

THE MAKING OF SALAFI-BASED ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The Salafi manhaj (method) is emerging as a new form of Islamic education, in addition to the existing pesantren (Islamic boarding school) and madrasah (Islamic school) education systems, both of which have long histories in Indonesia. The presence of these schools reflects Salafi efforts to achieve “purification of Islam” through adherence to the idea of returning to the ‘authentic Islam’ as practiced by the early generations of Muslim. Salafi manhaj schools are also part of a transnational Islamic movement that has purposely spread ideas and movements from the Middle East around the world, including to Indonesia. Over time, these schools have developed into two models: Integrated Islamic Schools and Salafi manhaj pesantrens. Both aim to instill Islamic tenets that comply with the Salafi manhaj and disseminate and incorporate such tenets in the religious practices of Indonesian Muslims, although the Integrated Islamic Schools are more inclusive and teach aspects of the conventional state curriculum too. This article challenges previous findings that the influence of Salafi education has faded in Indonesia as efforts to combat Islamist terrorism globally have increased, arguing that Salafi educators have been strategic and effective in promoting their approach to religious education. [Manhaj Salafi merupakan model pendidikan Islam yang baru muncul melengkapi keberadaan model lama, pendidikan pesantren dan madrasah yang keduanya mempunyai sejarah panjang di Indonesia. Kebadiran sekolah Salafi mencerminkan usaha untuk ‘pemurnian Islam’ melalui ketaatan pada

konsep mengembalikan 'Islam autentik' yang dipraktikkan oleh generasi awal muslim. Sekolah manhaj Salafi merupakan bagian dari gerakan Islam transnasional yang bertujuan menyebarkan ide dan gerakan asal Timur Tengah ke seluruh dunia, termasuk Indonesia. Sejaht ini mereka mengembangkan dua model yaitu sekolah Islam terpadu dan pesantren manhaj salafi. Keduanya menerapkan prinsip Islam yang selaras dengan manhaj Salafi serta menyebarluaskan prinsip tersebut dalam praktik keagamaan muslim di Indonesia, meski sekolah Islam terpadu tersebut juga lebih inklusif dan menerapkan kurikulum standar nasional. Artikel ini menantang tesis sebelumnya yang menyatakan bahwa pengaruh pendidikan Salafi di Indonesia luntur oleh peningkatan usaha memerangi teroris global. Namun pada kenyataannya adalah pendidik Salafi mempunyai strategi yang efektif dalam mempromosikan pendekatannya dalam pendidikan keagamaan.]

Keywords: Salafi Manhaj, Integrated Islamic School, Salafi Manhaj Pesantren, Piety Movement, Indonesian Muslims

A. Introduction

Salafi *manhaj* Islamic schools are a form of Islamic education that is now fast-growing in Indonesia. They offer an education system that aims at disseminating the tenets of Salafism, a form of Islamic religious practice that calls for imitation of the early Muslim generations by developing text-based religious ideation (pursuing literal interpretation of the religious scripts). Salafi *manhaj* schools developed in Indonesia alongside Islamic revivalism among middle-class Muslims, which began in the 1980s when the New Order government tentatively opened up wider social-political space Muslims.¹ Muslim middle class, particularly 'abangan' Muslims (a term introduced by Clifford Geertz referring to nominal Muslim whose practice syncretized Islam and local animism beliefs), became a key potential market for this education system.²

¹ Martin Van Bruinessen (ed.), *Contemporary Development in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the 'Conservative Turn'* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013), p. 5.

² Chris Chaplin, "Communal Salafi learning and Islamic selfhood: Examining religious boundaries through ethnographic encounters in Indonesia", *Ethnography*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2020), pp. 113–32; Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Salafi Madrasas of Indonesia", in *The Madrasa in Asia*, ed. by Farish A. Noor, Yoginder Sikand, and Martin van

As part of a wider transnational Islamic movement, Salafi *manhaj* schools in Indonesia developed thoughts and movements rooted in the Middle East. *Kyai* and *ulama'*, who had previously enjoyed a virtual monopoly as the key source of transmission and production of religious knowledge in Indonesia, increasingly found they had to share authority with alumni of Middle-Eastern universities who brought home the knowledge and hierarchical religious structures they had learned at their campuses.³

This new religious purification movement was fluid, and it developed along with the constantly changing strategies and different tactics,⁴ and continues to do so, but there are now at least three major Salafi groups. The first seeks to maintain purity and avoid political engagement. In other words, it is apolitical and emphasizes methods of proselytization (*da'wa*) that are non-violent, purifying, and education-oriented. The second group consists of political or *haraki* Salafi, who are oriented towards politics or power and focus on implementing Salafi doctrine through political engagement. The group considers the involvement in politics as crucial to ensure the enactment of Allah's law. The third group, the *jibadi* Salafi, consider that creating an Islamic power by force, instead of compromising with the establishment, is most appropriate course in the current situation and conditions.⁵

Bruinessen (Amsterdam University Press, 2008), pp. 247–74; Jaddon Park and Sarfaroz Niyozov, “Madrasa Education in South Asia and Southeast Asia: Current Issues and Debates”, *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, vol. 28, no. 4 (2008), pp. 323–51; Toto Suharto, “Transnational Islamic Education in Indonesia: An Ideological Perspective”, *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2018), pp. 101–22.

³ Hatsuki Aishima, “Review of Masooda Bano and Keiko Sakurai (eds.) Shaping Global Islamic Discourses: The Role of al-Azhar, al-Medina and al-Mustafa (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP 2015)”, *Die Welt des Islams*, vol. 58, no. 4 (2018), pp. 510–1; Alexander R. Arifianto, “Rising Islamism and the Struggle for Islamic Authority in Post-Reformasi Indonesia”, *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2020), pp. 37–50.

⁴ Asef Bayat, “Islamism and Social Movement Theory”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 6 (2005), pp. 891–908; Jamhari Jamhari, “Mapping Radical Islam in Indonesia”, *Studia Islamika*, vol. 10, no. 3 (2003); Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 2003).

⁵ Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism*, p. 208.

The approaches of Salafi movements in schooling also has different models: the Salafi *pesantren* or *tabfidz*, which focuses only on teaching the Salafi *manhaj* version of Islam and trains student to memorize the al-Qur'an; the *madrassa* (*madrrasah*), which combines religious and general (conventional) subjects; and the Integrated Islamic School, which offers a curriculum integrating general (conventional) and religious subjects, as well as Qur'anic memorization. The aim here is to produce students who are proficient in general subjects, science, and technology. This article discusses how Salafi-*manhaj* schools survive despite the poor image of Salafi schools that have a connection with Islamist jihadists.⁶ This article argues that the Salafi schools survive by emphasizing new religious practices by constructing particular lifestyles that consider specific religious penchants and preferences.⁷ Salafi Schools also have successfully recruited celebrities who help promote them through conventional and social media.

B. The Ideological Foundation of Salafi Movement

Salafism is an international movement that attempts to return to the era considered the 'golden period of Islam', developed by the Prophet and the two generations that followed him. Specifically, term '*Salafi*' refers to a group that follows religious methods and practices implemented by the companions of the Prophet (*sahabat*), the followers of the companions (*tâbi'în*), and the followers of the followers of the companions (*tâbi'it tabi'în*) - together considered the early generations of Muslims. The exemplary behaviors set by the *salaf al shalih* (the pious followers of the Prophet) are considered pious methods or practices of religion that reflect authentic Islamic teaching.⁸ They are a form of ideal piety regarded as an example and reference for the subsequent Muslim

⁶ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia* (Ithaca, N.Y: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2006); Jamhari, "New Trend of Islamic Education in Indonesia", *Studia Islamika*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2009).

⁷ Oki Setiana Dewi, "Pengajian Selebritas Hijrah Kelas Menengah Muslim (2000-2019): Respons atas Dakwah Salafi dan Jamaah Tabligh", Ph.D Dissertation (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2020); Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2011).

⁸ Yazid bin Abdul Qadir Jawas, *Mulia dengan Manhaj Salaf* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka At-Taqwa, 2009).

generations. The Salafi movement appeals to the “classical texts,” the Qur’an and Sunnah (sayings and conducts of the Prophet Muhammad), as well as the traditions of the companions and subsequent generations. As an Islamic movement, Salafism is often intolerant, rigid, and reactionary or anti-reform.⁹

The root of Salafi theology can be traced back to the formation of the *Fiqh Madzhab*s (schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence) in the 10th century Hijra. Muslim scholars (*‘ulama’*) of this period were divided into two major groups, namely the *abl al-hadith* (*hadith* scholars) and *abl al-ra’y* (logic/reasoning scholars).¹⁰ The first group defended the authority of religious texts for every human activity, while the *abl al- ra’y* tended to resort to logical ideas or reasoning to approach Islamic laws. Both groups were the primary schools of thought that flourished during the *tabi’in* era and were considered the bridge between the *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) of the Prophet’s companions’ period and that of the time of Madzhab of Imams.

The *abl al-hadith* group, developed by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 856 CE), became one of the four *madbhabs* of Sunni tradition and was part of the *tabi’ al-tabi’in ulama*. A student of Imam Shafi’i (d. 820 CE), Ibn Hanbal’s approach tended to be textualist, but not absolute. He placed revelation (*wahy*) above reason and explained that texts must comply with Arabic grammar, *hadith*, and the understanding of the *salaf al-salib* on the basis of the following principles: (1) if the answer to a question is found in a text, the textual interpretation of the text is fully adequate; (2) if the answer is found in a jurisprudence (legal opinion) expressed by a Prophet’s companion, then it is considered as definite; (3) if the answer is found in the companions’ speeches, then answers that are closest to the Qur’an and Sunna are the most relevant; and (4) if the answers are only found in a weak narrative with questionable authenticity, it is still preferred than an analogy. Finally, if the answer is not found in the text,

⁹ Robert G. Rabil, *Salafism in Lebanon: From Apoliticism to Transnational Jihadism* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014).

¹⁰ Christopher Melchert, “The Musnad of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: How It Was Composed and What Distinguishes It from the Six Books”, *Der Islam: Journal of the History and Culture of the Middle East*, vol. 82, no. 1 (2005), pp. 32–51.

strict analogy should only be used under exceptional circumstances.¹¹ Ibn Hanbal uncompromisingly refused the *ahl al ra'yi*'s perspective that uses reason and *qiyas* (analogy) to understand the Qur'an. His attempt to maintain Islam's purity by preserving the *hadiths*' chain of narrative can be found in his *Musnad*, which contained 40,000 *hadiths*, of which 30,000 were without any repetition.¹²

The process of crystallization of the theological and social-political foundations of *ahl al-hadith* and *ahl al-sunna* was developed by Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328 CE) and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792 CE). Ibn Taymiyyah was a unique figure, as he always adhered to non-mainstream Islamic interpretations. His attempts to purify the Islamic teachings were conducted by reference to the *aqidah* (creed), namely by: (1) returning to the authentic faith and practices of the *salaf as-shalib*; (2) upholding the *tawhid*, or specifically the *tawhid al-rububiyah* (glorifying the oneness of God in term of God's deeds), *tawhid al-ulubiyah* (glorifying the oneness of God through our behavior), and *tawhid al-asma wal-sifa* (glorifying the oneness of God through His noble names and attributes); (3) strengthening people's faith in the Islamic pillars, except when it comes to idolatry (*shirk*) behavior; (4) putting revelation over reason and refuses the metaphoric interpretation; (5) following the *madhhab* that contains heresy or wrongful innovation (*bid'ah*); and (6) obeying the ruler as an aspect of obedience to God, unless the ruler violates His commands. Ibn Taymiyyah's interest in theology was related to the purification of Islamic creed to rid it of what he considered heresy, and maintenance of the unity of the *ummah* (Muslim community).

Ibn Taymiyyah released ten *fatwas* in 10 cases of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) of *furu'iyah* (contested opinions). Two of his books, *Naqd al-Mantiq* and *al-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyyin* were his "ultimate weapons" that proved to be effective in eroding the tradition of logical reasoning among Muslims. While discrediting the philosophers and rationalists, Ibn Taymiyyah called for Muslims to return to the Qur'an and Sunnah in ways associated with the early generations of Islam. In his thinking, authentic Islamic authority was not yet established. When Mongols

¹¹ Henri Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

¹² Melchert, "The Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal", p. 37.

conquered the Islamic world, ibn Taymiyyah declared them disbelievers/infidels (*kaffir*) for their reluctance in applying the Islamic principles and laws (even though they eventually converted to Islam).¹³ According to ibn Taymiyyah, anyone who obeyed and complied with the Mongol infidel rulers had committed apostasy, that is, they had abandoned Islam (*murtad*). Such apostates may claim to be Muslim but their collaboration meant they rejected Islamic law or only superficially accepted Islam. Even if these people performed prayers (*salah*) and fasting, they remained apostates. Moreover, apostates deserved more severe punishments than those who had been infidels since the beginning, and their punishment should be death.

In the 18th century, Abd al-Wahhab, an Ulama in Saudi Arabia, revived the movement of returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah. The social and political situation was then dominated by anarchy, violence, conflicts, the flourishing of religious practices that deviated from the orthodox Sunni Islamic traditions, and rampant practices of animism, marked by cults of holy saints and other dead people. Al-Wahhab's attempts at reform aimed to unite the community and purify the holy land of illegal religious innovation through the purification of creed (*aqidah*). His core doctrine was the purification of Islamic teachings. The Muslim community was considered to be in a lost and deviant state, trapped in ignorance (*jahiliyyah*). On this view, the only way to achieve salvation and revive past glory was by reaffirming absolute monotheism (*tawhid*) and returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah.¹⁴ Unlike ibn Hanbal and ibn Taymiyyah, Abd al-Wahhab said that anyone who did not follow his account of the *tawhid* (oneness of God) doctrine was an infidel or apostate. Hence it was justified to wage *jihad* (holy war) against them. His teachings later became known as Wahabism.

Wahhabism focuses on the theological tenets of *tawhid* (oneness of God), thus creating a divided world: a world of faithful and loyal Muslims represented by the supporters of *tawhid* vs. the world of *mushrik* (polytheists) and disbelievers/infidels. On this basis, Abd al-Wahhab launched campaigns against Shia, *tasawwuf* (mysticism) and all others he considered polytheists, while at the same time prohibiting any further

¹³ Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism*, p. 167.

¹⁴ Rabil, *Salafism in Lebanon*, p. 12.

‘wrongful innovations’. He destroyed the Prophet’s companions’ tombs and Shia holy sites, banning widespread practices and beliefs and accusing their practitioners of polytheists and disbelievers. He then collaborated with Muhammad ibn Saud (d. 1765 CE) to establish the Saud dynasty. Initially, the Saudis acted as political and military arms of the Wahhabis but the campaign to forcibly impose the Wahhabi creed was long and arduous.¹⁵ Nevertheless, in 1932, Arabia was conquered and became a Saudi state, with Wahhabism as its religious identity. Since then, the government of Saudi Arabia has been the guardian of Wahhabism, which, in turn, provides political-religious legitimacy for the Saudi royal family.

C. The Development of Salafi *Manhaj*

In the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, a disproportionate imbalance in cultural, military, and political power between the Muslim and the Western worlds led to the emergence of Muslim reformers, including Egypt’s Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1897) Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905 C.E.), Allah al-Fasi, (d. 1974 C.E.) in Morocco, Abdel Hamdi bin Badis (d. 1940 C.E.) in Algeria, Abelazid al-Tha’labi (d. 1944 C.E.) in Tunisia, and both Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898 CE) and Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938 C.E.) in the Indian Sub-continent. These reformers attempted to create a synthesis between Islam and modern Western thought, affirming the importance of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), interpreting Islam from a modern perspective, and justifying educational, legal, and social reforms to revive the Muslim community from conservativeness and backwardness. The impact of these reforms included the emergence of secularism and liberalism in the Muslim world. Abduh’s students became the pioneers of secular nationalist movements, e.g., Saad Zaghlul (the founder of the Wafd Party—an influential nationalist secular party in Egypt after World War 1), Thaha Husain, and Fira’at Tahtawi (the initiators of modern Egypt), and Ali Abd al-Raziq (the creator of a secular government system for a Muslim society).¹⁶

¹⁵ Badrus Samsul Fata, “Kontestasi atas Teologi Politik Wahhabisme”, Ph.D Dissertation (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2021).

¹⁶ Derek Hopwood, *Egypt 1945-1990: Politics and Society* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1991).

During this time of political, economic, and social turmoil, Rasyid Ridha (d. 1935 C.E.), another of Abduh's students, extended the reach of the Wahhabi reform movement by reintroducing ibn Hanbal and ibn Taymiyyah in Egypt, openly expressed his sympathy to the Wahhabi Saud dynasty of Saudi Arabia. Ridha's stance paved the way for Hasan al-Banna (d. 1949 C.E.) to found Ikhwanul Muslimin (IM) in Egypt.¹⁷ The IM congregation afterward fell into several factions, including Jamaat-e-Islami (JI, established by Abu al-'Ala al-Maududi (d. 1949 C.E.) in Pakistan), Hizbut Tahrir (HT, established by Taqiuddin al-Nahbani), Hamas (established by Syaikh Ahmad Yasin in Palestine), Jihad Islam, and Jamaat al-Takfir. IM also inspired the emergence of other groups such as Hizbullah in Lebanon and FIS (Front Islamique du Salut) in Algeria.¹⁸

The IM Congregation was established in 1928 by Hassan Al-Banna, a schoolteacher in Ismailia, in north-eastern Egypt, as a social organization, which, in religious terms, was construed as “a community that lives for religious and moral reform to [spread] the message of Islam”.¹⁹ This focus came about from al-Banna's conclusion that Egypt's problems were rooted in moral decadence that became more severe over time and led to declining respect for tradition and religion. Al-Banna said that “Egypt is witnessing widening enthusiasm toward Western secular culture in its middle and upper classes”,²⁰ and he argued that the ongoing British occupation and foreign domination of the country's economy had made Egypt's independence meaningless. In Ismailia, this was symbolized by the glamorous and obtrusive mansions of foreigners that stood in stark contrast to local workers' “dreadful” housing. In 1929, al-Banna observed how the Egyptians practiced a “corrupted Islamic belief” and that they were shrouded by “hesitation and confusion, as well as being

¹⁷ Khalil al-Anani, “The Power of the Jama'at: The Role of Hasan Al-Banna in Constructing the Muslim Brotherhood's Collective Identity”, *Sociology of Islam*, vol. 1, nos. 1–2 (2013), pp. 41–63.

¹⁸ Jarret Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

¹⁹ Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965); Edward Mortimer, *Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam* (New York: Random House, 1982), p. 252.

²⁰ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 215.

tempted toward apostasy.”²¹

Al-Banna’s successor, Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966), advanced the doctrine that the existing political system was a religious justification for using violence to achieve an Islamic transformation. *Ma’alim fi al-Thariq*, Qutb’s magnum opus, became the classical reference for Islamists worldwide, providing the foundation for an ideological commitment to the notion that jihad (struggle) to establish an Islamic state is lawful.²² Sayyid Qutb as an Islamic thinker, leader and activist had a tremendous influence on contemporary jihadist movements. Extremist Islamic groups in Egypt in the 1970s and 1980s that adopted Qutb’s radical thought included al-Jihad (or Egyptian Islamic Jihad which allied with al-Qaeda) and Takfir wal Hijra (popular name of Jama’at al-Islami an extremist branch of Ikhwanul Muslimin), had applied the concept of modern *jabiliyya* (an ignorance government which does not apply Islamic teachings), attributed to Muslim rulers who refused to implement the *sharia*, and the idea that there was a need to transform “idol worshiper” society into an Islamic one. Qutb’s concept of *jabiliyya* was considered radical since it also attacked Muslim rulers and societies who were more compliant with human-made norms, rules, and lifestyles, which, in Qutb’s view, contradicted Allah’s laws.²³

Qutb’s ideas were further sharpened into more extreme action by his follower, Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj (d. 1982 C.E.). He argued that the Muslim community was in grave error if it ignored the call of duty for *jihad*, including *jihad* against disbelievers and the hypocrite Muslim rulers who stood against Allah’s laws. He called for the Muslim community to establish Islamic dominion on earth to fully implement Islamic *sharia*. He argued that if such Islamic dominion requires, or could only be achieved by, force (war), then it became mandatory for Muslims to wage war for that purpose.²⁴

Hizbut Tahrir (HT) was established in al-Quds, Palestine, by

²¹ Christina Phelps Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution: the Role of Muslim Brotherhood, 1928-1954* (The Hague: Published for the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford, Calif., by Mouton, 1964), p. 252.

²² Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones: Ma’alim fi al-Thariq*, ed. by A.B. al-Mehri (Birmingham: Maktabah Booksellers and Publishers, 2006), p. 81.

²³ Gilles Kepel, *Roots of Radical Islam* (London: Al Saqi, 2005).

²⁴ Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan Pub Co, 1986).

Taqiyuddin an-Nabhani in 1952 but has strong influence in the Islamic world today. HT is a strong proponent of the establishment of a world Islamic caliphate (*khilafah Islamiyyah*). To achieve this aspiration, HT developed a three-step struggle (*marhalah*): building and preparing the cadres (*marhalah at-tatsqif*), engaging with the community (*marhalah tafaul maa al-Ummah*), and taking power (*marhalah istilaam al-hukm*). Since its establishment, HT has proclaimed itself as an Islamic political party based on transnationalism. This claim is built on its ideal of uniting the entire world's political structure under a single political system: the Islamic caliphate. This has become a core principle among its members. HT has proliferated over the past few decades and has established networks in more than 40 countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan), Southeast Asia (Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia), and even in secular countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and Australia, and certainly in the Middle Eastern region and some former Soviet countries.²⁵ Although it tends to enjoy more influence in rural areas than in cities, Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni have noted that it has attracted many people from educated urban classes in some countries, including academics, professionals, and university students.²⁶

The majority of HT's proponents promote Islamic purification through the movement to return to Qur'an and hadith, using a more literalist and puritanical approach.²⁷ The Salafi-Wahhabi movement, Islamic modernism, al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, and Hizbut Tahrir all attempt to strengthen orthodoxy and support purification by rejecting innovation in religion (*bid'ah*) and superstition (*khurafat*). The Salafi-Wahhabi's target is to "Islamize" Muslims; because practitioners of innovation among Muslims are not considered Muslim, they therefore still have to be Islamized. The target of Islamic modernism is a little different: to combat myths (*takbayyul*), innovation (*bid'ah*), and superstition

²⁵ M. Imdadun Rahmat, *Arus Baru Islam Radikal: Transmisi Revivalisme Islam Timur Tengah ke Indonesia* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2005).

²⁶ Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni (eds.), *Gerakan Salafi Radikal di Indonesia* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2004).

²⁷ Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis Or Revolutionaries?: On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism", in *Global Salafism* (London: Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2009).

(*keburafat*) so that the Muslim community can progress by emulating Western development, but on its own terms. IM's target is to liberate the community from innovative religious practices to establish an Islamic community and Islamic state. Nation-states are tolerated but they must be Islamized through *sharia* regulations and policies. HT's target is a total Islamic purification in religion and politics by returning to the practice of caliphate under the guidance of prophethood (*Khilafah 'ala minhaj al-nubuwwah*) and by rejecting the concept of the nation-state that emanated from Western countries.

D. Salafi Movement in Indonesia

As a transnational Islamic movement, Salafism has benefited from the evolution of global civil society, where ideas and values are disseminated across borders using communication technology.²⁸ Transnational religious movements have been able to achieve significant progress due to the ease of interpersonal and inter-group communications. This helps them disseminate messages and connect to groups that share the same ideas across borders, enabling ideas to be spread and funds dispersed more easily than ever before.²⁹ The Internet has prompted communication, exchange of ideas, and publication, promoting transnational understanding.³⁰ However, despite this globalization, transnational Islamic ideologies are still usually construed as thought and movements rooted in the Middle East.

In Indonesia, the transnational Islamic movement began to gain a foothold due to the activities of the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII/Indonesian Islamic Proselytization Board), an Islamic organization established by Natsir³¹ in the 1970s, that actively translated

²⁸ Quinton Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Indiana University Press, 2004).

²⁹ Saifudin Asrori, "Mengikuti Panggilan Jihad; Argumentasi Radikalisme dan Ekstremisme di Indonesia", *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2019).

³⁰ Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Religious Transnationalism", in *Religion in Global Civil Society*, ed. by Mark Juergensmeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Kepel, *Roots of Radical Islam*.

³¹ Mohammad Natsir was a prominent Muslim intellectual and politician, He was the fifth Indonesian Prime Minister. He found Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII) to be a dakwah (Islamic proselytizing) center that trains people to teach Islam

the works of Middle Eastern Muslim thinkers.³² DDII was the first Islamic organization actively sending Indonesian Muslim students to pursue higher education in universities in the Middle East, such as the University of Ibn Saud, the University of Riyadh, the Islamic University of Madinah al-Munawwarah, and the University of Al-Azhar.³³ According to Abaza's study of Indonesian Muslim students in Egypt from the 1970s to 1980s, they absorbed extremist Islamic thoughts, as can be seen from their reading, which focused on the work of prominent IM and HT thinkers.³⁴ By translating their works, the returned students began to disseminate extremist transnational ideologies originating from the Middle East. In this way, DDII became a catalyst for Islamic revivalism. Schools such as LIPIA (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab/Indonesian-Saudi Institute of Islamic and Arabic Studies) produce puritan-orthodox Muslims, the Bina Masjid Kampus (Campus Mosque Program) produces puritan and scientific Muslims.³⁵ In contrast, Middle East scholarship programs produce a puritan-political *tarbiya* (an Islamic intensive education method) movement.

Like IM, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) targeted universities - mainly through campus mosques located within the university compound - and attracted Muslim intellectuals, particularly university students, as followers.³⁶ Unsurprisingly, the rise of HTI in Indonesia in 1982 and 1983, led by M. Mustofa and Abdurrahman al-Baghdadi,³⁷ took place mostly in

all over Indonesia.

³² ICG, *Indonesia Background: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix*, ICG Asia Report, no. 83 (International Crisis Group, 2004).

³³ Aay Muhammad Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Ideologi dan Praksis Politik Kaum Muda Muslim Indonesia Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2004); Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008).

³⁴ Mona Abaza, *Changing Images of Three Generations of Azharites in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993).

³⁵ ICG Report No 83, *Indonesia Backgrounds: Why Salafism and Terrorism mostly Don't Mix*, p. 6-8.

³⁶ Jajang Jahroni and Jamhari, *Gerakan Salafi Radikal di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2004).

³⁷ M. Imdadun M. Imdadun Rahmat, *Arus Baru Islam Radikal, Transmisi Revivalisme Islam Timur Tengah Ke Indonesia* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2005).

campuses, for example, through the al-Ghifari Mosque at IPB (Institute Pertanian Bogor/Bogor Agriculture Institute) University, Bogor. HTI uses *halaqah* (small learning groups) as its primary educational method, scrutinizing books by Syekh Taqiyuddin an-Nabhani, the supreme leader of HT, and other prominent HTI figures. HTI formed a publishing division, currently known as HTI Press, and its team of translators, including Umar Faruq, Yahya A.R., and others have translated dozens of works by HT leaders, including 22 by an-Nabhani. In addition to being the primary reference for Islamic movement activists concentrated in campus mosques, the translated books also contributed significantly to the transmission of transnational ideology among Muslim students on campus and wider Muslim society.

Through weekly discussions, HTI gradually gained recognition from the general public, particularly Muslim university students who had specific interests in the study of Islam. HTI has promoted an Islamic caliphate and taken an intense stand against the West, particularly the US, which is considered the new hegemon and colonizer of the Islamic world, a key reason why the organization is considered a representation of radical Islam.³⁸ HTI also believes that it is viable for Islamic *sharia* to be implemented as a substitute for the current Indonesian legal system, which it sees as the successor of Indonesia's oppressive colonial laws. In addition, HTI ceaselessly campaigns on the slogan "Save Indonesia with *Sharia*" (*Selamatkan Indonesia dengan Syariah*), believing that Islam is the only solution to solve various crises facing the country, that is, the fundamental and integral solution to address the crises is the establishment of a society based on Islamic law. Because HTI wanted to an Islamic State in Indonesian (an Islamic Caliphate), in 2017 the Indonesian Government banned HTI through Indonesian Government Regulation in lieu of Legislation.³⁹

HTI was one of a number of religious movements that gained political momentum after Soeharto's fall in 1998. Other Islamic organizations that emerged around that time included *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI/Islamic Defenders Front) in 1998, *Laskar Jihad* in 1999, *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* in 2000, and the political party *Partai Keadilan* (Justice

³⁸ Jahroni and Jamhari, *Gerakan Salafi Radikal di Indonesia*.

³⁹ Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang Undang (PERPU) No 2, 2017.

Party) in 1998 (which later became Partai Keadilan Sejahtera: PKS/Justice and Prosperous Party).⁴⁰ Besides supporting the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia, these organizations have also been involved in increasing religious violence, particularly between Muslims and Christians, through mobilization of Islamic fighters in conflict areas. Moreover, PKS became a political channel for young Muslim activists on university campuses and served as a political vehicle for proponents of Islamic revivalism.⁴¹

In addition to a growing number of educated *santri* (Islamic students), the New Order regime also witnessed the development of “*usra*” (small circles), which in the 1980s transformed into the “*tarbiyyah* movement” (from Arabic *tarbiyyah*: education). This campus-based Islamic movement aims to create pious Muslim cadres with unwavering loyalty and a scripturalist stance toward Islamic teachings. The *tarbiyyah* movement grew quickly in reputable campuses such as Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB/Bandung Institute of Technology) at its Salman Mosque, Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM/Gajah Mada University) at its Salahuddin Mosque, Universitas Indonesia (UI/University of Indonesia) at its Arif Rahman Hakim Mosque, Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB/Bogor Institute of Agriculture) at its Al-Huriyyah Mosque, Institut Teknologi Surabaya (ITS/Surabaya Institute of Technology) at its Manarul Ilmi Mosque, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (UNY/Yogyakarta State University) at its Al-Mujahidin Mosque, and Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ/Jakarta State University) at its Ulul Albab Mosque. As this suggests, the *tarbiyyah* movements’ leaders used the mosques located on the campuses of secular public universities (non-Islamic universities) as key platforms for the recruitment of students to be trained and indoctrinated through Islamic study groups and discussions, instilling them with a rigid type of Islamic interpretation and practices.

The mushrooming of Islamic movements on secular public campuses (non-Islamic campuses) from 1980s onwards built on Muslim student movements from earlier years. Starting as a minority group, they

⁴⁰ Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan: Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyyah di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002).

⁴¹ Muhamad Ali, “The Rise of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL) in Contemporary Indonesia”, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 22, no. 1 (2005), pp. 1–27.

were called the ‘prophetic minority’, a small community that played a prophetic role and sought to deliver fundamental changes. The use of mosques was based on the strategic roles of mosques in the early period of Islamization. Historically, mosques have always played significant roles in transmitting knowledge. They serve as a place to cultivate and nurse Islamic intellectual life. It was through mosques that scholars’ networks grew and developed into an intellectual network that generally influenced the development of Islamic civilization. Realizing the strategic functions inherent in mosques, campus Islamic movement activists decided to make them the central base for their religio-political agenda.

Besides mosques, the *tarbiyah* movement development was also supported by the hugely increased publication of books. At least 1,200 Islamic book titles spread across Indonesia from the 1980s to the early 1990s.⁴² These circulated in a “relay” manner through various meetings in campus mosques, disseminating *tarbiyah* ideas to university students on various campuses.

E. The Development of Salafi *Manhaj* Islamic Schools

1. *Integrated Islamic Schools*

The *tarbiyah* movement is part of the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK/Campus Proselytization Organization, is a student Muslim organization in Indonesian universities), and has been then embryo of a wider political and education movement. As mentioned, this eventually led to the establishment of, first the PK (Justice Party), later renamed the PKS (Justice Prosperous Party), in 2003, and, in the middle of the 1990s IIS –Integrated Islamic Schools (STI/Sekolah Islam Terpadu).⁴³ The IISs were established to modernize the management of Islamic educational institutions and strengthen their political orientation to build an organizational structure for younger generations of Muslim, instill

⁴² Rahmat, *Arus Baru Islam Radikal, Transmisi Revivalisme Islam Timur Tengah Ke Indonesia*. 60-63

⁴³ Noorhaidi Hasan, “Education, Young Islamists and Integrated Islamic Schools in Indonesia”, *Studia Islamika*, vol. 19, no. 1 (2012); Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia*; Noorhaidi Hasan, *Islamist Party, Electoral Politics and Da’wa Mobilization among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia*, RSIS Working Paper, no. 184 (Singapore: Nanyang Technological University, 2009).

Islamic ideology, and support PKS.⁴⁴ As Islamic educational institutions, IIS adopted the Islamic values in the Qur'an and hadith as their underlying philosophy in delivering education, including curriculum content. As is the case with its patron, PKS, IISs perceive Islam as a way of life that encompasses all aspects of life (*kaffah* Islam).⁴⁵

Initially, the IIS school model grew independently without any form of central coordination, and spread very rapidly across various regions in Indonesia.⁴⁶ In 2003, the IISs established an institution, Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu (JSIT/Integrated Islamic School Network), to coordinate the establishment and implementation of IIS education. This proved effective and by 2020, the network had expanded, managing Islamic education facilities ranging from daycare, early childhood education, kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school to senior high school, and Teacher's Training for Integrated Islamic School (Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Islam Terpadu/PGSIT).

The JSIT divides Indonesia into eight regions, each led by a coordinator. Region 1 consists of five provinces in Sumatra: Aceh, North Sumatra, Jambi, Riau, and the Riau Islands. Region II covers five other provinces, South Sumatra, West Sumatra, Bengkulu, Lampung and Bangka Belitung. Region III manages JSIT in Jakarta, West Java and Banten, while Region IV administers Central Java and the Special Region of Jogjakarta. Region V comprises South Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, West Kalimantan and East Kalimantan. Region VI consists of East Java, Bali, and West Nusa Tenggara. Region VII consists of Central Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Maluku, North Maluku, West Papua, Papua, and Gorontalo. Each regional JSIT is further divided into several local JSITs, which cover relevant districts.

The term 'integrated' is a good description of the JSIT curriculum structure. It combines the curriculum used in general (conventional) public schools that are managed under the Ministry of Education and Culture

⁴⁴ Robert W. Hefner (ed.), *Making Modern Muslims: The Politics of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008).

⁴⁵ Karen Bryner, "Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia's Urban Middle Class", Ph.D Dissertation (New York: Columbia University, 2013).

⁴⁶ Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesian: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2013).

and the curriculum of *madrassa*, that is, public schools characterized by Islamic values managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.⁴⁷ The JSIT curriculum principles were built without limiting religious content to just one or two subjects, as in conventional schools, but rather integrating them into all subjects, an approach also known as the ‘scientific integration curriculum approach’, developed in the 1970s and 1980s. JSIT followed Isma’il Raji al-Faruqi’s concept of ‘Islamization of knowledge/science’ *tawhid* in reconstructing the curriculum.⁴⁸

The Integrated Islamic Schools modified and developed their curriculum to achieve their primary goal: producing students who uphold Islamic qualities, have strong faith, and are intelligent. All subjects seek to taught integrate Qur’anic and Sunnah-based moral values with modern sciences with the aim of producing well-balanced students proficient in modern science and religious morality who can devote their entire lives to worshipping God. Five principles mark the curriculum of all Integrated Islamic Schools: (1) Islamic education and learning in all aspects of school activities; (2) competency-based learning; (3) Qur’anic proficiency; (4) Arabic and English proficiency to prepare students to compete in a global setting; and (5) actualization of students’ ability and talent.⁴⁹

The IIS self-development program consists of several activities: IIS scouting, swimming, taekwondo, painting, educative visits, wall magazine, *nasheed* (Islamic acapella), English courses, and *Jarimatika* (finger-math method). Of all these self-development programs, the one that makes IIS distinctive is its scouting program.⁵⁰ This enables students to carry out scouting activities as in conventional state schools but is used as a platform to cultivate the most fundamental Islamic values. In fact, the program is strongly loaded with ideology. This can be seen from the slogans taught by the scout instructors: *Allahu Ghoyatuna* (Allah is our

⁴⁷ Robert W. Hefner, “Islamic Schools, Social Movements, and Democracy in Indonesia”, in *Making Modern Muslims: The Politics of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia*, ed. by Robert W. Hefner (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Yon Machmudi, “The Emergence of New Santri in Indonesia”, *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2008), pp. 69–102.

⁴⁹ Karen Bryner, “Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia’s Urban Middle Class” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*; Noorhaidi Hasan, “Education, Young Islamists and Integrated Islamic Schools in Indonesia”, *Studia Islamika*, vol. 19, no. 1 (2012), pp. 77–111.

destination); *Rasul Qodwatuna* (Prophet Muhammad is our role model); *al-Qur'an Syir'atuna* (the Quran is our constitution), *al-Jihad Sabiluna* (jihad is our path of struggle); and *as-Syabadah Ummiyatuna* (martyrdom is our aspiration). These are identical to the slogans used by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt to build the loyalty of IM activists.⁵¹

As this suggests, in addition to being part of wider efforts to reintegrate science into Islamic education, the IIS curriculum also reflects educational ideology adopted from IM, particularly the ten *mummasafat* (Muslim personal qualities) concepts that are the goals of IIS education and are identical to IM values. Specifically, the IIS curriculum outlines targets to be achieved gradually through several steps, i.e., beginner (*muda*), intermediate (*madya*), and advanced/adult (*dewasa*), as follows:⁵²

First: the straight path of *aqidah* (creed/faith). Students must: 1) fulfill the five pillars of Islam—Syahadat, Shalat, Fasting in the month of Ramadhan, almsgiving, and hajj; 2) obey and submit to Allah; 3) perform good deeds with sincerity for Allah; 4) believe in Satan and torment of the grave; 5) be grateful for Allah's blessings; 6) take Satan as an enemy; 7) not pledging in other than Allah's name; 8) not be superstitious when hearing or seeing something; 9) not engage in sorcery and paranormal activities; 10) not ask for assistance from the *jinn*s or anyone collaborating with the *jinn*s; 11) and not ask for any favor from dead people.

Second: truthful worshipping: *ihسان* (excellence) in *thabarah* (cleansing oneself): *ihسان* in the five daily prayers; love reading and memorizing the Qur'an; perform mandatory fasting during Ramadhan; love congregational prayer; perform the *qiyam al-lail* (midnight prayer) at least once a week; perform recommended fasting (*sunnah* fasting) at least once a week; memorize one part (*juز*) of the Qur'an; conclude every activity with *istighfar* (seeking forgiveness from Allah); recite supplications at the appropriate times (*mustajab* time; the time when supplications have high chance to be granted); and perform *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) in all situations.

Third: noble behavior/deeds: fulfill promises; be honest; be kind to other people; protect the family's honor; care for the youngsters; respect the elderly; lower one's gaze; keep secrets; cover other people's weakness;

⁵¹ Park and Niyozov, "Madrasa Education in South Asia and Southeast Asia".

⁵² Bryner, "Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia's Urban Middle Class"

use other people's goods only with their permission; spread the *salam* (greetings of peace); stay away from *haram* (prohibited) things and deeds; befriend good people; be humble and stay away from arrogance; be principled and not blindly follow the mass; do not swear; do not divide people; do not badmouth other people or gossip.

Fourth: being independent/self-reliant: stay away from disgraceful behavior; fulfill other people's rights; learn to save; take care of public facilities; take care of private facilities and assets; and fulfill one's own needs independently (take a shower on one's own, sleep on one's own, and do other activities on one's own).

Fifth: possessing broad knowledge and horizons: proficient in reading and writing; can listen and express an opinion; observe the rules of *tilawah* (Qur'anic reading method); know the history of Prophet Muhammad PBUH; be earnest in carrying out tasks; memorize a part (*juʿz*) of the Qur'an and selected hadiths; and be aware of the existence of *gazan al-fiqr* (war of thoughts) against the disbelievers and people resisting Islam.

Sixth: healthy and robust physicality: take care of hygiene and orderliness at home, school, and community, perform routine physical exercise, wake up early before sunrise, live a healthy life, do not go close to a smoker, do not use drugs, eat and drink in Prophet PBUH's manner; and avoid transmittable diseases.

Seventh: be severe toward oneself: stay away from all *haram* (prohibited) things; stay away from *haram* places; and take care of personal safety. *Eighth*: be skillful in managing affairs: learn to make plans; do not rush; and routinely write a diary. *Ninth*: time discipline management: be on time, and use time for beneficial purposes. *Tenth*: be beneficial to other people: help your parents, always pray for parents, help anyone in need with their strength, money, and mind; pray for friends and other Muslims; and carry out your duties at home and school, and in the community.

The aim of this system is to internalize these ten characteristics not only for students but also for all educational stakeholders: the executive board and staff of the foundation supporting the school, school leaders, teachers, students, and parents. The board members and staff, teachers, school principals, and employees are instilled with the ten characteristics through a commitment-building process carried out

through a routine *halaqah ta'lim* (small learning circle) held once a week. For parents, internalization is conducted through parenting activities held once a month. The students are given an integrated learning process in all school subjects.⁵³ The *aqidah* (faith) dimension has to be manifested in each educational activity to build solid *tawhid* (the belief of one God, the fundamental belief of Islam) of the students. The formula is expected to create devout and fully-rounded Muslims with a modern profile, capable of responding to modernity and globalization, or, to use a popular term, a “*kaffah* Muslim”.⁵⁴

Another essential aspect is teacher development. For JIST, teachers do not just teach general (conventional) and religious subjects; they are also expected to take the role of educators and moral guides (*murabbi*) who instill religious values in students. Reflecting the ideas of Hasan al-Banna and other IM thinkers like Sayyid Qutb, teachers are considered the first foundation of every educational program. They are deemed to bear a special responsibility for new Muslim generations and must have high intellectual and moral standards. They must also be aware of their most important duty: to devote themselves to God’s worship and contribute to the Muslim state. They are also required to show compassion and tolerance to students and be passionate about teaching and gaining students’ trust.⁵⁵

Thus, they are to treat the students not as mere students but also as partners in developing knowledge and conveying *da’wa* (proselytization) messages. One IIS teacher has said that what distinguishes the IIS is not the curriculum, but teachers’ ability to instill religious and moral values in their students through concrete examples: how a teacher speaks in the language of the Qur’an and Sunnah and behaves following the Qur’anic and Sunnah principles as exemplified by the *Salaf al-Shalih* in the past.⁵⁶

⁵³ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Islamist Party, Electoral Politics and Da’wa Mobilization Among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia* (2009).

⁵⁴ Bryner, “Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia’s Urban Middle Class”; Hasan, “Education, Young Islamists and Integrated Islamic Schools in Indonesia”.

⁵⁵ Bryner, “Piety Projects: Islamic Schools for Indonesia’s Urban Middle Class”; Toto Suharto, “Transnational Islamic Education in Indonesia: an Ideological Perspective”, *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2018).

⁵⁶ Tatang Muttaqin et al., “The Achievement Gap in Indonesia? Organizational and Ideological Differences between Private Islamic Schools”, *School Effectiveness and*

2. *The Salafi Manhaj Pesantrens*

The important Salafi educational model in Indonesia is the Salafi *manhaj pesantren*, which design their curriculum to make students (*santri*) believe that the Salafi *manhaj* Islamic interpretation is the only authentic understandings of Islam based on the Quran and Sunnah, and to take that message to the wider community. Salafi educational institutions in Indonesia grew along with the rapid development of Salafi *manhaj da'wa* (proselytization). Educational institutions, from pre-school/early childhood education to higher education, are regarded as effective platforms to disseminate the Salafi *manhaj*.⁵⁷

The Salafi *pesantrens* put strong emphasis on *aqidah* (creed). The primary reference books used in the *pesantren* were written by Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab himself, and include *al Usul al Thalatha*, *Kitab al-Tawhid*, *Kashf al Shububat* and *Masail al-Jabilyah*. They also use books and explanations (*syarah*) written by other Salafi scholars such as Muhammad Ibnu Salih al Uthaymin and Salih Ibnu Fawzan ibnu Abd Allah al Fauzan. Other reference books include ibn Taymiyyah's work *al Aqida al Wasitiyyah* and its explanations (*syarah*) by al Uthaymin titled *Sharh al 'Aqida al Wasitiyyah*, as well as *al 'Aqida al Tahwiyah* by al-Imam al Tahawiyah and its explanation by ibn Abi al-'Izzi.⁵⁸

The second priority after *aqidah* (creed) is the study of *hadith*. The *hadith* books used are almost the same as those generally used in other *pesantrens*, such as *al-'Arbain Nawawi*, *Shahih Bukhari*, and *Shahih Muslim*. The *fiqh* (jurisprudence) books used are written by Abd al 'Azim ibn Badawi, titled *al Wajiz fi Fiqh al Sunna was al Kitab al 'Axi*; Ibn Qudama's work, *Umdat al Ahkam*, with explanation in the book of *Taysir al 'Allam* by Abd Allah ibn Abd al Rahman ibn Salih Alu Bassam. The *akhlak* (noble

School Improvement, vol. 31, no. 2 (2020), pp. 212–42.

⁵⁷ Hajam, "Pemahaman Keagamaan Pesantren Salafi: Studi Komparatif Pondok Pesantren As-Sunnah Kalitangan dan Al-Muttaqin Gronggong Kab. Cirebon", *Holistik*, vol. 15, no. 2 (2016); Arrazy Hasyim, "Teologi Muslim Puritan: Genealogi dan Ajaran Salafi", Ph.D Dissertation (Jakarta: Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, 2017).

⁵⁸ Chaplin, "Communal Salafi learning and Islamic selfhood"; Ibnu Hasan, "Paham Keagamaan Pimpinan Pesantren dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pengembangan Pemikiran Pendidikan: Studi Fenomenologi pada Pesantren Salafy di Kabupaten Banyumas", Ph.D Dissertation (Malang: University Of Muhammadiyah Malang, 2017); Jawas, *Mulia dengan Manhaj Salaf*.

behavior) book studied is the *al Ta'lim al Muta'allim* by al Zarnuji, while the reference for Islamic history is *Khulasan Nur al Yaqin* by Umar Abd al Jabbar.⁵⁹ All the reference books used to teach *aqidah*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, and *akhlak* are published by *Wazarat al-Maarif* (the Ministry of Education) of Saudi Arabia.⁶⁰ In *fiqh*, the discussion is somewhat similar to that discussed in other schools, covering, for instance, *taharah* (self-cleansing), *salah* (ritual prayer), *zakat* (charity), *Haji* (pilgrimage), and *muamalah* (social interaction). However, the only *fiqh* books used are those that follow the Salafi *manhaj*.⁶¹

In the study of knowledge, there are three basic principles to discuss: knowledge concerning God, stating Allah is the only god to worship; knowledge of religion (*iman*/faith, Islam, and *ihسان*/excellence); and knowledge of the messages of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The method of learning is straightforward, such as by giving a short and concise explanation, defining, following the *daleel* (reference) from the Qur'an and hadith, and discussing case studies through dialogues with questions and answers.⁶²

The *pesantren* Salafi *manhaj* consist of two models; first, the exclusive *pesantren*, which primarily teaches Islamic knowledge—including tahfidz and Arabic Language—and some basic general knowledge, namely Indonesian language and math, to equip students in their interactions with the community. The Indonesian language is to enable students to communicate well, and math is for practical business. Puritan and exclusive Salafi groups use this type of *pesantren*.⁶³

The second model is more inclusive *pesantren*. This type of *pesantren*

⁵⁹ Irham Irham, "Pesantren Manhaj Salafi: Pendidikan Model Baru di Indonesia", *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2016), pp. 1–18; Din Wahid, "Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj; a Study of Salafi Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia", Ph.D Dissertation (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2014).

⁶⁰ Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism*.

⁶¹ Chaplin, "Communal Salafi Learning and Islamic Selfhood: Examining Religious Boundaries through Ethnographic Encounters in Indonesia"; Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Failure of the Wahhabi Campaign Transnational Islam and the Salafi Madrasa in Post-9/11 Indonesia", *South East Asia Research*, vol. 18, no. 4 (2010), pp. 675–705.

⁶² Wahid, "Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj", pp. 155–6.

⁶³ Wahid, "Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj", pp. 154–155.

teaches both Islamic knowledge and general knowledge by adopting the national curriculum. The cooperative puritan Salafis use this model. One of the examples of this type is the *al Furqon pesantren* in Gresik. It provides education starting from kindergarten-*tahfidz*, *mutawassitah*, *tsanawiyah*, *takhassus*, and higher education. It focuses on *tahfidz al Qur'an* and studies the basic religious knowledge such as *aqidah*, *akhlak*, *hadith*, and *fiqh*. The basic knowledge consists of natural and social sciences, mathematics, Indonesian language, and civic education. The textbooks are those identified in the national curriculum. These *pesantrens* are not enrolled in the national exam scheme but if the students wish to get official recognition, they can take an “equivalency education package” program (program penyetaraan) provided by the government.⁶⁴

The teaching of the Salafi *manhaj* starts at an early age. For example, at the kindergarten level, it covers the most fundamental Salafi doctrines like teaching students to remember various meaningful prayers based upon the Prophet's *hadith*, prohibiting students from drawing living beings (humans and animals), forbidding music, and separating girls and boys in different classes.⁶⁵ The teacher is usually a woman with a *burqa* (face cover), but she will open it in class.

Dakwah (Islamic proselytizing) training program is given to students aged above ten and older, particularly more senior students. This training aims to enable students to teach and spread knowledge of salafi to other people. In the *Dakwah* training a teacher delivers one to three lessons taken from a particular book. The method used is *mulażama*, a session where all *santris* gather and listen to the teacher giving a speech or explanation about the book.

The women's education program (*tarbiyah al-nisa'*) aims to prepare female students to become supportive wives for their husbands in promoting and developing Salafism. The essential study material is the husband-wife relationship as described in Syaikh Muqbil's *Nasiha lil al Nisa'*. Women students are also taught other skills such as cooking and

⁶⁴ Nurhasanah Bakhtiar, “Manhaj Salafi dalam Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren di Riau”, Ph.D Dissertation (Pekanbaru: Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, 2018); Jawa, *Mulia dengan Manhaj Salaf*.

⁶⁵ Ibnu Hasan, “Paham Keagamaan Pimpinan Pesantren dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pengembangan Pemikiran Pendidikan: Studi Fenomenologi pada Pesantren Salafy di Kabupaten Banyumas”.

sewing.

Another interesting aspect of Salafi *manhaj pesantrens* is how the management is connected to the Salafi networks at national and international levels. This means Salafi *manhaj pesantrens* in Indonesia have received funding and books donated by the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other countries.⁶⁶

3. *Urban Muslim Piety*

The development of Salafi *manhaj* Islamic schools, Integrated Islamic Schools, and Salafi *pesantrens* have created new nuances in the Islamization or “santrinization” of Indonesian society.⁶⁷ The santrinization carried out at the IISs can involve various models. Students in the Salafi *manhaj* Islamic schools have generally gone through ‘re-Islamization’, that is intensive and targeted education on Islamic teachings and practices from a Salafi perspective. Many of these students will share their Islamic knowledge with their families. In some cases, parents might feel embarrassed to receive lessons from their children, and might seek more knowledge on Islam through books, C.D.s, cassettes, or by inviting private tutors to their homes.⁶⁸ Their children thus become an impelling force and learning about Islam leads to children and parents reminding each other to take up a more genuinely Islamic life, at least as they understand that.

As this suggests, Salafi *manhaj* Islamic schools have made significant contributions to the development of urban Muslim social piety. Urban Muslim populations not affiliated with the mainstream and long-established religious mass organizations, like NU and Muhammadiyah, has increased. A survey conducted by Lingkaran Survei Indonesia (LSI) on 18-25 February 2019, with 1,200 respondents and a margin of error of 2.9 percent, suggests that the Muslim population makes up 87.8 percent of the total Indonesian population. Of that number, 49.5 percent were affiliated to NU, 4.3 percent were affiliated to Muhammadiyah, 1.3 percent were affiliated to other Islamic mass organizations, 0.7 percent

⁶⁶ Wahid, “Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj”, pp. 9–10.

⁶⁷ See Machmudi, “The Emergence of New Santri in Indonesia”, pp. 26–8.

⁶⁸ Bryner, “‘Piety Projects’; AbdouMaliq Simone and Achmad Uzair Fauzan, ‘On the Way to Being Middle Class’, *City*, vol. 17, no. 3 (2013), pp. 279–98.

were affiliated to Presidium Alumni (PA) 212 (alumni who joined the demonstration against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama—Ahok—who had been accused of blasphemy held in 2nd of December 2016), and 0.4 percent were affiliated to FPI. In total, Muslims affiliated with any Islamic mass organizations reached 56.2 percent, so those not affiliated with any were 43.8 percent.⁶⁹ Some of those who have no affiliation to any Islamic mass organization are probably the source of Salafi followers.

Urban Muslims show several different religious attributes. Religious identity emerges due to the shifts in orientation and they ways they seek religious knowledge. The Internet has made traditional patron relations between the preachers – usually *kyai* or ulama- and their followers more fluid. For reasons of time and cost efficiency, many Muslims now choose to seek religious knowledge from the Internet rather than by being physically present at religious study gatherings (*majlis ta'lim*). As a result, many preachers (*ustadz*) from mainstream Islamic organizations with no social media channels have become less popular than preachers who have no base of followers in the community but are adept users of social media.

A similar pattern can also be seen in the growth of websites featuring religious content. In the contest for religious identity, mainstream Islamic organizations are faced with severe challenges from websites featuring content dominated by exclusive, often radical, Islam.⁷⁰ The eagerness to return to religion is well-captured by providers who produce “new santri” through religious narratives served as if they were fast-food menu. Their followers are urban Muslims who desire to become more religious by learning about religion, but do not have the time or funding to learn Islam systematically and so turn to various digital channels.⁷¹ Superficiality occurs, indicated by the increasingly common phenomenon that the more Islamic an individual is, the more puritan,

⁶⁹ “Survei LSI Denny JA: NU sebagai Ormas Terbesar yang Tak Tertandingi”, *suarainvestor.com*, <https://www.suarainvestor.com/survei-lsi-denny-ja-nu-sebagai-ormas-terbesar-yang-tak-terdandingi/>, accessed 14 Jan 2021.

⁷⁰ Yayah Khisbiyah and M. Thoyibi, *Kontestasi Wacana Keislaman di Dunia Maya: Moderatisme, Ekstremisme, dan Hipernasionalisme* (Surakarta: Pusat Studi Budaya dan Perubahan Sosial, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2018).

⁷¹ Oki Setiana Dewi, “Pengajian Selebritas Hijrah Kelas Menengah Muslim (2000-2019)”.

exclusive, and intolerant he or she will be.

Another religious attribute commonly found among urban Muslims is fluid and obscure limits between Islamic teaching content and the agenda of Islamic activism. The Internet not only serves as a medium to spread Islam or *da'wa* (proselytization) but is easily used as a tool to serve specific interests with a particular agenda of religious ideology. Within this context, the competition to win religious identity became more serious, leading to aggression in religious discourses, as a range of studies have confirmed.⁷²

Moreover, urban Muslim piety is also apparent in the stronger 'Islamization of the public space', including clothing, which is a very effective means for marking, categorizing, and presenting a person when they appear in a public. Apparel not only functions as an indicator of a particular social status or class, or an indicator of social identity, it also operates as way to establish religiosity. Salafy men for example avoid *isbal* (trousers hang underneath ankle). Salafy men also wear *Jalalabiyah* a middle eastern ankle length robe like. Moreover, they also grow beard long (*libyah*). They argue that Salafy followed the way the Prophet Muhammad dressed.⁷³

4. *Tabfidz: a new attraction*

Another salient feature of Salafi schools, both Integrated Schools and *Pesantren Manhaj Salafi*, is *tabfidz al-Quran* (memorizing the Qur'an). Currently, *tabfidz* is gaining popularity among Islamic schools in Indonesia, for a number of reasons. First, because of the influence of the TV program *Lomba Tabfid* (Qur'an Memorisation Competition) broadcast by a commercial TV station, RCTI TV, a *tabfidz* competition for children and one of the top rating programs in Indonesia. A second reason is that the Internet, and social media in particular, encourage interest in *tabfidz*. Salafi social media accounts are relatively widespread among netizens and one study has shown that the number of followers of these accounts is

⁷² Dita Kirana and Endi Aulia Garadian, "Religious Trend in Contemporary Indonesia: Conservatism Domination on Social Media", *Studia Islamika*, vol. 27, no. 3 (2020), pp. 620–1.

⁷³ Wahid, "Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj", pp. 266–7.

now very significant.⁷⁴

Some Muslim preachers who are active on social media routinely popularize *tahfidz*.⁷⁵ For example, Yusuf Masyur, a prominent preacher in Jakarta who owns a big *tahfidz pesantren* in Jakarta, popularizes a religious virtue program called “one day, one Qur’anic verse.” Other preachers associated with Salafi schools have endorsed *tahfidz* activity. A website, *sekolahsunnah.com*, an online directory of Salaf Manhaj schools in Indonesia, explains the dominant features of *tahfidz*.⁷⁶

The support of the urban middle class for the *tahfidz* tradition has been key to its renewed popularity in Indonesia. Although the tradition is not new in *pesantren*, Salafi groups’ enthusiasm for *tahfidz* has upgraded its status in Muslim daily life. There are some old *tahfidz pesantren* that were not popular among Muslims, with few willing to enroll, such as the *pesantren Yanbu’ul Quran* in Kudus, one of the oldest such *pesantren* in Indonesia.⁷⁷ However, since the Salafi movements have adopted *tahfidz* as a core activity in their schools, it has become very popular. And now that many celebrities, including movie stars and musicians, have endorsed Salafi practices, the *tahfidz* movement has received even more momentum.

⁷⁴ Dita Kirana, *Sekolah Salafi di Jabotabek*, Penelitian (Jakarta: PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2021).

⁷⁵ Mahfud Fauzi, ‘Tahfizh AL-Qur’an Kurikulum dan Manajemen Pembelajaran di pesantren tahfizh darul Qur’an tangerang banten’, Ph.D Dissertation (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2019).

⁷⁶ Kirana, *Sekolah Salafi di Jabotabek*, p. 2.

⁷⁷ ‘Filosofi dan Sejarah’, *Yanbu*, <https://yanbumenawan.sch.id/filosofi-dan-sejarah>, accessed 16 Jan 2021.

Table 1: Salafi and Social Media⁷⁸

Salafi Institutions	Website	Instagram	Facebook	YouTube	Radio
Majelis Cinta Qur'an	https://www.cqfoundation.or.id https://kajian-perkantoran.org	@cintaquran tv (follower: 222,000)	@cinta quran.tv (follower: 29,289)	1.Cinta Quran TV (follower: 625,000) 2. Cinta Quran Foundation (4,390 follower)	
Halaqah Silsilah Ilmiyyah (HIS)	https://abduallah-roy.com/	@hsimahazi Follower 10300	@hsimahazi Follower 97651	HSI Abdul-lahroy	http://radiohsi.com/ ; can be accessed from a podcast
Rodja TV	https://rodja.tv	@rodjatv 454,000an followers	@RodjaTV 378,708 followers	Rodja TV 410 rb subscriber 36.442.362 x watched since 2012 3,525 video	Rodja 756AM di https://radiatorodja.com/live/
Ahsan TV "Mendekatkan Keluarga Pada Sunnah"	https://ahsan.tv/video-kajian/	@ahsantv 19,300an followers	Ahsan TV 82,210 followers	Ahsan TV 71,6 rb subscriber 4.392.777 x watched since 2013 908 video	
Umma		@ummaindo-nesia follower: 183K	@ummaindo-nesia.id 1.708.100 followers		

F. The state of Salafi Manhaj Schools

The development of Salafi Manhaj Schools has not been smooth. The post-9/11 'war on terror' in global politics placed put Salafi Manhaj Schools under international scrutiny due to a possible links between global Salafism and Al-Qaida organization. In Indonesia, some Salafi Manhaj schools, such as Pesantren Ngruki in Solo, were certainly involved in extremism and even violence, and this may contribute to the decline of

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

some.⁷⁹ However, Salafi Manhaj schools are not a monolithic entity, and, as many studies have explained such as Quintan Wiktorowics and Din Wahid,⁸⁰ there are factions among them, including some that are more accommodative of the existing social and political context and others that are not, and some that have prospered while others have not.

According to Fotodakwah.com, a website of religious news in media, there are about 110 Salafi Manhaj schools throughout Indonesia. This number is not significant compared to schools and pesantren under the aegis of NU or Muhammadiyah, which number in the thousands. Nevertheless, looking at how Salafis have struggled to promote their teachings in Indonesia since 1990s, the rapid growth of these schools is an impressive achievement.⁸¹ The “purist” Salafi faction, which has a “cooperative” approach to existing social and political context, has contributed to this.

Salafi Manhaj Schools have gained significant success in attracting students in urban communities partly because of their use of the internet. Furthermore, through Yayasan Cahaya Sunnah, a charitable foundation, Salafis have established a social media enterprise, Radio Rodja (Radio Salafi PPIM). Rodja has now expanded its network to include TV Channels, YouTube Channels, and production of content for social media. Unfortunately, major Islamic organization such as NU and Muhammadiyah were not active in social media in the early 2000s.⁸² Dewi’s studies and PPIM’s study on religious trends among Muslim middleclass demonstrated that many celebrities—movie stars and musicians—have been attracted to Salafi teaching with many Pengajian organized by celebrities inviting only Salafi teachers.⁸³

However, the growth of Salafi Manhaj Schools may quickly slow

⁷⁹ Khaeron Sirin, Husen Hasan Basri, and Ta’rif (eds.), *Transformasi Pesantren Salafi* (Jakarta: Litbang Diklat Press, 2021), pp. 273–375.

⁸⁰ Quintan Wiktorowicz, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 29, no. 3 (2006), pp. 207–39; Wahid, “Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj” pp. 36–7.

⁸¹ Wahid, “Nurturing the Salafi Manhaj”, p. 55.

⁸² Khisbisyah and Thoyibi, *Kontestasi Wacana Keislaman di Dunia Maya*, pp. 41–87.

⁸³ Hamid Nasuhi (ed.), *Hijrah: Tren Keberagamaan Kaum Milineal di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2021); Dewi, “Pengajian Selebritas Hijrah Kelas Menengah Muslim (2000-2019)”.

if these schools affiliate with the more extreme Salafi teaching such as that of Al-Qaida and Jamaah Islamiah, which openly condone the use of violence in the name of religion.⁸⁴ Furthermore, Salafi Manhaj schools will also suffer if their public sermons openly oppose the beliefs of the mainstream Islamic organization such as NU and Muhammadiyah, because the roots of these two organizations are deeply established in Indonesian Muslim society. However, as long as the Salafi Manhaj Schools adapt to the local social context, and are not affiliated with the religious extremist views, they will continue to develop.

G. Concluding Remarks

Many studies, such as ICG, Wiktorowicz, Hasan, Wahid and Sirin have found that the Salafi movement in Indonesia cannot be separated from the International Salafi movement. The Salafi activities in Indonesia have been implemented through Salafi *manhaj* education that teach rigid salafy *aqidah* (faith) and create particular social life such as the way to dress, eat, and interact with people. The Salafi *manhaj* education—the Integrated Islamic School and the Salafi *manhaj pesantren*—have colored the Islamic education system in Indonesia. Both institutions share the same genealogy in the wider transnational Islamic puritanism movement. Salafi *manhaj* education has found “strategies” to strengthen its schools outside the mainstream educational system, despite public scrutiny as supporting global religious extremist activities. Integrated Islamic Schools have developed a modern schooling system by integrating religious teaching with modern mainstream education. With good facilities, allowing them to charge high tuition fees, most of these schools can only be afforded by the Muslim middle class. Meanwhile, the Salafi *manhaj pesantrens* gains access from its international networks to continuing further education in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries. Finally, both Salafi *manhaj* schools have enjoyed support from urban Muslims, including popular celebrities (movie stars and musicians) who have a strong social media influence that promotes the schools’ growth. Moreover, both Salafi *manhaj* schools have strategically used *tabfiḍ* as a point of distinction, attracting Muslim families in some big cities in Indonesia.

⁸⁴ Sirin, Basri, and Ta’rif (eds.), *Transformasi Pesantren Salafi*, pp. 379–81.

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