Damai Di Indonesia,” *Palita: Journal of Social Religion Research*, Volume 4, Number 2 (2019); Muhammad Khairan Arif, “Moderasi Islam (Wasathiyah Islam) Perspektif Al-Qur’an, As-Sunnah Serta Pandangan Para Ulama Dan Fuqaha,” *Al-Risalah*, Volume 11, Number 1 (2020).

¹⁵Roni Tabroni, “Ma’had Al-Zaytun Indramayu Movement: A Historical Inquiry”, *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems*, Volume 12, Number 08 (2020); Amy L. Freedman, “Civil Society, Moderate Islam, and Politics in Indonesia and Malaysia”, *Journal of Civil Society*, Volume 5, Number 2 (2009); Nostalgawan Wahyudi, “Between Islam, Politics, and Democracy: The Political Ideology of Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)”, *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, Volume 5, Number 1 (2017); Zaimul Asroor, “Islam Transnasional vs Islam Moderat: Upaya NU dan MD Dalam Menyuarakan Islam Moderat Di Panggung Dunia”, *ATATURAS: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, Volume 6, Number 2 (2019); Wahyudi Akmaliah, “The Demise of Moderate Islam: New Media, Contestation, and Reclaiming Religious Authorities,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, Volume 10, Number 1 (2020); Hasse Jubba, Jaffary Awang, and Siti Aisyah Sungkilang, “The Challenges of Islamic Organizations in Promoting Moderation in Indonesia,” *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya*, Volume 6, Number 1 (2021).

¹⁶Sunarwoto, “Online Salafi Rivalries in Indonesia: Between Sectarianism and ‘Good’ Citizenship,” *Religion, State and Society*, Volume 49, Number 2 (2021).

and the Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic (LIPIA) in the dynamics of the Salafist movement in Jakarta, Indonesia, and to trace and to describe the dynamics and the religious moderation movements of the Salafist groups, particularly in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The role of DDII and LIPIA

Talking about the development of the contemporary Salafist movement in Indonesia, there are two organizations that play an important role in it: the Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (DDII) and the Institute for Study of Islam and Arabic (LIPIA). DDII was founded by Mohammad Natsir in 1967 with the purpose of organizing Islamic proselytizing as opposed to Christianization and secularization, including the development of Javanese philosophy (*Islam abangan, kejawen*).¹⁷ This organization is known for the role of its founder, M. Natsir, who was one of the prominent figures in the Indonesian independence movement. Natsir is known as a former prime minister and former leader of the Masjumi Party. In addition, Natsir is also known as vice president of the Karachi-based World Muslim Congress (Mutamar al-Alam al-Islami) in 1967 and a member of the Jiddah-based World Muslim League (Rabithah al-Alam al-Islami) in 1969. Through Natsir, DDII then established cooperation with *Rabithah al-Alam al-Islami*, an organization that receives funding from the Saudi Arabian government.

One form of collaboration between DDII and Rabithah is the opportunity to study in the Middle East. This can be seen when in the early 1970s, DDII opened its office in Riyadh to facilitate this. The leader of the office is Abdul Wahid, an alumnus of the Persis *pesantren* in Bangil, East

¹⁷R.W. Liddle, "Media Dakwah Scripturalism: One Form of Islamic Political Thought and Action in New Order Indonesia," In *Toward a New Paradigm: Recent Developments in Indonesia Islamic Thought*, edited by M.R. Woodward. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University Program for Southeast Asian Studies, 1996.

Java.¹⁸ In addition to academic cooperation, another form of cooperation is the provision of funds for Indonesians who want to become mujahideen in Afghanistan.

The important role of DDII in the development of Salafi can be seen in the movement of translation and distribution of Salafist thinker works and campus-based proselytizing activities. This is in line with the three targets of Natsir and DDII proselytizing activities; *pesantrons*, mosques, and university campuses.¹⁹ DDII started its campus-based proselytizing activities in 1974 under the name *Bina Masjid Kampus* (Nurture a Campus Mosque) and an important product of this activity is the Training for Islamic Propagation Warriors centered at the Salman Mosque of the Bandung Institute of Technology.

In 1978 *Bina Masjid Kampus* became popular because the Soeharto administration made a policy of burying deeply in campus political life. This then had an impact on becoming the center of the campus mosque for activists. A few years later, DDII began to introduce and distribute translations of books by Hasan al-Banna, Yusuf al-Qardawi, Sayyid Qutb, and Abu A'la Maududi. Intellectual development centered on campus mosques, the translation movement, and the availability of scholarships to the Middle East were some of the important factors in the recruitment and development of the Salafist movement in Indonesia in the 1980s.

In addition to DDII, an organization that has an important role in the development of Salafists is LIPIA, the relationship between DDII and LIPIA was seen at the time of the establishment of LIPIA. At that time, the DDII figure M. Natsir was one of the people who welcomed the instructor assigned by Al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud University to

¹⁸ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix," *Asia*, 2004.

¹⁹ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

LIPIA, namely Sheikh Abdullah bin Baz's student, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Abdullah al-Ammar.²⁰

LIPIA is an educational institution in Indonesia sponsored directly by Saudi Arabia and is a branch of Al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in Riyadh. The institute was founded in 1980 in Jakarta under the name of The Arabic Language Teaching Institute (LPBA) with its main instructor being Shaikh Abdul Aziz Abdullah al-Ammar, a disciple of the famous Salafist cleric, namely Sheikh Abdullah bin Baz.

At the beginning of its establishment, the institution was aimed at the development of Islamic science and the Arabic language. In its development LIPIA then had two main programs, namely Arabic preparation and higher education. All lectures are also carried out in Arabic with the majority of teachers coming from the Middle East. This then became the attraction of the Indonesian people in addition to scholarships in the form of free tuition fees, pocket money in accordance with Indonesian standards, and scholarships to continue studying up to the Ph.D. level in Riyadh.

This institution can be said to have received a good response from the Indonesian people. There are about 1000-2000 applicants annually with only 200 students admitted. By June 1998, LIPIA had graduated 3,726 students and in 2004 its graduates were almost close to 5000 students.²¹ Until 2005 the number of graduates of this institution had then reached 6598 students or about 200 people every year. A total of 87 graduates came from abroad, including Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Korea, and Singapore.²²

The relationship between LIPIA and the contemporary Salafist

²⁰ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

²¹Mimbar Ulama, "No.238," *Mimbar Ulama*, 1998.

²²Ahmad Sujai, "Pengaruh Paham Wahabi Di Indonesia: Studi Atas Pengaruh Paham Keagamaan Wahabi Terhadap Praktek Keagamaan Mahasiswa Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam Dan Arab (LIPIA) Jakarta," Tesis, Depok: Universitas Indonesia, 2008.

movement in Indonesia can be seen in the curriculum used, the Saudi standard curriculum, which is a combination of the Salafist curriculum and the specific orientation of its faculty staff.²³ Many of its teachers were Salafist scholars brought directly from Saudi Arabia.²⁴ In addition to being Salafist in character, LIPIA, according to Anthony Bubalo and Greg Fealy,²⁵ was also heavily influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. This can be seen from the background of the teacher. LIPIA's linkage to the Muslim Brotherhood was also echoed by Sidney Jones, who said that in the early 2000s, LIPIA was dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood.

The majority of the Muslim Brotherhood itself can actually be said to be Salafists. This is what Wiktoriwicz later called *Salafi politicians*.²⁶ The difference between pure Salafists and the Muslim Brotherhood itself can be seen in political activism. The Muslim Brotherhood's political activism is more open and accommodating to political pluralism and religious diversity. Pure Salafists, have a tendency to distance themselves from politics and are intolerant of religious practices that they consider to be full of superstition, heresy, and *khurafat*.

LIPIA's role in seeding the Salafi movement in Indonesia can be seen in the role of its alumni. Some of LIPIA's first alumni later became important and influential figures in the Salafist movement in Indonesia. Starting from Ja'far Umar Talib-Founder of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah* Forum and *Laskar Jihad*, Abdul Hakim Abdat-ulama hadith from Jakarta, Abdul Qadir Jawwaz-founder of *Minhaj as-Sunnah*, Farid Okbah-Al-Irsyad, Ainul Harits- Nida'ul Islam Surabaya, Abubakar M. Altway- As-Sofwah

²³Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah: Pengaruh Radikalisme Timur Tengah Di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Mizan Pustaka, 2007.

²⁴ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix," *Asia*, 2004,8.

²⁵Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah...*

²⁶Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Volume 29, Number 3 (2006), 208.

Foundation Jakarta, and Yusuf Utsman Baisa- Al-Irshad Tengan leader. They indict Salafist ideology through various means, both conventional and information technology trends. The chosen professions also vary from *dai* (on campuses), teachers, politicians, establishing book publishing, translators, and *pesantren* caregivers.

In the early 1980s or the year, the Salafist movement began to flourish, one of the important strategies that emerged was to increase the intensity of the translation of Salafist and Brotherhood texts from Arabic to Indonesian. This is a response to the large public interest since the 1980s for Islamic books.²⁷ These activities then peaked in the period of the 2000s. This is where the role of LIPIA alumni becomes important. Some LIPIA alumni later became translators. This role is then supported by the translation and distribution carried out by DDII. The number of Salafist-oriented publishers has also increased sharply with wide distribution including through large store networks such as Gunung Agung and Gramedia.²⁸

Another strategy that makes Salafist proselytizing more widespread is the maximum use of mass media technology and digital technology. This can be seen from the research of Muhammad Ali Chozin,²⁹ who stated that in the early millennium or the 2010s, the Salafi proselytizing strategy had entered the mass media and telecommunications, such as television, radio, websites, blogs, mailing lists, and social networks. The development of digital technology with the internet as the main vehicle can also be maximized by this group. Proselytizing materials are easy to obtain on the internet, downloaded, and then circulated through a network of mosques,

²⁷Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah: Pengaruh Radikalisme Timur Tengah Di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Mizan Pustaka, 2007.

²⁸Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah...*

²⁹Muhammad Ali Chozin, "Strategi Dakwah Salafi Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Dakwah*, Volume 14, Number 1 (2013).

student groups, Qur'anic study classes, and the like.³⁰ Its transmission and dissemination have become more resonant with the emergence of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

In addition to social media, *pesantren* is a medium that has a very significant influence in terms of the growth trend or effectiveness of the spread of Salafist ideology. According to Bubalo and Fealy,³¹ *pesantren* have a good mechanism in terms of spreading Salafist ideas through social activities, training of teachers, and local Salafist *dai*. In quantity, *pesantren* affiliated with Salafist ideology increased dramatically from those that could be counted fingers in the 1980s to numbering in the hundreds now.

Apart from being a place for the sowing of Salafist ideas, LIPIA is also a place for the emergence of the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood. Many of its alumni adhere to the thinking of the Muslim Brotherhood. Some of them later became leaders of the Social Justice Party (PKS), such as Anis Matta, Hidayat Nur Wahid, and Ahmad Heryawan. The strengthening of the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology triggered a reluctance and ban on pure Salafist groups from studying at LIPIA in the mid-1990s.³² This is due to the assumption that LIPIA was compromised excessively with the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, in particular about *hizbiyah* thought.³³

The notion that LIPIA compromised with the Ideas of the Brotherhood began when the concept of the *usroh* community developed in the early 1980s. This concept, which literally means family, is a political movement (*harakah*) developed by the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan al-Banna. This movement aims to transform Muslim society based on the construction of model communities, ranging from 10 to 15 people. This concept was later adopted by campus study groups and some self-

³⁰Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah...*

³¹Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah...*

³²Anthony Bubalo dan Greg Fealy, *Jejak Kafilah...*

³³ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

declared anti-government groups, such as the Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir groups. In LIPIA itself, the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood began to appear when some teachers took up the principles of the Brotherhood, and books by Muslim Brotherhood leaders began to be scattered in LIPIA libraries. The feud between these two Salafist groups culminated when pure Salafists began to urge supporters not to go to LIPIA in 1995-1996.³⁴

The dynamics and the religious moderation movements of Salafist groups in Jakarta

The role of DDII and LIPIA, especially in Jakarta, then led to the emergence of organizations or foundations with a Salafi perspective that became the estuary of the flow of aid funds. The grant came from *The Rabitah al-Alam al-Islami* (World Muslim League) and its organizational sibling, the *Haitaul Ighatsah* (International Islamic Relief Organisation (IIRO)), based in Jiddah. Among the organizations and foundations that later received financial assistance was the al-Sofwah Foundation.

Al-Sofwah Foundation is a foundation founded by several Indonesians, one of whom is Muhammad Yusuf Harun on November 25, 1992. The foundation was later supported by a Saudi named Muhammad Khalaf of Unaizah, Al-Qasim. Khalaf is a close friend of one of Saudi Arabia's greatest Salafist teachers, Sheikh Utsaimin. Khalaf's existence in Indonesia has not escaped the role of DDII. The contact between the two then led to Khalaf's meeting with Abu Bakr Muhammad Al-Altway, a LIPIA graduate. Altway then supported Khalaf's program to promote Salafism in Indonesia through donor agencies. At first, the name of this foundation was the al-Muntada Foundation. The name of an Islamic charity foundation established in 1985 in Britain.

³⁴ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

This foundation is then committed to science and proselytizing based on the *aqidah ahlussunnah wal jamaah* and the manhaj (path) of the *as-salaf as-salih* (predecessors of the good people).³⁵ The purpose of this foundation is to realize development and help each other in virtue and *taqwa* in order to achieve a proper birth and mental life for humans, especially in Islamic society in the broadest sense to achieve the blessings of Allah.³⁶ The implementation of these principles and goals is the existence of an attitude of hating fanaticism (groups and groups) that persecutes the *as-salaf as-salih* so that Muslims are divided into several groups. This desire for Islamic unity then sought to be realized by not being bigoted to one of the clerics.

There were three main programs of the Al-Sofwah Foundation at its inception: proselytizing, education, and solving social problems. Proselytizing activities are the main activities of this foundation. One of its activities was to recruit 100 preachers and fund them and their families to travel around Indonesia indicating the basics of Salafism.³⁷ In addition, this foundation also organizes *daurah tauhid shari'a* (training for Islamic knowledge) for teachers of tawhid science in various *pesantren* and institutions who want to make the book of tawhid as a curriculum at the institution.³⁸

The education program is a program based on distance learning or the Open Islamic Studies (KIT) program through the post and the Internet.³⁹ This non-face-to-face learning is based on consulting or learning with the instructor by fax, telephone, email, or regular post. This program, in 2004

³⁵Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami," <https://Alsofwa.Com/ProfilYayasan/TentangKami/>.

³⁶Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami", ...

³⁷ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

³⁸Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami", ...

³⁹Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami", ...

already had 2000 alumni and was able to establish a Ma'had Ali for high school graduates. An institution intended to train prospective preachers.⁴⁰ In addition to these activities, the al-Sofwah Foundation also has an important role in distributing translations of Saudi Salafist scholars' works. From its inception in 1992 until 2004, the foundation has distributed approximately 1 million free books throughout Indonesia.⁴¹

The activities of the early al-Sofwah Foundation can be categorized as pure Salafist movements. This can be seen from the proselytizing activities or programs they carry out. This ideology of Salafism was later transformed. Relations and cooperation with Islamic institutions and foundations began to be established, especially Islamic foundations that walked on the basis of *aqidah salaful ummah ahlussunnah wal jama'ah*.⁴² Obedience and relations with the people of the government also began to be initiated. The assessment of the policies of the government or the people of the government is based on what appears and treats them with a good attitude.⁴³ In addition, the foundation then chose to focus its activities on social and community actions, such as disaster response, ambulance services, and the provision of clean water and public facilities. This attitude indicates the existence of a change and transformation of ideologies and movements. Salafism not only became a single principle but was also accompanied by accommodating attitudes towards other Islamic foundations, and even the government and activities that focused on socio-social activities, as was the case with NU and Muhammadiyah.

These accommodating attitudes were then accompanied by the emergence of moderate attitudes promoted by the Al-Sofwah Foundation. The emergence of moderate Islamic attitudes is really not new to them.

⁴⁰ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

⁴¹Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami", ...

⁴²Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami",...

⁴³Badan Pelaksana Yayasan, n.d, "Tentang Kami",...

Abu Bakr Muhammad Al-Altwy explained that

Moderation is the attitude of each religion to respect others or tolerate. If moderation is defined as tolerance, then Islam has taught. Islam forbids insulting the religion of others. Prophet Muhammad SAW told us to treat religions outside of us well. This can be seen even in the conditions of war. We are forbidden to disturb the people who worship in their worship.

(Personal Communication with Abu Bakar Muhammad Al-Altway, 2022).

Moderate attitudes are attitudes that arise from an understanding of differences and diversity. Difference and diversity is one of the attitudes that the Al-Sofwah Foundation then seeks to carry. Abu Bakr Muhammad Al-Altwy explained that

Islam is diversity. There are four schools in Islam and all of them are recognized by *Ahlusunnah wal jama'ah*. *Washatiyah Islam* itself is the teaching of *Ahlusunnah wal jama'ah*. What is wrong is to assume all religions are equal and force a Muslim to say all religions are the same.

(Personal Communication with Abu Bakar Muhammad Al-Altway, 2022).

This moderate attitude then led to a religious moderation movement. One of them can be seen in their response to radicalism and extremism. Although it often intersects with jihadist Salafist figures, it does not make this foundation into jihadist Salafist activities. This can be seen from Al-Sofwah's response to extremist events that occurred in Jakarta. One of them is the Cimanggis Bombing, which was the event of the explosion of a house in Cimanggis in March, 2004. The house was used as a place of study by Aman Abdurrahman.

The connection between Aman Abdurrahman and the Al-Sofwah Foundation can be seen when Aman Abdurrahman became the imam

of the mosque at the foundation in June 2000. Aman's radical-leaning existence later became a point of objection from the al-Sofwah Foundation which asked him to resign in 2003. This cross-section then ended with the participation of dozens of foundation students in the study founded by Aman.⁴⁴ Al-Sofwa's rejection of the violent ideas brought by Aman was also corroborated by Abu Bakr Muhammad al-Altwy. Al-Altwy says that:

At first, the study of Ustaz Aman was scientific but later poisoned with hard ideas. One of them is to fictionalize the earlier scholars. This is what makes the Al-Sofwa Foundation opposed to Ustaz Aman. Ustaz Aman had tried to be invited to dialogue but to no avail. Therefore, the foundation made him resign. Even the foundation made an announcement in the wall magazine not to attend the recitation of Ustaz Aman.

(Personal Communication with Abu Bakar Muhammad Al-Altway, 2022).

In addition to the rejection of the ideas of radicalism and violence, the Al-Sofwah Foundation also spreads the ideas of moderation through the publication of books. There are two books published by this foundation that address it. First, a book titled *Islam Is Not a Religion of Violence (Rejecting Accusations of Terrorism Against Islam)* was published in 2011. Second, a book entitled *Terrorism in an Islamic Perspective* was published in 2011. The book contains the fatwas of scholars, among them Abdul Aziz bin Baz and Muhammad al-Utsamain, two Salafi figures. In the book, an example of tolerance is given by the prophet Muhammad and the companions of Prophet Muhammad. In addition, in the book, it is explained that the greatest jihad is the jihad against ourselves.

DDII's association with Salafist organizations is also evident in its closeness to Wahdah Islamiyah. The founder of DDII, M. Natsir is known for his efforts to protect and facilitate Islamic religious activities.

⁴⁴ICG (International Crisis Group), "Indonesian Backgrounder..."

One of them is by establishing an Islamic foundation called the Fathul Muin Foundation.⁴⁵ This foundation later became the forerunner of the establishment of the Wahdah Islamiyah organization. In addition, M. Natsir sent Mohammad Zaitun Rasmin, Muhammad Ikhwan Jalil, Yusran and Rahmat Abdurahman to Saudi Arabia to study with the help of the Muslim World League and the Middle East network. The existence of Mohammad Zaitun Rasmin and Muhammad Ikhwan Jalil in Wahdah Islamiyah became important in terms of ideological transformation.

Wahdah Islamiyah was originally an Islamic movement initiated by a Muhammadiyah cleric in South Sulawesi, Fathul Muin Daeng Magading (Muin). Muin is known as a critic of the Soeharto government's authoritarianism policy towards Muslims. In addition, Muin is also known for rejecting Muhammadiyah's decision that accept Pancasila as the basis of the state. This can be seen when he threatened to leave Indonesia if Muhammadiyah accepted Pancasila as a basic principle.⁴⁶ His puritanism and rigorous understanding of Islam arose from his relationship with Kahar Muzakar, DI/TII *amir* (chairman) in South Sulawesi. This relationship also led him to the principle that Muslims would be used as an instrument of elite power if they did not implement Islamic beliefs.⁴⁷ This principle then developed into a vision of integrating Islam into all aspects of life.

The integration of Islam into all aspects of life ushered in the early Wahdah Islamiyah (1988-1994) being identified as a movement that adopted transnational ideologies, such as the Muslim Brotherhood and

⁴⁵Andar Nubowo, "Indonesian Hybrid Salafism", In Leonard C. Sebastian, Syafiq Hasyim and Alexander R. Arianto (eds.), *Rising Islamic Conservatism In Indonesia*, London & New York: Routledge, 2020, 181-197.

⁴⁶S. Jurdi, *Wahdah Islamiyah Dan Gerakan Transnasional: Hegemoni, Kompromi Dan Kontestasi Gerakan Islam Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: Labsos UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2012; Syandri, Salahuddin, and M. Darwis Muhdina, "Pemurnian Ajaran Islam KH Fathul Muin Dg Maggading," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam*, Volume 5, Number 1 (2017), 89-110.

⁴⁷Andar Nubowo, "Indonesian Hybrid Salafism",...

Salafism in its methods of proselytizing strategy and education. This ideology later developed when Mohammad Zaitun Rasmin became the leader. Not just a Salafi-oriented movement, but later blended eclectically with Muhammadiyah dan NU-inspired social, humanitarian, and educational activism.⁴⁸ This ideological change broadly does not change their original goal of integrating Islam in all aspects of life by means of upholding *tauhid* (monotheism), living in accordance with *sunnah* (the Prophet's traditions), and building Islamic solidarity to achieve a good society.⁴⁹ This can be seen from the attitude taken by Wahdah Islamiyah led by Zaitun Rasmin who accepts Pancasila and democracy but within a framework of Islamic sharia.

This sharia framework is then combined with a moderate approach. Wahdah Islamiyah began to open up with various other Islamic organizations and began to actively participate in democracy. This can be seen when Zaitun Rasmin actively participates in various Islamic activities, especially those related to advocating the enactment of sharia such as the Indonesia Muslim Congress (Kongres Umat Islam Indonesia, KUII) on November 1998 in Jakarta and the establishment of a committee for the preparation of sharia's enactment (Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariah Islam Indonesia, KKPSI) on April 2001 in Makassar.

Wahdah Islamiyah also seeks to enter and be involved in national organizations, such as the Indonesian Council for Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) and the Indonesian Council of Youth Intellectuals and Ulama (Majelis Intellectual Ulama Muda Indonesia, MIUMI). In addition, the organization's involvement in the 212 Action for Defending Islam in 2016 made its popularity rise, among Muslims, political parties, and

⁴⁸Andar Nubowo, "Indonesian Hybrid Salafism"...

⁴⁹PP Wahdah Islamiyah, *Anggaran Dasar Dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga Wahdah Islamiyah*, Makassar: PP Wahdah Islamiyah, 2007.

some of the prominent elites of local and national bureaucracy.⁵⁰ This is what then helped Wahdah Islamiyah become an organization that at first became a local standard and then became national.⁵¹

As an organization that has a national reach, Wahdah Islamiyah then opened regional representatives throughout Indonesia. One of them is in DKI Jakarta Province. The presence of representatives in the region is estimated to have existed since the 2010s with a not-yet-strict organizational structure. The development of a more advanced organization then began in 2015. Since 2016 this organization has been chaired by Ilham Jaya bin Abdur Rauf, a graduate of Medina, with the number of members reaching 114 people in 2022. The Regional Representative Council (Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah, DPW) in the region oversees 7 DPDs; 6 in Jakarta and one in Depok. The DPW office is located in Pesantren Al-Hijaz Kelapa Dua, Depok.

As a regional organization, DPW Wahdah Islamiyah Jakarta has a policy that supports its central organization in Makassar. This then has implications also on the programs created. Although there are central programs or policies, each region has its own dynamics. According to Ilham Jaya, this is due to the flexibility of each regional or regional representative to regulate their respective programs. Not much different from the parent organization, the DPW Wahdah Islamiyah Jakarta programs also use a moderate approach. Ilham Jaya explained that:

Wahdah Islamiyah Jakarta region has programs with a moderate framework. Although it is not explicitly written, it flows naturally. As in the institution of regeneration of *dai*, both the curriculum system

⁵⁰IPAC (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict), "After Ahok: The Islamist Agenda in Indonesia," Jakarta, 2018.

⁵¹S. Jurdi, *Sejarah Wahdah Islamiyah: Sebuah Geliat Ormas Islam Di Era Transisi*, Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2017; M.S. Aldjufri, *Wahdah Islamiyah Di Gorontalo: Studi Tentang Corak Pemikiran Dan Respons Masyarakat*, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, 2011.

and teachers will naturally and automatically be conceptualized to stay away from radicalism and violence.

(Personal communication with Ilham Jaya, 2022)

Programs that reflect the religious moderation carried out by Wahdah Islamiyah can be seen from the involvement of this organization in promoting the concept of *Wasathiyah Islam*, a terminology of Islamic moderation (*Wasathiyah Islam*) used by the MUI, Muhammadiyah, and NU. This can be seen in the theme of the 3rd Congress of Wahdah Islamiyah in 2016, namely Realizing a Peaceful and Civilized Indonesia with Islamic Wasathiyah. The Wasathiyah Islamic theme is still used at the 4th Congress in 2021. The theme in the congress was Realizing Indonesia Jaya with Plenary Education in *Wasathiyah Islam*.

The moderation practice carried out by Wahdah Islamiyah does not only appear in muktamar pamphlets. Like its predecessors, NU and Muhammadiyah, Wahdah Islamiyah also tried to implement this movement in their activities or programs. This can be seen in the series of the 3rd Muktamar in 2016, DPD Wahdah Islamiyah Depok held a *Tabligh Akbar* with the title A Million Love for Indonesia.⁵² An activity that contains *mubaligh* lectures on the foundations and reasons why the Islamic ummah should love this country. This attitude has consequences for not causing damage and divisions in this country.

The programs of DPW Wahdah Islamiyah can be said to be an extension of their ideology and identity, whose nature already attaches to in their parent organization. In its constitution (AD/ART), this organization describes itself as an Islamic organization based on the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and *as-salaf as-salih* (pious Muslims and Muhammad companions) with the

⁵²Abu Faiz, n.d, "Wahdah Islamiyah, Sejuta Cinta Untuk Indonesia." <https://Muktamar.Wahdah.or.Id/Wahdah-Islamiyah-Sejuta-Cinta-Untuk-Indonesia/>.

method of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah (Sunni Islam).⁵³ This is not much different from the explanation from Ilham Jaya who said that

The main axis of discourse is the Qur'an and hadith. Scholars, be it Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Ibn Taimiyah, or whomever the clerics were the tools to understand the two main axes.

(Personal communication with Ilham Jaya, 2022).

Conclusion

The ideological transformation and movements of Al-Sofwah Foundation and Wahdah Islamiyah show that Salafist *manhaj*, whether religious views or daily practices will not always be one-faced or monolithic. In addition to showing the development of a movement, it also reflects the adaptation of various movements or groups identified with the Salafi. Adaptation is needed in relation to the sustainability of the organization or movement. In addition, cities present different challenges, in relation to mobility and technological challenges. This then requires an organization to adapt, either in terms of strategy, method, or proselytizing approach.

Al-Sofwah Foundation adapted and developed from an institution closely related to Salafist proselytizing to an institution that is accommodating to cooperation with other parties, government policies, and technological developments. In addition, the choice to focus on socio-civic activities makes this foundation try to follow in the footsteps of major Islamic organizations that have existed in Indonesia, such as NU and Muhammadiyah. The ideas of moderation spread by NU and Muhammadiyah were also later adopted as one of the choices of activities carried out by this foundation.

Not many different things also happened to Wahdah Islamiyah, both in Jakarta and their parent organization in Makassar. Wahdah Islamiyah

⁵³PP Wahdah Islamiyah, *Anggaran Dasar...*

at the beginning of its emergence was known as one of the movements that strongly rejected Pancasila. Salafist ideas manifest in the vision of an organization that seeks to integrate Islamic values into all aspects of life. These Salafist ideas then developed along with the existence of Zaitun Rasmin as the leader. Ideas of moderation, love of the motherland, and democracy began to enter and be implemented.

Although Salafist ideas have developed and mixed with other ideologies, the basic ideas are not necessarily abandoned. In the case of the Al-Sofwah Foundation, the Salafi idea can be seen in the principles of the organization. Wahdah Islamiyah's adaptation also did not abandon the idea of Salafism. This can be seen from Wahdah Islamiyah's desire to unite Islam, the Republic of Indonesia with Sharia, and *Washatiyah* democracy.

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