

The Negotiation Strategy of Transnational Islamic Networks: The Case of Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesian Pesantren

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Islamic Studies at
the Faculty of Islamic Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

Master of Arts (M.A.)



by:

Nadia Rizky Fauziah

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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the negotiation and adaptation carried out by Jama'ah Tabligh as one of the transnational movements present in Indonesia. In contrast to other more general studies, this study focuses on the negotiations and adaptations carried out by Jama'ah Tabligh in the pesantren. It should be noted that since the mid to late 20th century, Jama'ah Tabligh, present in Indonesia, has brought major changes in the culture of Indonesian pesantren. They have collaborated their transnational ideas and internalized them into Indonesian pesantren. This change has even led to rapid development, with a shift in the orientation of the pesantren becoming a "Pesantren Tabligh" that has established almost 300 branches throughout Indonesia. Pesantren Tabligh has taken a significant role in the spread of Jama'ah Tabligh and its mobilization in various regions in Indonesia. This research shows the negotiation and adaptation carried out by the Jama'ah Tabligh through the institution of pesantren as one of the ways to spread and mobilize their dakwah. This research uses Quintan Wicktorowicz's resource mobilization theory, which states that the key to a social movement mobilization lies in emphasizing the type of formal organization, accommodating the role of informal institutions and social networks, and diagnostic framing. In practice, this research is qualitative field research with the sample of Pesantren Al-Fatah as one of the largest Pesantren Tabligh in Southeast Asia and Pesantren Darus Sunnah as a branch pesantren of al-Fatah. This research was conducted from February to June through interviews, discourse analysis based on the history of Pesantren Al-Fatah books, content analysis, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with 14 participants, consisting of the leaders of both male and female pesantren, three teachers, one radio staff, and several santri. This study argues that Jama'ah Tabligh has various strategies to negotiate and adapt to the context of Indonesian society today with the rise of Tabligh Pesantren. This study found that Jama'ah Tabligh has negotiated its strategy through the institution of pesantren by building student teams as an innovation in the spread of da'wah. They also established branch pesantren as a cadre base that serves as a strategic center to train Jama'ah Tabligh members and alums to establish branch pesantren. These pesantren utilize their social networks to spread the values of Jama'ah Tabligh as a more effective strategy for member regeneration. They also use modern communication advances such as Radio Trangkil FM to broadcast their ideas widely. On top of that, this study also shows a shift in the apolitical claims of Jama'ah Tabligh, especially those in pesantren, due to the political tradition in Indonesia that makes pesantren a warehouse for patronage activities.

Keywords: *Jama'ah tabligh, transnational Islam, pesantren, Indonesia, strategy*

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman
ا	a	س	s	ل	l
ب	b	ش	sh	م	m
ت	t	ص	ṣ	ن	n
ث	th	ض	ḍ	و	w
ج	j	ط	ṭ	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ء	'
خ	kh	ع	'	ي	y
د	d	غ	gh		
ذ	dh	ف	f		
ر	r	ق	q		
ز	z	ك	k		

Short Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
اَ	a	فَتَحَ	<i>fataḥa</i>
اِ	i	عَلِمَ	<i>'alima</i>
اُ	u	حَسُنَ	<i>ḥasuna</i>

Long Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
اِي/اِي	ā	رَضِيَ/رَامَ	<i>riḍā/qāma</i>
يِي	ī	قَرِيبٌ	<i>qarīb</i>
وُو	ū	جُلُوسٌ	<i>julūs</i>

Diphthong

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
اُو	aw	قَوْمٌ	<i>qawm</i>
يِي	ay	رَبِّبٌ	<i>rayb</i>

Notes:

1. Consonant with shaddah (◌◌) for instance, سُلَّم is written as *sullam* (double letters).
2. The Arabic letter *hamzah* (ء) at the beginning of a word is transliterated into “a” not into “’a”. For instance, أَكْبَرُ is written as *akbar* not *’akbar*, except in the middle of a term after a consonant. For example, مَرَأَةٌ is written as *mar’a*.
3. The Arabic script of *alif-lām qamariyyah* and *alif-lām shamsiyya* (ال) is written as “al” at the beginning of words. For instance, الْمَجْلِسُ is written *al-majlis* and الرَّجُلُ is written *al-rajul*.
4. The Arabic letter *ta’ marbūṭa* (ة) is unwritten/invisible when it is located at the end of the words, such as سُورَةٌ is written as *sūra*. When located in the middle of a sentence is written as “t”, such as صَلَاةُ الْمَغْرِبِ is written as *salāt al-maghrib*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, all praises be to Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, whose loves are always there every time for his creatures, giving strength, patience, and wisdom to undertake and complete this journey. Blessings and peace also be upon the Prophet Muhammad PBUH who has always been an inspiration for us.

The completion of my studies and the production of this thesis are owed to many individuals and institutions. Particularly, I express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Professor Yanwar Pribadi, Ph.D, for his tremendous guidance and encouragement that was crucial throughout the process of writing my thesis and compiling this research. His insightful comments, constructive and highly educational criticisms have guided me in the development of my arguments and the refinement of my analysis in this study. I have benefited greatly from his guidance, especially in writing and understanding the transnational Islamic movement in Indonesia, centered on Jama'ah Tabligh in pesantren.

Lecturers who have generously shared their knowledge and developed my perspectives in various fields, especially those related to Muslims, Muslim society, politics, youth, radicalism, culture, and religion in Indonesia. I want to mention Bhirawa Anoraga, Ph.D, Professor Syamsul Rijal, Ph.D, Haula Noor, Ph.D., Faried Fachruddin, Ph.D., and other lecturers, who have enriched my academic journey. In addition, I am also indebted to Universitas Islam Internasional, which generously provided me with a full scholarship, facilitating my two years of study at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIS). I would also like to thank the administrative staff of the Faculty of Islamic Studies for their hospitality and invaluable support in academic matters.

The realization of this research was only possible with the cooperation and participation of Pondok Pesantren al-Fatah in the Temboro, Magetan and Pondok Pesantren Darussunnah Bogor. I want to express my deepest gratitude to the informants as the leaders of Pondok Pesantren al-Fatah Magetan and Darussunnah Bogor, and the ustadz and ustadzah of the two pesantren, as well as the santri who have shared their time and insights during this research. I am also indebted to my younger sister Fairuza Dini Rahmatika, who, with her support, has accompanied me to go to the field and access Pesantren al-Fatah in Temboro, and also to Moch Dimas Maulana, who has accompanied me to access the Darussunnah pesantren located in Bogor, my sincere thanks for the support and time given.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my beloved parents, Supartono and Siti Asiyah, as well as my older sister, Tiana Farah Firdausi, who steadfastly supported me in

achieving my Master's degree. Bapak, Mamah and family are the ones who have always encouraged me to complete my studies, accompanied my struggling nights, and prayed for success in my academic career and future life. Finally, I must acknowledge the moral support and unceasing prayers from my kyai, Dr, Abdul Ghofur Maimoen, as well as Dr. Muhammad Najib Bukhori and my dormitory friends, who have been a good support system in my academic journey on this campus. Despite the contributions of so many people above, let me acknowledge that any shortcomings that exist in this thesis are my responsibility and, thus, my own.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The presence of the wave of globalization in the modern world today has contributed to the fields of culture, economic development, and progress in the social, political, and educational domains. Globalization has made the world more easily connected, shifting towards a liberal economy marked by the growing flow of goods, money, people, and ideas in general and religiously.¹ Globalization is also marked by the infiltration of Western culture and the spread of secular ideology in societies worldwide. In the Muslim world, the presence of this wave of globalization, although it brings many advances in science, also cannot deny various reactions, especially from Muslims around the world.² Especially in some Muslim countries, the presence of the impact of globalization is considered to have destroyed and paralyzed the traditions that Muslims have perpetuated for many years. The impact of this thought is the presence of reform groups that claim that Islam must be cleansed of khufarat and also modern traditions by returning to the main source of Muslims, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. This wave of the tradition of returning Muslims to the teachings of Islam is called the Islamism movement, where the term Islamism itself refers to Islamist politics or re-Islamization, which is a process where various fields in social life are invested with signs and symbols related to Islamic traditions. Examples of the process of Islamism in the world of the season are usually characterized by wearing the veil, consuming religious commodities, holding exclusive religious meetings, and displaying religious symbols in the public sphere.³

One of the side effects of the modern world's unshakable presence of globalization on this Islamist movement is the ease with which it can spread its ideas across national borders. This activity of expanding Islamic ideas across national borders is called the

¹ Anna Münster, "Transnational Islamic Movements," *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 30, no. 2 (April 22, 2013): 117–27, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378813476795>.

² Hoda Baytiyeh, "Have Globalisation's Influences on Education Contributed to the Recent Rise of Islamic Extremism?," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 16, no. 4 (August 8, 2018): 422–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2018.1456321>.

³ Yanwar Priyadi, "Sekolah Islam (Islamic Schools) as Symbols of Indonesia's Urban Muslim Identity," *TRaNS: Trans -Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* 10, no. 2 (November 29, 2022): 203–18, <https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2021.15>.

transnational Islamic movement.⁴ The Transnational Islamic Movement is also understood as the Arabization of Islam because it presupposes a theological-ideological transmutation of a religious doctrine from its original source (Arab) without contextualizing it into Indonesian Islam.⁵ In Indonesia, the ease of dissemination of these ideas is mostly brought by Indonesian students who study in the Middle East or other countries that are dense with the discourse of Islamism.⁶ The wave of Islamic revival in Indonesia was marked by the prominence of religious symbols, Islamic educational institutions, and Islamic lifestyles, accompanied by the courage of transnational Islamic organizations.⁷ The collapse of the Soeharto regime in 1998 witnessed the emergence of Islamic movements. The increasing demand for the comprehensive application of Islamic law in Indonesia is also a sign of this wave of revival, which was then followed by the success of the "Bela Islam" demonstration, which is also clear evidence that Islamism is flourishing, which raises the concerns of some people in contemporary Indonesia.⁸

Ayoob, divides transnational Islamic trends into three parts: 1 transnational jihadist, an Islamist group that tends to use radical action, terror, and violence in its movements 2 transnational missionary, as *da'wa* (literally "call"), which aims to make the existing Muslim population better Muslims in terms of following Islamic ritual practices and moral codes of behavior. 3 transnational politics, a movement that explicitly seeks to recreate an Islamic caliphate based on the model of the "righteous caliphs" of early Islam without expressly advocating violent activity.⁹ Focuses on the Islamic transnational missionary movement, which, according to Ayoob, is represented by Jama'ah Tabligh or JT. Jama'ah Tabligh is a global itinerant Muslim missionary movement described by scholars such as Masud, Metcalf, Sikand, and Reetz, as a global piety movement for the renewal of faith among Muslims and perhaps one of the largest missionary movements in

⁴ Husnul Hidayah, Suadi Sa'ad, and Andi Rosa, "TRANSNATIONAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS IN INDONESIA," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 25, no. 01 (February 10, 2024): 55–66, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v25i01.2494>.

⁵ Toto Suharto, "Transnational Islamic Education in Indonesia: An Ideological Perspective," *Contemporary Islam* 12, no. 2 (July 1, 2018): 101–22, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-017-0409-3>.

⁶ Martin Van Bruinessen, "Indonesian Muslims in a Globalising World: Westernisation, Arabisation and Indigenising Responses.," 2018.

⁷ Martin Van Bruinessen, "1. Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the 'Conservative Turn' of the Early Twenty-First Century," in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam* (ISEAS Publishing, 2013), 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789814414579-005>.

⁸ Bruinessen, "Indonesian Muslims in a Globalising World: Westernisation, Arabisation and Indigenising Responses."

⁹ Mohammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World* (United States of America: The University of Michigan Press, 2008).

the world today.¹⁰ Today, based on proselytization methods, Jamaah Tabligh has expanded to more than 200 countries¹¹ with an estimated 80 million followers worldwide.¹² Its network spans the globe from North America to Great Britain, continental Europe to Africa, Asia to the Middle East, and Southeast Asia to the Pacific Islands.¹³

The origins of Jamaah Tabligh date back to Mewat, North India, and the Deobandi tradition that originated from the Darul Uloom madrasa in Deoband, Uttar Pradesh. The Deobandi movement was started by Muhammad Qassim Nanotawi and Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi in 1867. Like the Deobandis, the Tablighis were conservative fundamentalists inspired by the reformists of the Salafi movement from the Arab lands. However, unlike the Deobandis, who were educators, the Tablighis were mostly lay missionaries who sought to transform Muslim society and bring Muslims back to the true path of Islam. As a conservative literalist-fundamentalist neo-Salafi movement with strong puritanical tendencies, the Tablighis are also unique in their ambiguous relationship with Islamic mysticism (Sufism) and Sufi practices, which would otherwise be considered deviant or contrary to Islamic teachings by more conservative neo-fundamentalist-pietist-movements.¹⁴ JT does not engage in pluralist discourse, is very introverted, and is not particularly interested in dialogue with non-Muslims. In countries with Muslim minorities (e.g., India, the United Kingdom, and the United States), JT encourages Muslims to protect themselves from the contaminating influence of the majority culture by remaining within the circle of true believers, who are considered islands of faith in countries inhabited mostly by infidels.¹⁵ In a broad context, JT's strategy of spreading its da'wah emphasizes an interpersonal approach between members and the community, including the concept of Khuruj, Talim, Jola, and Bayan they conduct in mosques.¹⁶

¹⁰ Farish A Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia," in *Islam on the Move* (Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 27–62, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9789048516827.003>.

¹¹ Alexander Horstmann, "The Tablighi Jama'at, Transnational Islam, and the Transformation of the Self between Southern Thailand and South Asia," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 1 (May 1, 2007): 26–40, <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-2006-041>.

¹² Pieri Zacharias, *Tablighi Jamaat and the Quest for the London Mega Mosque: Continuity and Change* (England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

¹³ Jan A. Ali, "Tabligh Jama'at as an Emulatable Model of Faith Renewal," in *Handbook of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Lives* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 1251–70, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32626-5_85.

¹⁴ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹⁵ Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*.

¹⁶ Ali, "Tabligh Jama'at as an Emulatable Model of Faith Renewal."

However, as Yoginder Sikand has clearly stated, JT's strategy changes and is able to negotiate with the context. In Muslim minority countries or in predominantly Muslim countries where Islamist political activity is harshly suppressed, JT follows a strict political line. In fact, Muslim regimes fighting Islamist opponents often see JT as a viable antidote to politically active Islamist groups and, thus, as an ally in helping to maintain the status quo. In situations more favorable to Islamist political activity, some JT members, including some of its leaders, play an active political role, both within and through Islamist parties.¹⁷ Although the JT does not officially take a political stance and toes an apolitical line, it can be concluded that, given the congruence between its long-term goals and those of Islamist political formations, the JT has the potential to act as an advocate for Islamist parties if circumstances require it.¹⁸ An example of JT's strategic negotiation with context occurred in Pakistan, where they were fortunate in their recruitment campaign due to the publicity received from several prominent Muslim celebrities who joined the movement. Several UK-based Tablighis interviewed were happy to inform that many members of the Pakistani cricket team are active members of JT, including Mohammad Yusuf, a convert to Islam who is one of the few Christians to have played for the Pakistani national team. After attending JT's sermons, he became a Muslim and Tabligh. Given the importance of cricket as a sport in Pakistan, this new player helped raise the sport's profile. Another source mentioned that Pakistani singer and fashion designer Junaid Jamshed is an active movement member. JT also enjoys considerable support from prominent politicians and military personnel in Pakistan and Bangladesh, as well as from the Muslim population in India.¹⁹

For JT, the mosque is a headquarters that plays a big role in their da'wah. This is because their da'wah concepts related to *khūrūj*, *talīm*, *bayān*, and *jaula* all occur in the mosque, which is the center of their community. They seem like an endemic population that tends to gather in one place and looks different from others because of their clothes and closed nature. JT's proselytization model is similar to the Salafi movement in general, which focuses on education and proselytization. However, in practice, JT is not so active in the strategy through education and focuses on its missionary movement. However, in the UK, the negotiation of JT's da'wah strategy also targeted the establishment of educational institutions; where they were able to establish the Doeband madrasa located in Dewsbury

¹⁷ Yoginder Sikand, "The Tabligh? Jama'āt and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal," *The Muslim World* 96, no. 1 (January 24, 2006): 175–95, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.2006.00122.x>.

¹⁸ Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*.

¹⁹ Zacharias, *Tablighi Jamaat and the Quest for the London Mega Mosque: Continuity and Change*.

and had a mission to establish an educational institution that was clear from the influence of Western thought.²⁰

In Indonesia, Jama'ah Tabligh succeeded in infusing traditional Indonesian education with the trans ideology they brought. Pesantren al-Fatah is one of the major shreds of evidence of the penetration of JT ideology that not only targets mosques but also educational institutions.²¹ Until its culmination, al-Fatah has been transformed into one of the pesantren-based Jama'ah Tabligh educational institutions in Southeast Asia. The pesantren is located in a village in the Temboro area of Magetan, a regency in the eastern part of Java, standing on an area of more than four square kilometers, consisting of the al-Fatah pesantren complex as well as four mosques and Jama'ah Tabligh centers. The study of Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro, generally discusses ideological aspects and religious movements for instances: Noor²²; Badriza et al²³; and Nurhayati²⁴, also related to amaliyah that characterizes Tablighi Jamaat such as Masturah by Machmudi and Ardhani.²⁵ Several studies also examine the authority and leadership of Kiai and Nyai from the perspective of the Tablighi Jamaat: Arifin²⁶; Machmudi & Ardhani.²⁷ Moreover, the influence of Tablighi Jamaat ideology and the authority and leadership of the Kiai on changes in community

²⁰ Zacharias.

²¹ Mundzier Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Asta Buana Sejahtera, 2009).

²² Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

²³ Kholili Badriza, Muhammad Wildan, and Thoriq Tri Prabowo, "Kampung Madinah Temboro as Tablighi Jama'at Sub-Cultural Community: A Socio-Historical Studies," *KARSA Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 30, no. 2 (December 29, 2022): 328–63, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v30i2.6438>.

²⁴ Anifa Nurhayati, Imam Muhsin, and Thoriq Tri Prabowo, "The Convergence of Nahdlatul Ulama and Jamaah Tabligh Traditions in Temboro Village, Magetan, East Java," *IBDA` : Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Budaya* 21, no. 2 (October 1, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v21i2.7797>.

²⁵ Yon Machmudi and Putih Kusumah Ardhani, "The Role of Women in Islamic Propagation: A Case Study of Tablighi Jamaat's Nyai of Pesantren Al-Fatah, East Java, Indonesia," *Journal of Asian Social Science Research* 2, no. 2 (December 27, 2020): 175–90, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jassr.v2i2.27>.

²⁶ Zainal Arifin, "Authority of Spiritual Leadership at Pesantren Temboro Based on Jamaah Tabligh Ideology," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (December 27, 2017): 265, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2017.62.265-292>.

²⁷ Machmudi and Ardhani, "The Role of Women in Islamic Propagation: A Case Study of Tablighi Jamaat's Nyai of Pesantren Al-Fatah, East Java, Indonesia."

culture has been carried out by Arifin et al ²⁸ and Pabbajah ²⁹. Nisa,³⁰ also explored the influence of Tablighi pesantren on the identity of its female followers. In her article, Eva mentioned that Tablighi Jama'ah in Indonesia had taken a genius step by using the original Indonesian education, namely pesantren, as an entry point. However, she missed to highlight that JT's da'wah strategy to the pesantren education pattern implies an adaptation strategy that should be investigated.

This is intriguing to study, especially when we see an amazing pattern related to JT's success in changing the orientation of the da'wah of the Temboro pesantren from NU to JT, which turns out to have a more far-reaching impact than we expected. The success of al-Fatah Temboro in influencing the surrounding community has shown the success of their da'wah strategy through pesantren. Until the time of pesantren education, al-Fatah was able to build more than 200 branch pesantren that adopted the tabligh curriculum as a by-product of the expansion of da'wah for the regeneration of followers throughout Indonesia. This shows the success of JT's negotiation and adaptation in regenerating and spreading its da'wah. This research will explore their strategy of negotiation local context and traditional Islamic education as a strategy to mobilize more followers. This study argues that Jamaah Tabligh has various strategy to negotiate and adapt to the context of Indonesian society today with the rise of Tabligh Pesantren.

JT makes changes and developments as a result of the accumulation and long process from the beginning of its arrival on the island of Java, especially centered in Temboro, East Java. JT has developed its da'wah strategy from a traditional to a more modern way of mobilizing people. This study will concentrate on identifying and analyzing the strategy of negotiation of Jama'ah Tabligh's in Indonesian Pesantren, one of which is related to the development of JT's ideological pesantren as an interesting strategy in developing da'wah. I argue that Tabligh Pesantren has been crucial in the spread of Jama'ah Tabligh's proselytization. Jama'ah Tabligh has adapted its strategy to the conditions and also the power of Indonesian pesantren. This adaptation has an impact on the change in their strategy, which originally focused on their da'wah model from mosque to mosque but changed to the formation of student teams, the construction of branch pesantren, the

²⁸ Zainal Arifin et al., "The Kiai's Cultural Strategy in Shaping the Religious Culture of the Community of Temboro Magetan Village, East Java," *Dinamika Ilmu*, December 15, 2021, 369–81, <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v21i2.3657>.

²⁹ Mustaqim Pabbajah et al., "Kampung Madinah: The Construction of Jamaah Tabligh for the Arabization Process in Magetan, East Java," *JSW (Jurnal Sosiologi Walisongo)* 6, no. 1 (April 30, 2022): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jsw.2022.6.1.8378>.

³⁰ Eva F. Nisa, "Insights Into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'at," *Modern Asian Studies* 48, no. 2 (March 13, 2014): 468–91, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X13000681>.

establishment of radios, and also a shift in the apolitical attitude they promoted. Then, in carrying out this research, I will use Pesantren al-Fatah as a sample and the center of the development of the largest JT pesantren in Indonesia and one of the al-Fatah branches, Darussunnah, located in Bogor, West Java, which will be based on work observation in the field.

1.2 Research Question

1. How does Jamaah Tabligh (JT) negotiate their strategy in Indonesian Pesantren?
2. To what extent does the role of pesantren contribute to the dissemination of JT ideology?
3. To what extent is the impact of JT's changing strategy on traditional Indonesian Islam?

1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 Transnational Islam Strategy in Indonesia

It is important to understand that a movement must be able to adapt to the local context and develop strategies that correspond to the political, social, and cultural situation in each place³¹ Similarly, Islamist movements need to understand and adapt to the realities in which they operate. This is because it is difficult to adopt an ideology directly from one place to another without considering the local context. Thus, the ability of transnational Islamist movements to adjust to the local context can increase their relevance and strengthen their legitimacy in the eyes of local communities, as well as increase the success and sustainability of the movement.

Salafi movement is one of the Transnational Islamic Movements present in Indonesia. Since its first presence in Indonesia, Salafi is one of the movements that has attracted public attention because of Islamist nuances that appears thick with long beards (*lihya*), Arabic-style robes (*jalabiyya*), turban (*imama*), and trousers up to the ankles (*isbal*), and black niqab that covers the whole body in public places³² Hasan has discussed the Salafi strategy and its changes, especially in the field of education in Indonesia. Historically, the Salafi presence in Indonesia was apolitical and emphasized education and da'wah. They spread their ideology through grassroots education by establishing small

³¹ Jeanne M. Brett, *Negotiating Globally How to Negotiate Deals, Resolve Disputes, and Make Decisions Across Cultural Boundaries* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007).

³² Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia: Transnational Dynamics and Local Development," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 1 (May 1, 2007): 83–94, <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-2006-045>.

madrasas in rural areas that were exclusive and rejected Western culture. However, due to exclusivism and antiquated structures, Salafi madrasas went into decline, culminating in the split of Salafi Yamani and Salafi Sururi. However, Sururi Salafis managed to mobilize people by systematically incorporating secular subjects in their curriculum, in contrast to Yamani Salafis, who needed help in spreading the ideology through traditional madrasas.³³ In another article, Hasan complements his research by explaining the Salafi strategy that is strengthened through funding from Saudi Arabia through DDII and LIPIA, which play a role in spreading da'wah and recruiting students in the education of Salafi doctrine.³⁴

Another strategy of transnational Islam was developed by PKS in the political sphere. PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) is a party in Indonesia's structural politics that is a permutation of the Saudi Ikhwanul Muslimin-inspired da'wah movement. Again, Hasan³⁵, also discusses PKS's strategy of moving through recruitment and expansion into Indonesia's organic Muslim organizations. PKS aggressively recruited activists from established Islamic organizations in Indonesia, such as Muhammadiyah and NU, although it ended up with various resistance from these organizations. PKS also utilizes the da'wah movement for political outreach with young people as its target, aiming to Islamize the Indonesian Islamic environment. Through the tarbiyya movement, PKS teaches Islamic education under the guidance of a teacher who provides moral direction. This process is enforced through various religious programs organized by PKS on campuses. PKS also sponsored the establishment of the Iqra Club, a da'wah wing among high school students and teenagers, to enhance students' da'wah activities in Islamic activity units. The activists are obsessed with their vision to restore the glory of the ummah, which begins with instilling Islamic values in every individual.³⁶ In a more limited scope, Jung Hoon, in his study, explores PKS strategies in the local sphere by considering the culture and politics of local communities. In his article, Jung Hoon discusses PKS's local strategy in Indonesia, which varies significantly in various regions, reflecting the diverse political landscape and voter demographics. This variation in strategy is due to the party's need to adapt to local

³³ Noor Haidi Hasan, "The Salafi Madrasas of Indonesia," in *The Madrasa in Asia Book: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages*, ed. Farish A Noor, Yoginder Sikand, and Martin Van Bruinessen (Amsterdam University Press, n.d.).

³⁴ Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Failure of the Wahhabi Campaign," *South East Asia Research* 18, no. 4 (December 18, 2010): 675–705, <https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2010.0015>.

³⁵ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Islamist Party, Electoral Politics And Da'wah Mobilization Among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia," *Journal Of Indonesian Islam* 6, no. 1 (June 1, 2012): 17, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2012.6.1.17-47>.

³⁶ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Islamist Party, Electoral Politics And Da'wah Mobilization Among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia," *Journal Of Indonesian Islam* 6, no. 1 (June 1, 2012): 17, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2012.6.1.17-47>.

political dynamics to mobilize elections effectively. One example Jung Hoon cites is PKS's Gorontalo and Ngada District strategy, which focuses on utilizing personalities and clientelistic networks to gain electoral support. This approach proved particularly effective in areas where the party could capitalize on the personal appeal of its candidates and build solid clientelistic ties with voters.³⁷

The strategies above show the importance of continuous negotiation with local culture by the Transnational Islamic Movement in society. This proves that negotiation is a dynamic process that is never finished because it relates to conflict, differences, and similarities. Whine (n.d.) also discussed other transnational Islamic strategies and explored the *Hizb at-Tahrir* movement. Whine classifies the HT strategy into 3 stages: 1) Recruitment and Dialogue, 2) Participation in the center of power, and 3) Implementation of Islam through the establishment of a Caliphate. Whine thoroughly discusses the changes in Hizb al Tahrir's strategy in the areas they visited, such as Jordan. If their strategy should have required recruitment and dialogue, HT participates in public office before recruitment and operations in secret. A more exciting strategy they also did in London after the WTC event that galvanized the world on November 9. HT conducted a public conference that expressed its opinion regarding the rejection of non-violence in the ruling regime as a violation of Islamic Shariah as a step to hide their controversial stance and to hide their anti-Jewish ideology³⁸.

HT was also present in Indonesia in the 90s as an Islamic transnational organization. Phenomena related to HT Strategy in Indonesia are explored by Osman.³⁹ In his article, he mentions HT's strategy, which is not directly involved in politics. In Indonesia, HT is more interested in attracting the masses through education and Da'wah. One of the steps they take is to build a Campus Da'wah Institution (LDK) that targets students to spread their ideas. This is coupled with distributing bulletins in Jakarta mosques to introduce their ideas.⁴⁰ Then, HT actively influences the masses through demonstrations to show its power. HT's genius strategy is also carried out in the bureaucratic system, and HT is not directly involved in the political and bureaucratic arena. However, they spread

³⁷ Jung Hoon Park, "Localised Impacts on Islamist Political Mobilisation in Indonesia: Evidence from Three Sub-Provincial Units," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 54, no. 3 (October 4, 2023): 450–79, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463423000474>.

³⁸ Michael Whine, "Is Hizb Ut-Tahrir Changing Strategy or Tactics?," 2006.

³⁹ Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, "The Transnational Network of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 18, no. 4 (December 18, 2010): 735–55, <https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2010.0018>.

⁴⁰ Osman.

their ideas through IPDN (The Institute of Local Governance, an educational institution that produces prospective bureaucrats to form the Nusrah network.⁴¹

Before the organization moved massively, Rijal in his study, concluded that these Transnational Islamic networks also cooperated through similar organizations to mobilize the masses through publications. Rijal argued that LDK, PII, LIPIA, and Hidayatullah Pesantren had developed a strategy to spread their da'wah more widely with the production of Sabili magazine. The magazine contains Islamist issues and agendas that support the enforcement of Islamic shari'ah in Indonesian public life, with an anti-Western outlook and the belief that Islam is the solution to the problems faced by Indonesia.⁴² Their most recent strategy is explored by Muttaqin (n.d) , who analyzes the changing strategies of Salafi, Wahabi, and HTI organizations in using various social media platforms such as YouTube, Tiktok, and Facebook as a direct interaction between users through live chat features, facilitating the spread of narratives of Islamic populism and extremism more quickly among internet users in Indonesia. These platforms provide a haven for Islamic populism and extremism to flourish, even after their formal organizations have been banned and disbanded.⁴³

The above research shows that transnational movements that are not products in Indonesia will continue to adjust to the changing context and the times. This research will complement research related to Islamic transnational strategies in Indonesia, primarily related to the Jama'at Tabligh Islamic missionary movement. Although JT has long spread in Indonesia, much research has yet to be related to JT and its activities. It is mainly related to negotiating JT's strategy towards the Indonesian traditional Islamic context. With that in mind, I need to know JT's strategy as a transnational missionary organization in spreading its ideology in Indonesia.

1.3.2 Jama'ah Tabligh in Temboro

Understanding the Jama'ah Tabligh movement in Indonesia will not be unfamiliar with Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro. In his writing, Noor (2013) has discussed al-Fatah

⁴¹ Mohamed Nawab and Mohamed Osman, "Terrorism and Political Violence Reviving the Caliphate in the Nusantara: Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia ' s Mobilization Strategy and Its Impact in Indonesia Reviving the Caliphate in the Nusantara: Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia ' s Mobilization Strategy and Its Im," no. October 2014 (2010): 37–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2010.496317>.

⁴² Syamsul Rijal, "Media and Islamism in Post-New Order Indonesia : The Case of Sabili" 12, no. 12 (2005): 421–74.

⁴³ Ahmad Khoiri and Jindar Muttaqin, "The Transmission Of Islamic Populism And Extremist Ideology Through Social Media In Indonesia" 40, no. 01 (n.d.), <http://tashwirulafkar.net/index.php/afkar/index>.

Pesantren as one of the places that played an essential role in the Jama'ah Tabligh movement in Indonesia. This is because al-Fatah was the first pesantren to accept the JT ideology in its body and grew into the largest Jama'ah Tabligh headquarters in Java. As a Tablighi pesantren, al-Fatah plays a role in and shapes its followers' religious knowledge and religious experience.⁴⁴ Eva Nisa (2014) revealed that the practice of teaching in Tablighi pesantren, which is dominated by Islamist discourse, influences their religious identity and commitment. Their da'wah experiences and transnational connections are essential in strengthening their desire to be part of the global Jama'ah Tabligh. Eva briefly discusses Tablighi pesantren in her article as a genius strategy for spreading JT's da'wah. Unfortunately, Eva did not explore the shift in JT's strategy from using the mosque as a medium in its dissemination to pesantren as a medium.⁴⁵

In addition, the impact of JT's presence in the al-Fatah pesantren environment has invited many changes, especially for the community around the pesantren. This was supported by the role of Kyai from al-Fatah, who could shape the community to become more religious. Arifin (2017), in his study, has analyzed the leadership authority models that occur in the al-Fatah pesantren and the role of kiai in shaping religious society in Temboro.⁴⁶ The ideological culture of JT and Kyai plays a significant role in shaping religion around the pesantren, which makes this Temboro village called Kampung Madinah.⁴⁷ Bu Nyai at al-Fatah pesantren also plays an essential role in developing JT da'wah, especially in the masturah da'wah programme.⁴⁸ The establishment of Kampung Madinah in Temboro Jama'ah Tabligh group has shown the process of Arabisation in the community. Pabajjah wrote in his research about the cultural shift from a secular community to a more Islamist community, which is shown in the tendency of their appearance with the use of cadar, niqab, robe, and abaya. In other study, Pabajjah et al, showed that the cultural change in the community resulted from JT's influence on the Pesantren and the role of Markaz Tabligh, especially about the role of their leaders who succeeded in making persuasive approaches in the community. Although the way of life of their community seems to show JT tendencies in their daily lives, the Temboro community does not directly abandon NU

⁴⁴ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

⁴⁵ Nisa, "Insights Into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'at."

⁴⁶ Arifin, "Authority of Spiritual Leadership at Pesantren Temboro Based on Jamaah Tabligh Ideology."

⁴⁷ Arifin et al., "The Kiai's Cultural Strategy in Shaping the Religious Culture of the Community of Temboro Magetan Village, East Java," December 15, 2021.

⁴⁸ Machmudi and Ardhani, "The Role of Women in Islamic Propagation: A Case Study of Tablighi Jamaat's Nyai of Pesantren Al-Fatah, East Java, Indonesia."

traditions.⁴⁹ Nurhayati, in their study, explored the transformation of Temboro Village into Kampung Madinah, showing the strong influence of JT. However, the practices and local wisdom of Indonesian Islam, including the traditions of NU and the *Shafi'iyah* Mazhab, remain embedded in the lives of the community. This study analyses the traditions of NU and JT, which can synergize with each other to form religiosity and social harmony in Temboro Village.⁵⁰

A more complete research, was studied by Badriza, who examined the socio-historical aspects of Madinah Village, which formed a subculture community based on the ideology of Jama'ah Tabligh. The success of this Madinah village is inseparable from the role of the al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School and Markaz JT as the center of education and the spread of da'wah.⁵¹ Although the research conducted by Badriza et al has explored the socio-historical aspects of Madinah Village and the role of institutions such as Pesantren al-Fatah and Markaz JT in forming a subculture community based on the ideology of Jama'ah Tabligh, the focus of the research planned by the author is more emphasis on how the adaptation and negotiation of Jama'ah Tabligh towards Traditional Islam affects changes in their da'wah strategy. Thus, the author will focus more on the dynamics of adaptation and negotiation in the Jama'ah Tabligh's da'wah strategy in Temboro by highlighting the role of pesantren branches as part of the da'wah dissemination strategy.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Strategic framing is crucial to the success of strategy and mobilization in Islamic activism. By effectively defining and identifying the problem and offering solutions appropriately to potential supporters involved in Islamic activism, it is possible to mobilize wide support and inspire collective action for the movement. In analyzing the strategy negotiation of Jama'ah Tabligh in Pesantren, the concept of strategic framing will be very helpful in presenting this research's findings. The concept of strategic framing in this analysis will refer to the Resource Mobilization Theory offered by Quintan Wiktorowicz.⁵² One of the best theories that talks about this topic would be resource mobilization theory, which stands as a major theory in social movement studies. It gives weight to resources,

⁴⁹ Pabbajah et al., "Kampung Madinah: The Construction of Jamaah Tabligh for the Arabization Process in Magetan, East Java."

⁵⁰ Nurhayati, Imam Muhsin, and Prabowo, "The Convergence of Nahdlatul Ulama and Jamaah Tabligh Traditions in Temboro Village, Magetan, East Java."

⁵¹ Badriza, Wildan, and Prabowo, "Kampung Madinah Temboro as Tablighi Jama'at Sub-Cultural Community: A Socio-Historical Studies."

⁵² Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Mark Tessler (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004).

organizational structures and strategic framing as the three main components needed to grasp the emergence, dynamics and success of any social movement. In this case, RMT can be a useful tool for analyzing the strategies of groups such as Jama'ah Tabligh — they heavily rely on grassroots mobilization plus community engagement. By looking at these components (resource mobilization, organizational structure and strategic framing) through the lens of RMT we will be able to get an idea about how others work with similar principles.

The Jama'ah Tabligh navigates its journey by resource leveraging, network construction, and framing diagnostic. Their primary objectives through these negotiation elements are fostering the Islamic practice and dispersing the movement ideologies. An analysis of these components would provide insights into the negotiation strategies they brought: the success of their mission and their reach to the broader Muslim community. By delving into these areas, we can obtain a richer comprehension of what they seek to achieve through their movement and how it relates back into themselves as well as others within this large collective body.

1.5 Research Significance

The presence of globalization has significantly influenced the development of Islamist movements and transnational Islamic organizations, including Jama'ah Tabligh. Through this research, deep insights will be gained into how Jama'ah Tabligh, as one of the transnational Islamic missionary movements, conducts negotiation and adaptation strategies in the Indonesian traditional Islamic context. This research will reveal the factors that will affect the negotiation process of Jama'ah Tabligh, such as the dynamics of Indonesian transnational Islam, interaction with local Islam, as well as social, cultural, and political changes that occur. Overall, the results of this research are expected to enrich the academic discourse in the study of transnational Islam and Islamic missionary movements in Indonesia, as well as contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of interaction between transnational Islam and traditional Islam in the country.

1.6 Methods

This research will begin with field research to gain an initial understanding of the location and subject of the research. The observation will be conducted in two Tabligh pesantren, namely Pesantren al-Fatah and Darussunah in Bogor. The selection of these two institutions is based on the reason that both institutions are pesantren affiliated with Jama'ah Tabligh. The reason for choosing these two pesantren is that al-Fatah will be the primary source because it is one of the pioneers of the Jama'ah Tabligh movement change strategy,

and the branch pesantren as a complementary source that provides additional information related to movement negotiations. The pesantren were chosen because they are closely related to the Temboro Markaz, which is the center of JT activities.

The data collection process for this research will be conducted in two ways: primary data sources through field observations and in-depth interviews and secondary data sources through literature references. Field observations will be conducted with the organization's permission in March until June 2024, while in-depth interviews will be conducted semi-structured with the help of digital recordings.

Data analysis in this research will be conducted through three stages. First, reading the data, creating codes, and labeling the most emergent themes in the in-depth interview process. In the first stage, the research conducted a process of reading the interview transcripts repeatedly to find the most frequently emerging themes, then used them as the basis for coding. Second, sorting the data according to the most relevant themes that emerged to answer the formulation of research problems. In this stage, the researcher has the right to filter the data by discarding some information that does not answer the question. Third, interpreting and synthesizing the results of in-depth interviews and observations of the phenomena found in the field. At this stage, the research will compile a scheme of negotiation strategies carried out by the Jama'ah Tabligh movement. Then, in the last stage, the research will conclude and summarise the research report on the practice of negotiation strategies carried out by JT.

Meanwhile, data analysis will be carried out by classifying the strategies used by JT and identifying the factors that influence its changes—selecting answers from the interview results to determine whether the data provided is sufficient. Interpreting and verifying observation data and interview data. Draw conclusions based on the results of the analyzed data.

CHAPTER 2

TRANSNATIONAL ISLAM IN INDONESIA HISTORY AND PRESENT DAY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the dynamics of transnational Islam in Indonesia. The emergence of various variants of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago today cannot be separated from the interaction of Indonesian Muslims with Islamic countries in the Middle East, which are centers of Islamic knowledge, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The relationship between Indonesian Muslims and Muslims outside this region has existed for centuries. Since the 15th century, the two holy cities in Arabia, Mecca and Medina, have been considered the center of the global Islamic network. The ulama in these two places developed their authority throughout the Muslim world. Contacts between Muslims in the Indonesian archipelago and the Middle East have been significant since the late 16th century and intensified in the late 19th century.

This chapter also discusses how the phenomenon of 'globalization' of Indonesian Islam involves direct imitation of international orientations rather than relying on local traditions. In Indonesia, the presence of these transnational movements is marked by the outbreak of Islamization in society as well as the presence of various Islamic revivalist ideas such as HTI, the Muslim Brotherhood-inspired PKS, and also the Salafi movement originating from Saudi Arabia, which was marked by the use of Islamic identity in the public sphere after the overthrow of Soeharto as president of Indonesia in 1998. This chapter argues that these transnational revivalist movements have adapted their strategies to the Indonesian social and political context.

2.2 The Dynamics of Transnational Islamic Indonesia

The emergence of many variants of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago today cannot be separated from the interaction of Indonesian Muslims in Islamic countries in the Middle East, which are centers of Islamic knowledge such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The relationship between Indonesian Muslims and Muslims outside this region has been established for hundreds of years. Moreover, historically, since the late 15th century, the two holy cities in Arabia, Mecca and Medina, have been considered the center of the global Islamic network. The Islamic scholars in these two places developed their authority throughout the Muslim world. They not only gave fatwas for issues in their territories but

also provided answers to questions sent by Muslims worldwide.⁵³ Contact between Muslims in the Indonesian archipelago and the Middle East has been significant since the late 16th century and intensified in the late 19th century. This was partly because many intellectuals had networked with Islamic centers in the Middle East and studied there, particularly Makkah, Madinah, Egypt, Yemen, Turkey, and Persia. This network with the Middle East played an important role as the source of the intellectual tradition of the ulama. It became their foundation for translation and Islamic ideas in colonial and post-independence periods.⁵⁴

Since the 1980s, the global influence of Islam on Indonesian Muslims has become increasingly apparent. This phenomenon of 'globalisation' of Indonesian Islam involves direct imitation of international orientations rather than reliance on local traditions. Socio-political events in the Middle East, including religious conflicts and clerical schisms, have had a significant impact on Indonesian Muslims. The globalization of Islam in Indonesia culminated in the collapse of the Suharto regime and Indonesia's transition to democracy, which saw Islamist groups bringing ideas from other countries to the fore. After the collapse of the New Order regime, Islamist organizations, both national and international, were able to move freely because, before the fall of the New Order regime (led by Soeharto), both national and transnational Islamic groups did not dare to reveal themselves. After all, they were restrained by the authoritarian regime of Soekarno (1959-1966) and the Soeharto regime (1966-1998).⁵⁵ At that time, there were rarely any stories, pictures, or news that showed that these organizations were involved in conspicuous activities, let alone violent or intimidating activities.⁵⁶ The presence of international Islamist organizations influenced Indonesian Islam through this global wave of Islam, which is called transnational Islam.

Academically, the debate on transnational Islam is more identical to the phenomenon in Western countries. The leading cause is the migration of Muslims into the Western world, whose population is increasing day by day. For example, the war in Syria

⁵³ Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2008).

⁵⁴ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah & Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Kencana, 2013).

⁵⁵ Marcus Mietzner, "Fighting Illiberalism with Illiberalism: Islamist Populism and Democratic Deconsolidation in Indonesia," *Pacific Affairs* 91, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 261–82, <https://doi.org/10.5509/2018912261>.

⁵⁶ Fealy, Greg. "Islamic Radicalism In Indonesia: The Faltering Revival?" *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 2004, 104–21. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27913255>.

has flooded Europe with refugees from the Middle East, most of whom are Muslims. The presence of these Muslim refugees in Europe attracted the attention of Western academics to study the phenomenon. A book entitled *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe* written by Gelhom & Lithman, 1988 appeared, and after its presence, literature related to transnational Islam increasingly appeared in the broader study area.⁵⁷ What is unique and exciting to Western scholars related to transnational Islam is that although Muslims live in Europe, even until their second generation appears, their relationship with their home country is not disrupted. Hasyim, in his book, mentions one example: the Turkish and Senegalese communities living in Germany and Paris. Although they live in the heart of Europe, they still refer to the muftis in their respective countries and do not ask the muftis in the countries where they live in Europe. For them, Their association with the correct Islam is not the one in Europe but the one in their homeland. From this context, research and studies are in demand in research centers worldwide. This perspective then examines the phenomenon in other regions, such as Indonesia.⁵⁸

One Western social scientist, Bowen, mentions three dimensions characterizing transnational Islam. First, transnational Islam is a form of demographic movement; second, transnational religious institutions exist. Third, transnational Islam is an area for debate about Islam.⁵⁹ The transnational Islamic wave or, usually understood as the wave of Islamism from the Middle East, is marked by a process of Arabisation marked by the emergence of groups that support the enforcement of Islamic sharia.⁶⁰ Hasan, in his study, reveals that one of the reasons for this wave is that young Islamists are exposed to transnational ideas and experiences through their interactions with members of the global Muslim ummah or community. Another reason is also due to some Indonesian intellectuals who participated in the global jihad in Afghanistan, where they came into contact with

⁵⁷ Ralph Grillo, "Islam and Transnationalism," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 5 (September 2004): 861–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183042000245589>.

⁵⁸ Syafiq Hasyim, *Islam Nusantara Dalam Konteks*, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Gading, 2018).

⁵⁹ John R. Bowen, "Beyond Migration: Islam as a Transnational Public Space," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 5 (September 2004): 879–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183042000245598>.

⁶⁰ Bruinessen, "Indonesian Muslims in a Globalising World: Westernisation, Arabisation and Indigenising Responses." Lihat juga, Baladas Ghoshal, "Arabization," *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 66, no. 1 (March 19, 2010): 69–89, <https://doi.org/10.1177/097492841006600105>.

jihadists from different parts of the world and explored ideas and ideologies in an environment based on the jihad ethos.⁶¹

Muslims' economic and labor migration to economically developed countries such as Saudi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and European countries has also facilitated the spread of Transnational Islamic Da'wah movements. Migrant workers often form religiously active communities and bring back the influence of transnational Islamic movements to their home countries. Social networks and the transmission of ideologies across national boundaries also support this. Through these networks, the ideologies and thoughts of transnational Islamic movements can be easily transmitted and influence individual communities in different countries.⁶² Imitated movements from the Middle East have mushroomed in Indonesia, and each of these movements is developing its contact channels and networks with Egypt, Yemen, Jordan, India, and Pakistan. The emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi groups, Hizbut Tahrir, and Jamaah Tabligh is significant evidence that transnational Islamic movements have sown their influence in Indonesia. The development of technology and communication has also contributed to the spread of transnational Islam, mainly through social media and information media that facilitate the spread of ideologies through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The movement's messages and thoughts are quickly and widely disseminated through these platforms to Muslim communities in various countries. This convenience also refers to mass mobilization and coordination through social media and facilitates access to global information.⁶³

In its development in Indonesia, this transnational Islamic group is better known as a jihad-orientated militant group. It tends to be categorized as an extreme Islamic sect because they commit acts of violence to achieve their goals. As mentioned earlier, historically, the Islamic movement that transcends national borders is a phenomenon that has occurred even before Indonesia's independence. However, it has received worldwide attention since the WTC or 9/11 incident in the 20th century, which witnessed the emergence of an unexpected and extraordinary phenomenon: the rise of Islam and Islamist

⁶¹ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Transnational Islam in Indonesia," in *Transnational Islam in South and Southeast Asia Movements, Networks, and Conflict Dynamics* (NBR Project Report, 2019).

⁶² Nil Mutluer, "Secularism, Religion, and Identification beyond Binaries: The Transnational Alliances, Rapprochements, and Dissent of German Turks in Germany," *International Journal of Religion* 1, no. 1 (November 22, 2020): 105–19, <https://doi.org/10.33182/ijor.v1i1.1201>.

⁶³ Tobias Lemke and Michael W Habegger, "A Master Institution of World Society? Digital Communications Networks and the Changing Dynamics of Transnational Contention," *International Relations* 32, no. 3 (September 26, 2018): 296–320, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117817747666>.

political movements.⁶⁴ In the Indonesian context, the rise of militant Islamist groups in post-Suharto Indonesia, calling for jihad and other acts of violence, underlies the perception that transnational Islamic groups are close to the term jihadist. The underlying reason for these militant groups' demand for the full implementation of sharia (Islamic law) is skepticism towards the existing system, which, according to them, has created opportunities for the global Zionist-American conspiracy to change the course of Indonesia into an Islamic state. Undoubtedly, the rising influence of radical Islam in post-Suharto Indonesia has raised questions about how Indonesian Islam is increasingly being infused by transnational Islamic discourse and activism emerging from the rise of global pan-Islamism and jihadism.

This discourse of violent Islamism seemed to be exacerbated and became more visible, especially during the Jakarta gubernatorial election in 2017. Islamists used smear propaganda and smear campaigns that included manipulating Islamic texts, discourses, and symbols to win the hearts and minds of everyday Muslims to gain support for their favored candidate (Anies Baswedan) over his rival (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama). Moreover, to make matters worse, these Islamist groups use strategies and tactics such as terrorizing, intimidating, threatening, rioting, and also hate speech that creates fear among the public.⁶⁵

It needs to be emphasized that the transnational Islamic discourse itself is only a movement that brings Islamic ideas across the territorial boundaries of a country by inviting Muslims to return to the core values of Islam in other countries. What needs to be clarified again here is that based on contemporary analyses, some transnational Islamist activities do not fall under the description of 'jihadist'.⁶⁶ It is only the militant Islamist propaganda that aims to establish an Islamic state based on Islamic principles and laws without considering the context that makes the misunderstanding of transnational Islam close to the terms 'jihadist', 'extreme,' and 'radical.' In fact, for some groups, this movement only teaches to re-establish Islamic shari'a (making Muslim societies closer to Islamic values) and expel Western influence in Muslim-majority countries without having to cause violence and conflict. Ayooob also mentioned that "in fact, transnational jihadi groups are a small

⁶⁴ Clara Egger and Raül Magni-Berton, "The Role of Islamist Ideology in Shaping Muslims Believers' Attitudes toward Terrorism: Evidence from Europe," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 44, no. 7 (July 3, 2021): 581–604, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1571696>.

⁶⁵ Sumanto Al Qurtuby, "The Rise Of Islamism And The Future Of Indonesian Islam," *Journal International Studies* 16 (December 30, 2020): 105–28, <https://doi.org/10.32890/jis2020.16.7>.

⁶⁶ Ayooob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*.

minority among transnational Islamist actors, as well as among jihadi groups themselves, most of which operate within national borders and have local, rather than global, goals."

The existence of various characteristics and purposes in the transnational Islamic movement makes Ayoob divide the classification of this transnational Islamic movement into three parts. Firstly, transnational jihadists, which are Islamist groups that transform the primarily defensive mode of Islamism in which mainstream Islamists operate both domestically and around the world into an offensive mode by attacking the source of the problem - as they see it - which lies outside the Muslim world. The focus of their activities is on expelling Western influences that are perceived to be preventing Muslims from creating Darul Islam at the national as well as the global level by making indiscriminate violence, rather than agitation and mobilization, the main instrument of political action. Secondly, transnational missionaries, referred to as *dawa* (literally 'call'), only aim to make the existing Muslim population better Muslims in terms of following Islamic ritual practices and codes of moral behavior. Moreover, finally, the transnational Islamic political trend explicitly seeks to recreate an Islamic caliphate based on the model of the 'righteous caliphs' of early Islam without openly advocating violent activity.⁶⁷

If we refer to the classification offered by Ayoob, then Jama'ah Tabligh belongs to the category of transnational missionaries who only aim to make the Muslim population a better Muslim. However, what needs to be questioned now is how Jama'ah Tabligh introduces this Islamist organization in the Indonesian context. Especially if we consider the literature above, which stereotypes transnational Islam as militant Islam that is not suitable for the Indonesian context. Before focusing on that, in this chapter, I present some transnational organizations that are also present in Indonesia that have changed their strategies and adapted to the Indonesian context. Pressure from the Indonesian government and pro-democracy Muslim groups on Islamist discourse, however, gradually forced these transnational Islamist groups to abandon their high-level politics and shift towards a strategy of implementing sharia from below at the grassroots level. No longer seeing violent jihad as a relevant means of realizing their goals, many groups now argue that *da'wah* is more appropriate for raising the awareness of Indonesian Muslims of their duty to uphold Sharia supremacy. These groups now also believe that non-violent endeavors are more

⁶⁷ Ayoob.

appropriate to Indonesia's current situation and are crucial to maintaining Muslim solidarity and the long-term struggle for a comprehensive Islamic order.

2.3 Negotiation and Adaptation Strategies of Islamic Transnational in Indonesia

2.3.1 Strategy and Tactics of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia

Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia was the most precise illustration of the presence of transnational Islam in Indonesia. The organization had been present in Indonesia since the 1980s and is now said to have taken root on the country's secular campuses. What HTI stands for was establishing an Islamic government based on the rule of a caliph. However, the organization is based in London, United Kingdom, exploiting the country's freedom of expression. Hizbut Tahrir is a political party with links to Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, which means the party of liberation based on the ideas of Taqiuddin al-Nabhani, but in Indonesia, it was a dakwa organization and was not registered as an Islamic party and did not take part in elections. Although HTI was classified as a terrorist organization and was banned in several countries for its terrorism and militancy, in Indonesia, it was not associated with terrorism at all.⁶⁸ It should be noted that despite had the same ideological basis, HTI was not identical to Hizbut Tahrir (HT) in other parts of the world. HTI instead chosen a moderate and intellectual way as a means of da'wah.⁶⁹

HTI grew up in the Indonesian context and has distinctive Indonesian characteristics. One of these is the mandate to promote the Khilafah ideology peacefully. HTI often raises international issues affecting Islam and the Muslim world as the basis for its campaign towards the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. However, its activists are also concerned with various domestic social and political issues.⁷⁰ Despite trying to avoid electoral politics, HTI realizes that it needs a broader mass base than its cadres at the student level. HTI is undergoing a transition where it develops varied messages to suit different audiences while maintaining its initial strategy. In Indonesia, Hizbut Tahrir came first in Bogor. It started with a prominent cleric in Bogor, *Mama* (a nickname for a kyai in Sundanese) Abdullah bin Nuh, who visited his son in Sydney in the 1970s. Abdullah bin Nuh met an HT follower in Australia and was fascinated by HT's methodology, which, in

⁶⁸ Ricklefs, M.C. *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A Political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, c. 1930 to Present*. NUS Press, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1qv3fh>.

⁶⁹ Ken Ward, "Non-Violent Extremists? Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63, no. 2 (June 2009): 149–64, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357710902895103>.

⁷⁰ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, "The Quest for Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37, no. 4 (2009): 623–45, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853109X460219>.

his mind, offered sustainable and practical solutions to the problems of the Muslim world. In 1982, he invited one of the HT leaders in Australia, Baghdadi, to teach at his boarding school, al-Ghazali. This marked the beginning of HTI Indonesia. Since Abdullah's students were mostly studying at the Bogor Agricultural Institute, this was the entry point for the HT movement to internalize its ideology among Indonesian students.⁷¹

HTI utilizes Muslim student institutions to expand its network and support. They expand the scope of their da'wah by using the scope of official religious bodies sponsored by the campus for recruitment and organizational purposes. At this stage, shadowy organizational structures operate behind informal networks. The first body used was the Student Islamic Spirituality Board (BKIM) at Bogor Agricultural University (IPB). They expanded their da'wah so secretly that some leaders were unaware they were part of HTI. In addition, Baghdadi also expanded HTI's ideas through recitations conducted at several mosques in Bogor. In 1987, it was only then that they were informed that they were part of HTI, and to expand its followers outside Bogor, HTI began to pioneer the formation of student groups known as Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK) in several universities, such as in Bandung, Surabaya, and Makassar. HT's early recruits were Al-Khatthath, Hafidz Abdurrahman, Ismail Yusanto, Zulia Ilmawati, and Fahmi Amhar; they were actively involved in the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK) and managed to influence members with HT's ideas. This LDK is sheltered by the Forum Silaturahmi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (FSLDK some *other literature is called BKLDK*), which is the network for spreading HT ideology outside Bogor. Most of HT's followers in the student environment are public students with a background in the large NU organization, but they study religious knowledge at the Campus Da'wah Institution. This makes it easy for HTI to influence them because of their ignorance of religious knowledge. With the collapse of the New Order regime, the group began to surface due to greater democratic freedoms in the post-reform era. The group began to campaign openly and promote its ideology, gaining popularity among educated Muslim youth. The first major public event held by HTI was a conference in Jakarta in May 2000, where they promoted the benefits of an Islamic caliphate.⁷²

⁷¹ Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, "Reviving the Caliphate in the Nusantara : Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's Mobilization Strategy and Its Impact in Indonesia," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22, no. 4 (September 14, 2010): 601–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2010.496317>.

⁷² Osman, "The Transnational Network of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia." Andri Moewashi Idharoel Haq, "Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's (HTI) Efforts the Idea of Caliphate and Recruit Members after Being Banned by the Government," *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 72, <https://doi.org/10.30983/it.v7i1.6188>.

What is interesting about HTI is its brilliant strategy to mobilize Muslim organizations across groups and approach strategic groups such as Muhammadiyah or NU.⁷³ For example, they utilize cadres from backgrounds in Nahdatul Ulama (NU or traditional Islamic organizations in Indonesia). The existence of this NU background makes it easier for their cadres to infiltrate and spread their ideology amid moderate organizations such as NU. HTI expansion has infiltrated the core of NU at both the structural and grassroots levels. Figures such as Kyai Abdallah and Kyai Sajad from Pamekasan Madura, for example, represent an ideological shift from moderate Islam to radical Islamism. As part of an NU-affiliated pesantren in Banyu Anyar, Pamekasan, Kyai Abdullah can attract a large audience among Muslims in Madura because he is considered the heir to the family lineage of the esteemed kyai in the pesantren. With his students and the wider community, he campaigned for the importance of Khilafah as the ideology of HTI. The shift in prominence from NU to HTI in Pamekasan can be explained by their relationship with Sarekat Islam (SI), which is politically more prone to hardline ideologies than NU.⁷⁴

In 2017, the organization was disbanded by the Jokowi regime as it was deemed to be against Pancasila.⁷⁵ The action taken by the Government was to issue a government regulation (Perppu) no. 2 of 2017, which has now been formalized into Law on Community Organizations (Ormas Law) No. 16 of 2017.⁷⁶ This was followed up by the official revocation of HTI's license in Indonesia. Even though the Government has dissolved it, HTI remains a movement that maintains its transnational ideology but returns to using the underground movement during the New Order era. Now, they are shifting their strategy to using online media-based mobilizing machines. As a result of the dissolution of HTI, organizations such as the Campus Da'wah Institution (LDK) also suffered the consequences of having their permits revoked by the campus rector for being affiliated with HTI. This did not make HTI give up. Instead, they remained active by recruiting members and conducting covert HTI campaigns. They also began to focus more on online content through infographics and videos and even made films about the Khilafah to spread their teachings

⁷³ Mohammad Iqbal Ahnaf, "Between Revolution and Reform: The Future of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 2, no. 2 (July 2009): 69–85, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467580902822163>.

⁷⁴ Masdar Hilmy, "The Rise and Fall of 'Transnational' Islam in Indonesia The Future of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)," in *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2020).

⁷⁵ The foundation of the state and philosophy of the nation and state of the Republic of Indonesia

⁷⁶ PERPPU No. 2 Tahun 2017 Tentang Perubahan Atas Undang-undang Nomor 17 Tahun 2013 Tentang Organisasi Kemasyarakatan (peraturan.go.id).

through social media. However, they still make limited use of leaflets, posters, and magazines. LDK affiliated with HTI or what is called the Coordinating Committee of Campus Da'wah Institutions (BKLDK/FSLDK) began to find other ways, such as by infiltrating other LDK, namely intra-campus institutions whose existence is not affiliated with specific religious movements. They will also slowly shift the leadership in the LDK, making recruiting new members easier.⁷⁷

Lastly, HTI also uses its cadres to preach in different capacities; we can see this from one of its members, Felix Siau, who is an active member of HTI. He created the YukNgaji community by utilizing the hijrah trend among young people to recruit members. Indirectly, Felix can also disguise his Islamist agendas in every post and preaching. From here, we can see that HTI is trying to continue to spread its ideological views, but its HTI identity is hidden so that it can still recruit new members and spread its core ideology, namely the Khilafah.⁷⁸ From this, we can see that HTI is an Islamic organization consistent in its ideology. For them, once khilafah remains khilafah. They only changed their strategy to avoid conflict and the restraints and bans imposed by Indonesia.

2.3.2 Transnational Inspiration: PKS and The Muslim Brotherhood

The Indonesian Islamic movement does not only consist of movements that are incorporated and affiliated with Transnational Islam. Among them is a movement inspired by Transnational Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, namely PKS. The PKS movement was formed in the late 1970s and took inspiration from the Middle East. PKS emerged from discussion forums among students of several secular universities and was then transformed into a political movement. The movement was brought by Indonesian students returning from Egypt, along with the Muslim Brotherhood's ideas on tactics and organization that they brought with them. One of the main ideas they borrowed was that character building, and religious education (*tarbiyah*) were the best ways to build a movement for social change. The first *tarbiyah* cells sprouted on Indonesian campuses in the late 1970s or early 1980s. By the mid-1980s, *tarbiyah* Islamists began to take control of state-sanctioned religious training programs on top campuses. In its political institutionalization, PKS has three stages. The first stage is the campus proselytizing phase,

⁷⁷ Haq, "Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's (HTI) Efforts the Idea of Caliphate and Recruit Members after Being Banned by the Government."

⁷⁸ Wai Weng Hew, "THE ART OF DAKWAH: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siau," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2, 2018): 61–79, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757>.

the second is the formation of the student movement, and the third is the political movement.⁷⁹

Initially, their movement was an apolitical da'wah movement because their strategy was to instil their Islamist ideas through the Campus Da'wah Institution and use campus mosques as the headquarters of their movement. This was done because they avoided confrontation with the state and believed that only the path of da'wah and education would have a longer reach.⁸⁰ Their political movement began when Soeharto resigned on May 21, 1998, due to a press freedom law inaugurated by the MPR under the new President, B.J. Habibie, granting permits to establish political parties. PKS figures, who at that time were members of the Indonesian Muslim Student Action Community (KAMMI), began to consider establishing an Islamic political party. They redesigned strategies to achieve their ideological goals in a more democratic political system. PKS incarnated themselves by registering themselves with a political party that would compete in the upcoming general elections, and they called this new party Partai Keadilan. However, it had Islamist ideas and a platform to implement Shariah law. The party did not make it through the election as it only received 1.4 percent of the vote nationally in 1999, which made it unsuccessful in contesting the next general election. Then, in the next general election, 2004, the party was recycled as PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) while dropping its Islamist aspirations to become more moderate.

The transformation of the Tarbiyah movement (da'wah institution) into a political party, PKS, is not to abandon its da'wah mission but to advocate the unification of da'wah and political institutions (*al-ḥizb huwa al-jamā'ah wa al-jamā'ah hiya al-ḥizb*). PKS is neither an apolitical da'wah institution nor a purely pragmatic political institution; it manifests a combination of social and political institutions (socio-political da'wah institution).⁸¹ According to Yon Machmudi, citing Van Bruinessen, although PKS - which at that time was Jema'ah Tarbiyah - played an essential role in building good individual character and being apolitical, they also showed rejection of the Pancasila state and un-Islamic practices in modern Indonesia. However, PKS does not implicitly reject the

⁷⁹ Burhanuddin Muhtadi, *Dilema PKS: Suara Dan Syariah* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2012).

⁸⁰ Yon Machmudi, "Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)" (the Australian National University, 2006).

⁸¹ Nostalgawan Wahyudi, "Between Islam, Politics, and Democracy: The Political Ideology of Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)," *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities* 5, no. 1 (October 5, 2017): 11–25, <https://doi.org/10.14203/jissh.v5i1.23>.

existence of the Pancasila state. They oppose the imposition of Pancasila as the "Single Principle" (Asas Tunggal) on all political parties and mass organizations.⁸²

It should be noted that PKS's disapproval of government policies is not just due to the rejection of Pancasila. Nevertheless, they opposed the government's policy of ignoring other ideologies that were considered to conflict with Pancasila because, at the time, the Soeharto regime continued to try to impose its interpretation of Pancasila on Indonesian society at large.⁸³ In politics, PKS appears to be more pragmatic, especially in its efforts to win various direct elections at the regional level (pilkada). PKS does not hesitate to help candidates who can afford to pay by providing loans through party institutions and its extensive mobilization network and collaborating with other parties, including the nationalist-secular PDI-P and the Christian religious Damai Sejahtera Party in 2009. PKS's pragmatism does not necessarily moderate its image as a party that harbors a hidden agenda to establish an Islamic state. Its ambition to develop da'wah as a complementary strategy to dominate the Indonesian political landscape must be revised. But, in its da'wah activities, PKS has deliberately expanded its Islamisation agenda by targeting homemakers, professionals, and a wider audience through *majlis ta'lim* and recitation activities. In shaping cadre and mass mobilization, PKS has a significant strategy targeting students on campuses by using PKS's dominance over formal organizations among students, including BEM (Student Executive Committee), BPM (Student Representative Committee), and Islamic Activism Unit (Rohis), which operate from department to university level. Not stopping there, PKS also attracts campus elites, whom it uses to mobilize students and respond to national and international issues.

In the realm of education, PKS established the Iqra' Klub institution, a da'wah wing aimed at high school students or teenagers; this group aims to increase student da'wah activities in Islamic activity units and make students obsessed with becoming activists with their dream of restoring the glory of the ummah starting with instilling Islamic values in individuals.⁸⁴ PKS also builds coalitions with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). These NGOs serve as intermediaries for PKS services to obtain resources and logistics and

⁸² Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* / Yon Machmudi (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008). Yon Machmudi, "The PKS and Tarbiyah Movement: Its Agenda and Future in Indonesia," in *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 163–81.

⁸³ Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* / Yon Machmudi.

⁸⁴ Hasan, "Islamist Party, Electoral Politics and Da'wah Mobilization among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia."

deliver faith-based social services to targeted Muslim constituencies across the archipelago. Such organizations include the women's welfare association, Salimah; Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu Indonesia (JSIT Indonesia); zakat/charity organizations such as Rumah Zakat and PKPU, to name a few.⁸⁵ In addition, in mobilizing its voters, PKS tries not to oppose traditional Islamic elements by using Javanese cultural symbols such as wayang performances to show its openness to the Indonesian culture. They do this to remove the suspicion of the public that they have Wahabi agendas that try to purify Islam by rejecting Indonesian culture.⁸⁶

2.3.3 Different Strategies and Approaches in Salafism

Salafism is one of the fastest-growing Islamic transnational movements that has spread beyond its home country of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East to Europe, North America, East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. However, along with its spread across the globe, Salafism is not a unified and monolithic movement as it is divided into several factions engaged in intra-Salafi struggles over how Salafi doctrine is interpreted and applied by its supporters. It is a movement with fragmented faces and different voices, leaders, and organizations. Saudi Arabia exported Salafism around the 1970s due to the skyrocketing world oil prices, which provided considerable economic benefits to Saudi Arabia, leading the kingdom to sponsor various proselytizing activities across the Muslim world.⁸⁷ Saudi Arabia has made the spread of Salafism in the Muslim world one of its critical foreign policies to maintain its central position in the Muslim world and also to counter the influence of the Iranian revolution on the Saudi family's political dominance.⁸⁸ The global spread of Salafism is also made possible by the long tradition of student and cleric relations in Muslim countries. After returning to their home countries, graduates of Middle Eastern universities or informal educational institutions, especially in Saudi Arabia, maintain their networks with the scholars they studied. As such, these graduates are

⁸⁵ KIKUE HAMAYOTSU, "The Political Rise of the Prosperous Justice Party in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 51, no. 5 (October 1, 2011): 971–92, <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2011.51.5.971>.

⁸⁶ Mark Woodward et al., "Getting Culture: A New Path for Indonesia's Islamist Justice and Prosperity Party?," *Contemporary Islam* 7, no. 2 (July 12, 2013): 173–89, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-012-0187-x>.

⁸⁷ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Salafism, Knowledge Production, and Religious Education in Indonesia," in *The New Santri* (Indonesia: ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 2020).

⁸⁸ Hasan, "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia: Transnational Dynamics and Local Development."

committed to spreading Salafism by giving lectures, translating, and publishing the works of their teachers.

Salafism began to flourish in Indonesia in the second half of the 1980s, with young men sporting long beards (*lihya*), flowing Arabic-style robes (*jalabiyya*), turbans (*imama*) and ankle-length trousers (*isbal*) and women wearing black, full-body veils (*niqab*) in public places. People who identify themselves as Salafis, claiming to be followers of pious ancestors (Salaf al-Salih), tend to stand apart from the 'anything goes' open society around them. The inflow of Salafism mainly comes from the Jakarta-based Indonesian Da'wah Islamiyah Council (DDII) and the Islamic and Arabic Studies Institute (LIPIA). With substantial financial support from Saudi Arabia, DDII is not only active in sponsoring the construction of mosques and Islamic schools but also in sending young Indonesians to study at various universities in the Middle East. As the international branch of Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University in Riyadh, LIPIA is here to intensify the Saudi campaign by providing free higher education to the young generation of Indonesian Muslims.⁸⁹ Salafi groups live in small, exclusive, close-knit communities. Salafis believe that Muslim society must first be Islamised through a gradual evolutionary process that includes education (*tarbiyyah*) and purification (*tasfiyyah*) before the full implementation of sharia can be realized. As a strategy to achieve this goal, they have been fully committed to da'wah activities, participating in the establishment of *halqah* (study circles) and *daurah* (workshops). In Indonesia, the strategy employed by Salafis in their da'wah is closely linked to Islamic educational institutions. Initially, their da'wah started from grassroots education through mosques in villages that they used. They took permission from the local community and established small hermitages around the mosque that they called similar to *pesantren*; however, due to their exclusive, closed, self-limiting, and overtly rejecting local religious practices. They lost their relevance and failed in proselytizing, culminating in a split within the Salafis that differentiated them in terms of ideology and a strategy for continued proselytizing.⁹⁰

In his article, Hasan divided the Salafis into two parts, namely *Salafi Yemeni* and *Salafi Sururi*. The term *Salafi Yemeni* refers to a branch of Salafism that is more known for its focus on Islamic education and religious knowledge; this Salafi model is apolitical and focuses on passive da'wah. Whereas *Salafi Sururi* is a more politically active model of

⁸⁹ Hasan.

⁹⁰ Hasan, "The Failure of the Wahhabi Campaign."

Salafi and is often associated with calls for Jihad and the establishment of an Islamic state. *Salafi Sururi* refers more to Salafi activists who advocate for political and societal reform and the re-establishment of the caliphate through political activities.⁹¹ Another study, Iqbal, divides Salafi into three sections: *Yemeni Salafis*, who represent mainstream Salafis, mainly focusing on propaganda and avoiding politics; *Haraki Salafis*, who are politically minded but engage in non-violent political activism; and *Violent Jihad Salafis*, who highly politicize and radicalize Salafi doctrines and engage in jihad as warfare and acts of violence. The existence of this division shows the fragmentation in their ways of mass mobilization and the differences in their da'wah methods.⁹²

Of these three types of Salafi groups, it is the Haraki Salafis who continue to receive Saudi funding as they are in line with Saudi Salafi ideas against violence and seem to be growing as they shift into a more moderate organization. They concentrate their da'wah activities through offline media, primarily through educational institutions such as foundations and learning centers. On the other hand, the Yemeni Salafis have intensified their mobilization strategy through online media due to a need for more resources, leading them to strengthen their mobilization through online media. They use the internet to respond to current issues and overcome the lack of resources. In particular, they sought to attract more legitimacy, solidarity, sympathetic support, and celebrity endorsements. This is an attempt to manage limited moral resources, recruits, and followers as they lack human resources and financial support, to address the lack of material resources, and to network to address the lack of social-organizational resources.⁹³

In other literature, it is mentioned that Salafism continues to grow in Indonesia and expand its influence beyond Salafi circles, reaching students in high schools and universities through their madrasah strategy. They also intensify their strategy to reach beyond their group by producing Salafi literature to contextualize and adapt Salafi messages in schools and university education. They produce textbooks and Islamic literature that are distributed among students. These books are imbued with the discourse of revitalizing the prophetic tradition and the example of the *salaf al-salih* and translating Salafi reference books, including their theological literature. This is characterized by a shift

⁹¹ Hasan.

⁹² Asep Muhamad Iqbal, "Cyber-Activism and the Islamic Salafi Movement in Indonesia" (Murdoch University, 2017).

⁹³ Iqbal.

in the theological books adopted by schools from adopting *Asy'ariyah Maturidiyah* theology to Wahabi theology.⁹⁴

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter asserts that the dynamics of transnational Islam in Indonesia result from continuous interaction between Indonesian Muslims and centers of Islamic knowledge in the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This interaction has been going on for centuries, strengthening the global Islamic network with Mecca and Medina at its center. In the modern context, the globalization of Islam in Indonesia reflects not only the adaptation of local traditions but also the adoption of international orientations. This phenomenon is seen through the spread of Islamic revivalist ideas and the emergence of movements such as HTI, PKS, and the Salafi Movement, which, although inspired by the Middle East, have adapted their strategies to Indonesian social and political conditions. The chapter concludes that these transnational movements play an essential role in Islamization in Indonesia, showing how outside influences can be adapted to local contexts to produce unique and complex religious dynamics.

⁹⁴ Hasan, "Salafism, Knowledge Production, and Religious Education in Indonesia."

CHAPTER 3

BOUNDLESS PREACHING: MODELS OF JAMA'AH TABLIGH STRATEGIES AROUND THE WORLD

3.1 Introduction

Mandaville (2001: 109), in his book, inquires what happens to Islam when it 'travels, migrates, or is 'transplanted'?. He begins his argument with the question of how these Muslims move from one place to another yet still remember their place of origin, perhaps even wanting to return, and concerns how that space travels with them and changes along the way.⁹⁵ This chapter will emphasize the changes that happen to Muslims as they travel, changes caused by conversations in the societies they enter, and important dialogues within Islam itself - in other words, engagement with other Muslims. It implies a politics of cultural negotiation where different conceptions of Islam are mediated and new critical capacities emerge. Negotiation is how people with conflicting interests determine how they will work together. Negotiation involves interdependence, where both parties influence each other. In this context, negotiation will center on the models of a movement's strategy to become accepted by the other side while accepting the other side.⁹⁶

The previous discussion discussed the negotiation strategies of transnational movements in general and emphasized globalized Islamist movements that focus on political Islam, as well as Islamic Jihadist groups. The movement is also characterized by its specific use of Islamic traditions and teachings, which concentrate on the authoritative features of Islamic scriptures and jurisprudence. This chapter will discuss the strategies of transnational Islamic movements that emphasize the religion of spirituality rather than a religion of law as developed by political Islam. The Transnational Islamic Movement, also known as the global revivalist Islamic Movement, have one of the movements that keep away from political contests in the Islamic world. This movement emphasizes the importance of the mission of da'wah without involving itself in political activities and is referred to as Jama'ah Tabligh. This movement chose a Sufi approach amid most of the Islamic movements in Southeast Asia in the 1920s, which instead used socio-political power to revive Islam.

⁹⁵ Peter G. Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics* (London: Routledge, 2001), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203453155>.

⁹⁶ Brett, *Negotiating Globally How to Negotiate Deals, Resolve Disputes, and Make Decisions Across Cultural Boundaries*.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what Jama'ah Tabligh is and its strategy in the international arena and in Indonesia itself. How does the movement localize the global Islamic movement and, at the same time, globalize local Islam? Applying the Tabligh ideology, which originated in South Asia, to the local context in which they operate, Jama'ah Tabligh - consciously or unconsciously - is entangled in a dialectical process in which the local is an inseparable part of the global, and vice versa. This chapter argues that Jama'ah Tabligh's ability as a transnational movement depends on its ability to adapt its core messages and strategies to various contexts. The chapter emphasizes the movement's quest for spiritual awakening, its reliance on mosque-centered activities, and its strategic use of personalities, population migration, and local narratives to engage with various audiences. In addition, the chapter recognizes the possibility for JT to engage in political activities, especially if JT works in the interests of an Islamist political establishment. The final part of the chapter discusses Jama'ah Tabligh's relationship with pesantren, along with examples of pesantren that I will discuss.

3.2 Jama'ah Tabligh

Khuruj (Jaulah) is a popular key term for easily identifying what Jama'ah Tabligh is. *Khuruj* is a ritual that is one of JT's points of difference from other religious movements. *Khuruj* is one of the obligatory rituals they perform to preach by forming traveling preaching groups consisting of 10-15 people (can or less) who go to Muslim areas to conduct house-to-house preaching. The emphasis of *Khuruj* is to distinguish JT from other Islamist groups, and this is because the way the Jama'ah Tabligh dress is very similar to the Jema'at Islamiyah movement that was also born in India - that is, men are identified wearing long robes and beards, and women wear all-black gamis and wear a niqab. For those unfamiliar with *Khuruj* and Jama'ah Tabligh, it is a movement that aims to reaffirm fellow Muslims in the faith through missionary work. This movement is a response to the feeling that faith among Muslims is slipping. They invite people to the local mosque to pray and listen to sermons on the virtues of a pious life.⁹⁷

Jama'ah Tabligh is a South Asian movement that emerged in Mewat, South of Delhi, India, in 1927. Jama'ah Tabligh (also known as Jama'ah Tabligh) is the unofficial name given to a transnational Islamic movement that focuses on the revival of the Muslim Faith and a return to the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). The movement was founded by Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi, a 40-year-old Madrasa teacher concerned about the

⁹⁷ Dietrich Reetz, "Sūfi Spirituality Fires Reformist Zeal: The Tablighī Jamā'at in Today's India and Pakistan," *Archives de Sciences Sociales Des Religions*, no. 135 (September 1, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.3715>.

condition of the masses of Muslims. Jama'ah Tabligh draws on the pristine South Asian Islamic tradition birthed by *Dar al-Ulum* Deoband in northern India.⁹⁸ However, Jama'ah Tabligh incorporates Sufi-inspired rituals in repeated and carefully controlled ceremonies and gatherings. Initially, the movement existed in a local context. It only aimed to rid the Meo Muslim community of un-Islamic beliefs and practices amidst the social and economic conditions of the Meo in the Mewat region at that time, which tended to be very poor, and the Muslims had syncretic religious beliefs and practices.⁹⁹ At the time, the movement competed with Hindu proselytizing activities among Muslim tribal conclaves. Ilyās saw Mewat as 'backward' and its inhabitants nominally Muslims who had lost touch with orthodox practices, with a hybrid Muslim-Hindu identity. He wanted them to abandon the remnants of Hindu culture and embrace Islam in totality, arguing that it was the way to revitalize.¹⁰⁰ Today, however, Jama'ah Tabligh operates in all countries where there are Muslims and is described as the world's transnational Faith renewal movement. One of the major goals of the Tabligh Jama'at is to save the entire Ummah and the world; therefore, the Tabligh Jama'at eschews social and political ideologies generated by nationalism and remains committed to sanitizing Muslim practices at the international level. Even their annual International Jama'ahs in Bangladesh and Pakistan are often claimed, both by their people and researchers, to be the second largest Muslim gathering in the world after the Hajj Jama'ah.¹⁰¹

They have a six-point program.¹⁰² It is these Six Points that form the foundation of Jama'ah Tabligh and comprises what Ilyas believes to be the basic principles of moral behavior, consisting of the pillars of faith (*kalima*), the five daily prayers (*salat*), knowledge of the principles of Islam (*'ilm*) to remember Allah (*dhikr*), respect for a Muslim (*ikram-al-*

⁹⁸ B. D Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs.," *Isim Paper*, 2002, 1–24.

⁹⁹ Jan A. Ali and Rizwan Sahib, *A Sociological Study of the Tabligh Jama'at* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98943-9>.

¹⁰⁰ Zacharias Pieri, "Tablighī Jamā'at," in *Handbook of Islamic Sects and Movements* (BRILL, 2021), 49–72, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004435544_005.

¹⁰¹ M. Ahmad, "Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia: The Jama'at-i-Islami and Tablighi Jamaat," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994). Yoginder Sikand, *The Origins and Development of Tablighi Jamaat* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2002). Farish A. Noor, "Pathans to the East! The Development of the Tablighi Jama'at Movement in Northern Malaysia and Southern Thailand," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 1 (May 1, 2007): 7–25, <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-2006-040>. B. D. Metcalf, *Islam in South Asia in Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009). Eva F. Amrullah, "Seeking Sanctuary in 'the Age of Disorder': Women in Contemporary Tablighi Jamā'at," *Contemporary Islam* 5, no. 2 (July 7, 2011): 135–60, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-010-0147-2>.

¹⁰² M. K. Masud, "The Growth and Development of Tablighi Jamā'at in India," in *Travelers in Faith: Studies of Tablighi Jamā'at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal*, ed. M. K. Masud (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

muslim), sincerity of purpose (*Ikhlās al-niyyah*), and saving time for worldly work and donating that time to da'wah work (*tafriq al-waqt*).¹⁰³ For JT, religious education was based on the Qur'an and Hadith, especially on a book by Maulana Mohammad Zakariya entitled *Fazāil al-A'mal* (Rewards and Good Acts). He published this text in the 1950s, later known as Tablighi Kurikulum. This book is always read aloud, and its contents are repeatedly memorized and embodied in daily practice because, for JT, the text alone is dead and can live if practiced.¹⁰⁴

Some scholars such as Metcalf, Ali, and Pieri have argued that while the Jama'ah Tabligh is a sizable movement, JT does not keep official records of participants in the movement, its structure is flexible and theoretically, any Sunni Muslim can move in and out at will. However, promotion through the ranks of the movement requires disciplined dedication.¹⁰⁵ Here, however, subscribe to Reetz's view, with which Horstmann also agrees, that reports describing the Jama'ah as an informal association without a written constitution, fixed organizational rules and procedures, leadership hierarchy, or official records are untrue.¹⁰⁶ The enormous growth of the movement requires considerable institutions to guide, control, homogenize, and motivate. Furthermore, although Jama'ah Tabligh at the leadership level reproduces the myth of an egalitarian movement with no specific organization involved, the movement is highly hierarchical, rigid, and powerful." To date, it is estimated that JT has 80 million followers worldwide.¹⁰⁷ Jama'ah Tabligh is also not well known among non-Muslims and perhaps also ordinary Muslims. This is because JT avoids open politics and limits itself and its work to other Muslims. Jama'ah Tabligh members are known for their ascetic lifestyle and their aversion to politics, which

¹⁰³ Ahmad, "Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia: The Jama'at-i-Islami and Tablighi Jamaat." Sikand, *The Origins and Development of Tablighi Jamaat*. Masud, "The Growth and Development of Tablighi Jamā'at in India."

¹⁰⁴ Alexander Horstmann, "Transnational Ideologies and Actors at the Level of Society in South and Southeast Asia," April 2009.

¹⁰⁵ Barbara Metcalf, "Travelers' Tales in the Tablighi Jamaat," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588, no. 1 (July 8, 2003): 136–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203588001009>. Ali, "Tablighi Jama'at as an Emulatable Model of Faith Renewal." Pieri, "Tablighi Jamā'at."

¹⁰⁶ Dietrich Reetz, "The 'Faith Bureaucracy' of the Tablighi Jama'at," in *Colonialism, Modernity, and Religious Identities: Religious Reform Movements in South Asia*, ed. Gwilym Beckerlegge (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 98–124. Horstmann, "Transnational Ideologies and Actors at the Level of Society in South and Southeast Asia."

¹⁰⁷ Zacharias, *Tablighi Jamaat and the Quest for the London Mega Mosque: Continuity and Change*.

is considered a 'worldly affair'. Another possible reason for its unfamiliarity is that other names know it, as in The Gambia, where some people know Tabligh as *mashalas*.¹⁰⁸

3.3 Tablighi and The Different Strategy at Different Context

Being a movement that transcends national borders and is globalized, Jama'ah Tabligh has various negotiation strategies to spread its teachings around the world. As a movement formed in South Asia, the Jama'ah Tabligh initially grew up amidst India's social and political context, which inevitably requires a strategy to approach the public to spread its teachings. In particular, if the movement is to sustain its growth, it may need to balance its message of faith renewal with greater flexibility in local and national structures, especially in regions of the world where governments are increasingly concerned about the ability of religious movements to influence their followers.

Sikand has also mentioned in his article "The Jama'ah Tabligh and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal" said that Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy can change and negotiate with the context. Usually, in Muslim minority countries as well as in Muslim majority countries where Islamist political activity is severely suppressed, the JT follows a strict political line. In reality, too, Muslim regimes fighting politically motivated Islamist opponents tend to see the JT as a viable antidote and, thus, an ally in helping to maintain the status quo. In situations more favorable to Islamist political activists, some JT members and even leaders also play an active political role, both within and through Islamist parties.¹⁰⁹ One of the cases where the JT movement dabbled in politics was in Uganda, East Africa, in the 1970s and 1980s, which initially concentrated on purifying Islam from local traditions but was successfully politicized because, over time, the movement had shaped itself into an opposition political movement that opposed the marginalization of the Muslim minority community by the government. It culminated in the bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 when pilgrims from India¹¹⁰ and Pakistan were blocked from entering Uganda.¹¹¹ This case shows that while the JT has repeatedly expressed that although it is an apolitical movement, it can be inferred that given the congruence between its long-term goals and those of Islamist political formations, the JT has the potential to act as an advocate for Islamist parties and even join them if circumstances require it. This is

¹⁰⁸ Marloes Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised," in *Islam, Youth, and Modernity in the Gambia: The Tablighi Jama'at* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 69–98, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139629133>.

¹⁰⁹ Sikand, "The Tabligh? Jama'at and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal."

¹¹⁰ Sikand.

¹¹¹ Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised."

particularly because they can spread Islamic values and lifestyles in Muslim-majority societies, thus making them more receptive to the Islamists' political message.¹¹²

Transnational movement approaches typically take advantage of advances in transportation and communication technologies that accelerate global exchange through integrated trade markets, broader diplomatic alliances and massive cross-border migration.¹¹³ Jama'ah Tabligh's grand strategy as a transnational movement tends to be their ability to utilize the migration patterns of the South Asian population¹¹⁴, in particular, the migrating Indian population, as a way to facilitate their mingling with the local population and forming networks—the migration of the Indian population that the Jama'ah Tabligh utilized occurred in Malaysia. Jama'ah Tabligh involved transnationalization among the Indian community in Malaysia, especially among Indian business people in Kuala Lumpur. The strategy in Kuala Lumpur was very successful because of the role of Indian-Muslim business people in Kuala Lumpur. One of the main roles of these businessmen was to make it easier for Indian *karkūn* to come to Malaysia, as the Malay people still did not know much about the movement. One of their business people, Tuan Haji Hassan, helped the Indian *karkūn* arrive because of his familiarity with the airport immigration staff. So when an Indian came to Malaysia, the staff would call him to confirm the identity of the Indian with Tuan Haji Hassan first. Tuan Haji Hassan was also close to some Indian-Muslim businessmen in Kuala Lumpur who were also administrative staff of the Indian Mosque and became his connections.¹¹⁵

Jama'ah Tabligh Malaysia also utilizes local figures' authority to contribute to its da'wah's success. This strategy is also shown through JT approaching a figure in Malaysia named Tan Sri S.O.K Obaidillah, an Indian Muslim who has migrated to Malaysia since 1938. Obaidillah played an important role in the country's various social, religious, economic, and political aspects. He founded the MIC (Malaysian Indian Congress) and FIO (Federation of Indian Organizations), two Indian political movements used to promote Indian interests in Malaysia. Obaidillah was one of the reasons for the successful spread of JT in Malaysia, to the extent that it was well-received by Indian Muslim traders living there.

¹¹² Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*.

¹¹³ Timothy Marr, "Islam and Transnationalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Transnational American Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 251–68, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316048146.017>.

¹¹⁴ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹¹⁵ Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, "The History of Jama'ah Tabligh in Southeast Asia: The Role of Islamic Sufism in Islamic Revival," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 46, no. 2 (December 26, 2008): 353–400, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2008.462.353-400>.

In the case of Malaysia, Jama'ah Tabligh was tolerated by the government in the 1970s and 1980s, as it was considered a social reform movement that could be used to help rehabilitate drug addicts and wayward youth. What Farish A Noor emphasizes most about Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy in Malaysia is its Indian descent, which is an effective way for them to introduce Jama'ah Tabligh to the Muslim community in the country.¹¹⁶

Islamic movements like JT have flourished in Europe, including the UK. This is shown by the fact that mosques in the UK have grown rapidly in the last decade. In 1963, there were 13 registered mosques in the UK; by 1975, the number had risen to 99, and by 1985 to 338. Until recently, the majority of mosques in the UK are Sunni-controlled and, particularly in London, orientated towards the Deobandi school of Islam, including TJ. For example, there are around 800 Deobandi mosques in the UK compared to 350 Barlewi mosques and around 60 Salafi mosques.¹¹⁷ Today, the UK is one of the main foci of TJ activity in the West, although the movement has been successful in many European countries. The desire to establish what TJ leaders hope will be a new world center has brought the most attention to the movement in Britain and London. TJ activists have been at the forefront of helping to establish mosques and other Islamic institutions in Britain. They also established madrassas with a Doeband curriculum which they collaborated with a formal Western curriculum with three initial aims: "to impart knowledge of the basic rituals and beliefs of Islam to children; to counter the influence of Western and Christian culture; and to instil in children a spirit of devotion to Islam, which can later be channelled into Tabligh activities" The Jama'ah Tabligh positioned Britain as their homeland in Mewat. The UK was the first place they expanded overseas. It may also be supported by the freedom of speech and way of life that makes it easy for them to express their religious expression. They used the same methods as those used in Mewat and gave great importance to building mosques to become centers of expansion for the congregation. These facts show that the JT attaches great importance to the mosque as all their activities are centered there.¹¹⁸

Although in its development in the UK, JT created a Doeband educational institution as an educational center. In its history as an Islamist revivalist movement, the Jama'ah Tabligh has emphasized its itinerant education in mosques as a key strategy to bring

¹¹⁶ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹¹⁷ Zacharias, *Tablighi Jamaat and the Quest for the London Mega Mosque: Continuity and Change*.

¹¹⁸ Zacharias.Bulbul Siddiqi, "Tablighi Jamaat in the UK," in *Becoming 'Good Muslim'* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2018), 119–28, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7236-9_8.

Muslims back to Islam. JT's close involvement with mosques has become a very powerful strategy among them, just like other Islamist strategists such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia. Jama'ah Tabligh established a strong presence in local mosques in Thailand and took over the Muslim public space there. In Tha Sala, Thailand, the Tabligh Jama'at, formed by local Muslims - many of whom studied at Tabligh Markaz in Pakistan - has effectively taken control of the mosque. One mosque imam explained that Jama'ah Tabligh members have replaced the local imam who rejected Jama'ah Tabligh's new ways and that they lead prayers and take over the call to prayer at the local mosque at all times. At least one member remains in the mosque, looking after the mosque's security and clean water supply. These activities also indicate the presence of the Congregation in the local mosque. The massive presence of the Tabligh Jama'at puts enormous pressure on the villagers' life cycle rituals, particularly the local mosque and its ritual functions. A local imam, for example, who received his education in a traditional mosque in Patani, felt so frustrated by the breakthrough of the new ideology and the loss of his authority that he built an alternative mosque behind his house, where he became the imam. Jama'ah Tabligh is attractive for some Thais because it can open up a genuinely religious career. No wealth or traditional Islamic education is required to qualify as an emir. Some villagers who choose a religious career enter the Markaz to qualify as hafiz, maulana, and mufti. These emirs hold responsibilities within the congregation, coordinate activities at the local level, host foreign pilgrims, mediate between the local Jama'ah Tabligh and the national and international leadership, and lead prayers at the local mosque. The appointed 'Alim sometimes complements and sometimes collaborates with the local imam. In any case, the local imam must now share authority with the Tabligh Jama'at.¹¹⁹

In another corner of the continent, West Africa's Gambia, Jama'ah Tabligh has made a significant impact by making Gambia one of its strategic centers. Tablighi was present in Gambia in the 1960s when the country was experiencing a period of economic stagnation.¹²⁰ Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy there lies in building a narrative that investment in the spiritual rather than the material ultimately brings greater returns in the future.¹²¹ This attracted middle-class Gambian youth because the Jama'ah provided young Gambians with an escape from the frustrations of daily life in a country plagued by economic uncertainty and a way to combat a sense of hopelessness. The movement channels young people's

¹¹⁹ Horstmann, "The Tablighi Jama'at, Transnational Islam, and the Transformation of the Self between Southern Thailand and South Asia."

¹²⁰ Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised."

¹²¹ Pieri, "Tablīghī Jamā'at."

frustration about the lack of opportunities by offering them a moral orientation and the hope that their investment in tabligh would result in a better life in the afterlife.¹²²

This shows that in addition to its core strategy of storming mosques in a city, JT also seems to be able to adapt its strategy to the local context, one of which is by selling exciting stories about the afterlife and adjusting it to the needs of the local community, especially in its da'wah targets. One of them is in Kyrgyzstan, which is known as a secular region and is considered a region that has no religious interest or spiritual strength; Jama'ah Tabligh grows very fertile. It is because the Jama'ah Tabligh can reach people dissatisfied with the world by selling stories that promise better happiness in the hereafter. A rather bizarre example is shown by Pelkmans where JT leaders there love to tell stories of happiness in heaven that are related to sex, including heavenly angels such as narratives like "Someday in heaven there will be many girls, and what's more, each girl will be more beautiful than the most beautiful woman you have ever seen in your life. And your own wife, she will be the most beautiful of them all." Pelkmans further explored that this was closely related to the tabligh followers who had problems with their families, especially with their wives, such as their inability to provide for their wives, which made their wives angry every day, divorce, and also the unemployment of one of them, which made it difficult for them to find a wife. The stories expressed the hope that through Tabligh's da'wah, the men would solve some of their relationship and marital problems.¹²³ The strategic models they put forward are in line with Metcalf's words that the Tabligh movement emphasizes the importance of stories, which "engage the listener, not only intellectually but also emotionally" and aims to achieve "experience, not intellectual understanding."¹²⁴

In addition, it is a religious activity with the principle that religious duties are not only the task of Islamic scholars and ulama but also a form of disappointment with religious functionaries in Islamic schools. The Jama'ah Tabligh's preaching journey, including lay preachers, was innovative in democratizing religious authority. In The Gambia, this attracted Gambian youth as the ulama were no longer considered the sole custodians of Islam. This encouraged the youth to seek religious authority after being excluded from the religious domain and to claim for themselves religious authority because "Islam does not

¹²² Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised."

¹²³ Mathijs Pelkmans, "Walking the Truth in Islam with the Tablighi Jamaat," in *Fragile Conviction: Changing Ideological Landscapes in Urban Kyrgyzstan*, 1st ed. (Cornell University Press, 2017), 102–23.

¹²⁴ Barbara D. Metcalf, "Living Hadīth in the Tablighī Jama'āt," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 52, no. 3 (August 23, 1993): 584–608, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2058855>.

belong to any particular person but to everyone who believes in it and practices its principles."¹²⁵

Unlike other continents, the Tabligh movement in America is said to be not as advanced as the rest of the world. However, there are an estimated 50,000 Muslims affiliated with Jama'ah Tabligh. The headquarters of Jama'ah Tabligh in North America is thought to be at al-Falah Mosque in Queens, New York, although some say it is at al-Noor Mosque in Chicago. Tabligh mosques operate in several US states, including California, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Hawaii. Eva Borreguero, professor of political science at the University Complutense in Madrid, argues that the Congregation's unique strategic approach to practicing its religion has allowed it to spread quietly and peacefully worldwide, unopposed by foreign governments. In America, the activities of the Tabligh Jama'at have been under intense scrutiny for several years and are not accessible to move around. This seems to be related to the attacks by radical groups on 9/11. As a transnational movement, the Jama'ah Tabligh has come under negative scrutiny mainly because of its Arab-like appearance.¹²⁶ Barbara Metcalf claims that it is difficult to distinguish between the Tabligh and the Taliban because they share the same physical appearance and dress and share a history rooted in the Doeband Madrassas.¹²⁷

3.4 The Arrival of Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesia

Jama'ah Tabligh first landed in Indonesia around the 50s, precisely in 1952, and was located in Medan led by a man named Miaji Isa by calling their movement Jama'ah *Khuruj* (a group of travelers in the path of Allah to practice self-development and invite others to be faithful to Allah). Then Miaji Isa continued his wanderings to the island of Java, as evidenced by the Tabligh activities at the al-Mubarak Krukut Mosque. This group introduced da'wah efforts to figures such as Muhammad Natsir, Muhammad Hatta, and Mohammad Roem. In 1956, a group from Singapura totaling 12 people led by Prof. Mohammad Djamil came to Indonesia and conducted da'wah until they stayed for four months. Then, it continued in 1965 with a group from India led by Ibrahim Kaza, and again, it received a da'wah visit from Prof. Djamil a year later. Another version states that the Jama'ah Tabligh in Jakarta occurred in 1955, which began when eight Jama'ah Tabligh from India landed in Cengkareng and hired a taxi for no particular purpose. They asked the driver to escort Indians to Jakarta and ended up being directed to the residence of Haji

¹²⁵ Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised."

¹²⁶ Ilana Freedman, *Gateway to Jihad: Tablighi Jama'at* (Washington: Center for Security Policy Press, n.d.).

¹²⁷ Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs."

Zaristan Khan, an Indian descent who obtained Indonesian citizenship.¹²⁸ The spread of Jama'ah Tabligh to Indonesia occurred when Muhammad Yusuf In'amul Hasan led the movement after being led by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi's son Muhammad Yusuf (1917-1965). Yusuf succeeded in introducing the Tabligh preaching throughout the Indian-Pakistani subcontinent, then penetrated various countries in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America. Meanwhile, In'amul Hasan expanded his preaching to Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia.¹²⁹

The intensive movement of Jama'ah Tabligh until the establishment of the national headquarters in Indonesia occurred in 1974 in Kebon Jeruk, Jakarta. This began with a group of 12 people from Bangladesh led by Maulana Lutfurrahman, who returned to the al-Mubarak Krukut mosque. At that time, the conditions and situation of the al-Mubarak mosque were not conducive and uncomfortable for the group, so the group moved to the Kebon Jeruk mosque. This is where Maulana Lutfurrahman and his colleague H Djaris Khan asked permission from the head of the mosque management to stay at the mosque. After occupying the mosque for four months, Maulana Lutfurrahman held a deliberation to say goodbye to return to Bangladesh. He asked the congregation to maintain the tabligh business located in Kebon Jeruk. The deliberation decided that H. Zulfakar, as the caretaker of this mosque, should also serve as amīr of the Kebon Jeruk Jama'ah Tabligh. H. Zulfakar's willingness symbolized the existence of Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesia and made Kebon Jeruk Mosque the national headquarters of Jama'ah Tabligh until now.¹³⁰

Today, Jama'ah Tabligh's proselytizing has spread to almost all cities and provinces throughout Indonesia. Farish A Noor even mentioned that "there is almost no place left in Indonesia where the Jama'ah Tabligh has not been established. One of the activities of the Tabligh movement that is quite visible in their annual meeting called *ijtima'* in several points from various regions in Indonesia, such as in the Ancol area of North Jakarta, in the Kebon Jeruk mosque, on Jalan Hayam Wuruk, Central Jakarta, at the al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School, Magetan, in the Medan area of North Sumatra, Lampung, Kalimantan, Papua, Maluku, Sulawesi and various other regions throughout Indonesia. This has shown that the people of Indonesia have accepted the Jama'ah Tabligh well, although sometimes,

¹²⁸ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹²⁹ Marc Gaborieau, "The Transformation of Tablighī Jamā'at into a Transnational Movement," in *Travelers in Faith: Studies of Tablighī Jamā'at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal*, ed. M Masud (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 121–38.

¹³⁰ Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

in some places, it still receives rejection. In addition, this is also shown in their *ijtima'* which took place in 2000 and managed to gather 800,000 Muslims. Asad mentioned that Indonesians accept the Jama'ah Tabligh because 1) Jama'ah Tabligh minimizes debates and differences in Islamic law (*fiqh*). Tabligh tends to accept all *fiqh* scholars. 2) Jama'ah Tabligh tends to adhere to Sufi teachings that emphasize ritual worship 3) Jama'ah Tabligh tends to be considered more favorable than radical because it focuses on building character to become a better Muslim. 4) Jama'ah Tabligh tends to reject and avoid talking politics.¹³¹ This fourth point is also why the government at that time (i.e., Soeharto's regime) allowed the Jama'ah Tabligh movement to roam because it is seen as a non-political and non-violent movement.¹³² The movement's development peaked in the 1980s and 1990s, like other Islamist movements that enjoyed the last decade of the New Order. After Soeharto's resignation and the collapse of the new order, Islamist groups such as Jama'ah Tabligh began to spread their teachings more openly.

In its development in Java, the Jama'ah Tabligh took root quickly by utilizing the Indian Muslim migrant network since the 1980s.¹³³ Jama'ah Tabligh quickly and efficiently found a place for itself among members of the Indian Muslim community who had stayed in the ports and coastal areas of West Java Island. In Central Java, Jama'ah Tabligh took root by utilizing the Indian Muslim trading center located in Surakarta, especially because Indian Muslims in this area were prominent local business community members. However, in its development in East Java, the Jama'ah Tabligh found it challenging to penetrate the local Muslim boundaries. They encountered robust and active resistance from Nahdatul Ulama members who did not accept them in what they considered to be their homeland. It is because East Java tends not to accept the Tabligh sect when they are led by Indian Muslims who tend to be racially, ethnically, and even nationality different. This reason is supported by East Java's reputation as the stronghold of Nahdatul Ulama, which means that NU will not cede its cherished ground to local Islamic rivals such as Muhammadiyah. Due to the highly unfavorable ground realities, none of the several Jama'ah Tabligh delegations that had been sent to various cities such as Magetan, Madiun, Jombang, Ponorogo, Malang, and Surabaya gained a permanent foothold in the city.¹³⁴

¹³¹ As'ad Sa'id Ali, "Jama'ah Tabligh," <https://nu.or.id/opini/Jama'ah-tabligh-upUFj>, 2011.

¹³² Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹³³ Abdul Aziz, "The Jama'ah Tabligh Movement in Indonesia: Peaceful Fundamentalist," *Studia Islamika* 11, no. 3 (January 1, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v11i3.596>.

¹³⁴ Farish A Noor, "The Spread of the Tablighi Jama'at across Western, Central and Eastern Java and the Role of Indian Muslim Diaspora" (Singapore, 2009).

Jama'ah Tabligh attempted to change its tactics by adapting to the situation and conditions at the time. Eventually, they began sending delegations led by native Indonesians to Surabaya, hoping this would make it easier for them to gain a foothold in the city. Success finally came in 1984 when a delegation was sent to Surabaya led by Ustaz Haji Muhammad Amin Sayid, the small group of five men he led managed to gain the approval of the Pekan Barat educator, who allowed them to settle in the Nur Hidayat Mosque on Ikan Gurame street 4/5, Pekan Barat.¹³⁵ This model strategy was also used by the Jama'ah Tabligh when they first landed in Aceh, where they struggled to win over the local community. A delegation of local Muslims from the Kebon Jeruk Headquarters, Jakarta, was sent to assist their da'wah strategy. The Jama'ah Tabligh, who had previously preached in Aceh secretly without mentioning who they were, began to reveal themselves. In Aceh, most of their followers are young men and university students attracted by how the Jama'ah Tabligh dress represents faithful Islam. Students dominate the development of the Jama'ah Tabligh in Aceh, so the communities they proselytize sometimes assume that they are a group of people offering a new interpretation of Islam. They do not have the authority to legitimize their preaching actions in Aceh because there, the religious authority lies in Tengku, a dayah leader (if in Java this is the same as kiai or ulama who lead pesantren). In Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, Jama'ah Tabligh's da'wah strategy is applied by establishing small pesantren to invite and educate young people to read and memorize the Qur'an.¹³⁶ Jama'ah Tabligh worked together to repair road infrastructure to win the hearts of the local community, which makes people moved to join them because of their kindness and sincerity. Lastly, in Deli Serdang, the Jama'ah Tabligh was able to eliminate places that contained negative stereotypes in the community, such as prostitution places and bookies, to present a positive perspective in the community and be interested in joining them.¹³⁷

Jama'ah Tabligh first made contact with the pesantren tradition in Magetan, East Java. This stemmed from the desire of the Tabligh delegation in East Java to find a more significant center in East Java. In 1984, they made a breakthrough by gaining the support of the local community in Temboro village. They gained the power of the local religious authorities through the Tablighis' meeting with a kiai of a pesantren in Temboro. In

¹³⁵ Noor.

¹³⁶ Bustamam-Ahmad, "The History of Jama'ah Tabligh in Southeast Asia: The Role of Islamic Sufism in Islamic Revival."

¹³⁷ Doni Pranoto, "Praktik Keagamaan Jama'ah Tabligh Di Markas Madani Medan Marelan : Studi Kehidupan Jama'ah Tabligh, Kec. Labuhan Deli, Kab Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara," *ULIL ALBAB : Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 3, no. 2 (2024): 284–97.

Temboro, the Tablighis were most successful in reorienting the NU pesantren into a Tabligh pesantren. Not only did they control a pesantren, but they could control an entire village at once.¹³⁸

3.5 Jama'ah Tabligh and Pesantren: What is Pesantren Tabligh?

Jama'ah Tabligh and Pesantren is a discussion that experiences differences in context. Jama'ah Tabligh is a revivalist Islamist movement that grew, and its development began in the Indian lands of South Asia.¹³⁹ Moreover, its model is identical to Doebandi's educational (*madrassa*) models but instead focuses on the missionary movement.¹⁴⁰ At the same time, Pesantren is an Indonesian organic Islamic educational institution established decades before Jama'ah Tabligh came to Indonesia. Indonesia has long known an Islamic educational institution called Pesantren. This rural-based educational institution teaches Islamic subjects exclusively using yellow books (classic Arabic books using yellow paper) to produce Islamic scholars and religious experts. Pesantren is very much identified with the traditionalist mainstream Indonesian organization Nahdatul Ulama. This institution has a central figure named Kyai, a traditional Islamic *scholar*. Slightly different from pesantren, in the Indonesian context, madrasah is an Islamic educational institution that refers to Islamic schools at the primary and secondary levels that adopt a modern education system, where Islamic subjects are taught with general subjects. The main objective of the madrasah is to produce graduates similar to modern secular schools but with more emphasis on their better understanding of religion. In recent years, these pesantrens and madrassas have been the subject of serious discussion as they have clashed with transnational ideologies present in Indonesia.¹⁴¹

Since the end of the last decade of the 20th century, Indonesia has experienced the growth of many pesantren. Van Bruinessen classifies pesantren into two parts: Traditional pesantren are tradition-oriented and socially conservative and focus on religious education and old beliefs and practices; they are usually the center of rural religious activities, and modern (*reformist*) pesantren are pesantren established as an alternative to traditional

¹³⁸ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹³⁹ For a detailed explanation of the history of Tablighi Jama'at see Sikand, *The Origins and Development of Tablighi Jamaat*. Metcalf, "Living Hadīth in the Tablighī Jama'at." Masud, "The Growth and Development of Tablighi Jamā'at in India." Gaborieau, "The Transformation of Tablighī Jamā'at into a Transnational Movement." Ali and Sahib, *A Sociological Study of the Tabligh Jama'at*.

¹⁴⁰ Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs."

¹⁴¹ Hasan, "The Salafi Madrasahs of Indonesia." For a further account of the differences between these three educational institutions, see Karel A Steenbrink, "Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah: Recente Ontwikkelingen in Indonesisch Islamonderricht" (Nijmegen Catholic University, 1974).

pesantren by reformers who are critical of traditional pesantren. The curriculum emphasizes general and non-religious subjects oriented towards secular professional careers; one of the most recent modernist pesantren is the discussion of Salafi pesantren, which are, in fact, pesantren that adopt the ideas of transnational Salafi from Saudi Arabia.¹⁴² Indonesia also has another pesantren model that adopts the ideas of the transnational movement, namely, Jama'ah Tabligh. Pesantren affiliated with Jama'ah Tabligh adopt the educational model derived from Doebandi as well as the ideology of Jama'ah Tabligh and modify it by incorporating elements of traditional pesantren in Indonesia; I will simplify the term to be Pesantren Tabligh or Tabligh Pesantren.¹⁴³

The development of Tabligh pesantren in Indonesia will be closely related to and contribute to the development of Jama'ah Tabligh's da'wah as a transnational Islamic missionary organization. Tabligh pesantrens are more likely to adopt the education of traditional Indonesian pesantrens that teach classical salaf books such as those used by other Indonesian traditionalist pesantrens such as *Fathul Qarib*, *Bulughul Maram*, *Jurumiyah*, and various other yellow books. This is not strange given that the majority of Tabligh pesantren also used to be closely associated with Nahdatul Ulama (one of the most prominent Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia) but combined it with some core Tabligh books especially *Fadail al-A'mal* by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya al-Kandhlawi, the nephew of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi.¹⁴⁴ Tabligh pesantren usually also adopt the Doebandi educational model by establishing a *daurah* hadis program inspired by education in the place where the Jama'ah Tabligh originated, accompanied by practicing tabligh doctrines such as *khuruj* and also reading the book of *fadha'il amal* in daily activities. In Indonesian history, some of the founders of traditional pesantren usually came from families that had enjoyed religious prestige, and others were bright young men who could travel to Mecca for education. This is also the case in Tabligh, that the person who is entitled to build a Tabligh pesantren usually also has religious prestige in the community, except that, as mentioned by Adlin Sila that Tabligh's religious authority lies with educated people who, for them are those who have done *khuruj*, and they may not be experts in Islamic doctrine. They are not always religious scholars or scriptural experts, but

¹⁴² Martin Van Bruinessen, "Traditionalist and Islamist Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia," in *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 217–47.

¹⁴³ Eva Nisa termed it as Tablighi Pesantren.

¹⁴⁴ NISA, "Insights Into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'at."

those who build Tabligh pesantren are usually those who have made *khuruj* to Pakistan and also India and are usually alumni of the Tabligh pesantren themselves.¹⁴⁵

3.5.1 The Case of Pesantren al-Fatah and Pesantren Darussunnah

The encounter between Jama'ah Tabligh and Pesantren began in 1986. It started with Jama'ah Tabligh, which changed one of the orientations of pesantren in East Java, Indonesia, al-Fatah Temboro. Due to the preaching of a group of Pakistani Tabligh led by Prof. Abdussobur, kyai Mahmud from the influential Al-Fatah pesantren in Temboro, Magetan, East Java joined and began to attract many new followers, making the pesantren one of the leading centers of Tabligh activities. The presence of the Jama'ah Tabligh group from Pakistan actually did not make the Temboro pesantren the target of its Tabligh preaching. Their presence in Temboro began with the expulsion carried out by the management of the Ngale Mosque, a village near the center of Ngawi city, because they were suspected of intending to spread Ahmadiyah (which is considered heretical). After they were expelled and stayed in another mosque, namely the Kauman Great Mosque of Ngawi, they searched for a new mosque route that could be occupied. They stopped by one of the mosques in Manisrejo and met Ustadz Muhammad Isa, who was teaching students to study the book of *Safinatunnaja*. Ustadz Muhammad Isa then reported to Kyai Mahmud, who at that time was the Head of the al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School, and decided to meet the guest. The Jama'ah Tabligh took root in al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School and Temboro village from that meeting.¹⁴⁶

Pesantren al-Fatah was founded in 1958 by Kyai Mahmud Siddique, the son of the famous Javanese scholar Kyai Ahmad Siddiq. At the beginning of its establishment, this pesantren was a pesantren that focused on *Sufi* and *thoriqoh* activities and was affiliated with Nahdatul Ulama; even the two Kyai, Kyai Uzairon, and Kyai Mahmud were an essential part of the management of Syuriah Nahdatul Ulama in Magetan. As a pesantren born as a traditional pesantren, al-Fatah also adopted formal education similar to several other traditional pesantren institutions that felt the need for modern education as the times developed. In 1962, al-Fatah established Madrasah Wajib Belajar (an institution at the level of elementary school today). Then, they built a religious teacher education institution (now equivalent to a high school) to establish secular education in the form of al-Fatah junior

¹⁴⁵ Muhammad Adlin Sila, "Nurturing Religious Authority Among Tablighi Jamaat In Indonesia: Going Out for Khuruj and Becoming Preacher," in *The New Santri: Challenges to Traditional Religious Authority in Indonesia*, ed. Norshahril Saat and Ahmad Najib Burhani (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2020).

¹⁴⁶ Dadang Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro* (Magetan: Penerbit Temboro, 2023).

and senior high schools around 1978, and they established MA and MTS institutions in 1988/1989. Public education in the form of junior and senior high schools was later disbanded because it was felt that it was not in line with the mission and vision of pesantren education until finally, al-Fatah focused on MTS and MA education in 1989, which continues to this day.¹⁴⁷

The background is that of one of Kyai Mahmud's sons, Kyai Ubaidillah, who studied in Pakistan. In the early 20th century, under the leadership of Kyai Uzairon, Pesantren al-Fatah then established *dauroh* education, which aimed to deepen religious material and the level of Islamic insight of al-Fatah students. It was motivated by the idea of one of Kyai Mahmud's sons who studied in Pakistan, Kyai Ubaidillah. This Dauroh program is inspired by the education model in Pakistan and India, where, in the last year of education, students are required to study hadith, especially *kutubussittah*. Later, it was mentioned that the *dauroh* teaching staff were taken from Pakistani graduates. Feeling successful in developing dauroh education, then al-Fatah also developed *Takhassus* education, which aims to specialize in one branch of religious science such as *Ushul Fikih, Hadith, and Tajweed*, but is not required because this education is only a complement to previous education and is optional.¹⁴⁸

Early in adopting the Jama'ah Tabligh movement in the Pesantren, al-Fatah received resistance from the local community and two of the largest Indonesian Islamic organizations, Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. These two organizations are prejudiced that al-Fatah and its Kyai have become the spreaders of the Shi'a and Ahmadiyya bases. This prejudice caused tension in the relationship between al-Fatah and the NU Magetan Committee. At that time, Kyai Mahmud was Muhtasyar NU, and his son, Kyai Uzairon, was Rais Syuriah NU Magetan. Moreover, the Magetan NU movement depends on al-Fatah pesantren. The consequence of the conflict was that Kyai Mahmud chose to resign from the NU management to diffuse the conflict. This was a solution. At the time, there was much tension within NU Magetan because some of its members criticized Kyai Mahmud for following a religious cult. Some more moderate others responded that the way of da'wah was not contrary to the principles of NU but was rare among the NU community, so they recommended not to be followed. In response to the conflict, the central NU institution, which at that time was led by Abdurrahman Wahid, heard the news and responded that the da'wah of Jama'ah Tabligh in al-Fatah did not conflict with NU teachings

¹⁴⁷ M. Hasan Biki Muhammad, *Sang Muassis: Kisah Perjalanan Hidup Romo Kyai Mahmud* (Magetan: Pustaka Maktabatuna, 2022).

¹⁴⁸ Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro*.

and did not violate the Islamic principles adopted by Nahdatul Ulama. However, to avoid prolonged conflict, it was finally decided that Kyai Mahmud would resign from the NU institution. His son, Kyai Uzairon, also followed this resignation in 1990. The impact of this decision was quite significant, where al-Fatah lost hundreds of students due to the loss of trust of some parents of students due to rumors that were spread.¹⁴⁹

In the early days of this *tabligh* da'wah effort, al-Fatah also often received repression from the local government, suspected them of being influenced by Wahabism, mainly because Kyai Uzairon had studied at Ummul Quro, Mecca, which at that time was dominated by the Wahabi revivalist movement. This condition made Kyai Uzairon, who served as the head of the pesantren at that time, often summoned by the police to be interrogated for his movement. Some of the followers of Jama'ah Tabligh in al-Fatah were also often targeted by the police and detained in the police because they were suspected of joining the Islamic political movement around the 1980s. This happened because, at that time, it was still under the leadership of Soeharto, who was indeed very suppressive and hostile to Islamist politics and did not provide space for the Islamist movement to move.¹⁵⁰ The side effects of the accusations and rumors that were spread also had an impact on the tradition of endogamous marriages that usually took place in pesantren.¹⁵¹ Many Kyai previously wanted to marry off their sons and daughters to descendants of al-Fatah Pesantren. However, the tradition was immediately silenced due to their adoption of the Jama'ah Tabligh proselytization model.¹⁵²

Around 1989, he confirmed his decision to join Jama'ah Tabligh, mainly due to pressure from various parties. Kyai Mahmud and his son, Kyai Uzairon, decided to travel to India to confirm the truth about the JT movement. They also went to Pakistan and Bangladesh because the Tabligh's da'wah efforts had advanced in those two countries, so they were used as a reference for the da'I of the Jama'ah Tabligh throughout the world.

¹⁴⁹ Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

¹⁵⁰ This was due to the conflict between the Islamic and secular nationalist camps on a secular state and not a religious state in an honorable position. However, Muslim groups who were not satisfied with this compromise took up arms to establish an Islamic State. One such group was the DI/TII movement) which operated in West Java, Aceh, and South Sulawesi. The Soekarno regime successfully suppressed this movement, and the freedom of the Islamic movement afterward became suppressed until the end of Soeharto's leadership. For more details, see Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Perspective On The Nation-State: Political Islam In Post-Soeharto Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 39 (2001): 292–309.

¹⁵¹ Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, Dan Tarekat: Tradisi Islam Di Indonesia*, vol. 2 (Mizan, 1995).

¹⁵² Barli, Interview with Ustadz in Pesantren al-Fatah, March 10, 2024.

They met with Maulana In'amul Hasan, who was then the leader and responsible for the da'wah of Jama'ah Tabligh centered in Nizamuddin. They also traveled to Reiwind Markaz, Lahore, Pakistan, and Kakrail Markaz, Bangladesh. After returning from their visit to the Jama'ah Tabligh center, they felt that there was nothing wrong with the Jama'ah Tabligh movement in terms of dhikr and thoriqoh - *because, for them, it was still in accordance with ahl-sunnah wal-jama'ah-*, as people had accused them of, so they *remained* determined to preach the Jama'ah Tabligh. After the visit of the Kyais of al-Fatah to Nizamuddin, al-Fatah further strengthened its network with the Jama'ah Tabligh center by sending its students to study there. Often, al-Fatah also invited and brought Sheikhs from India to give lectures and visit al-Fatah. In addition, al-Fatah also often sends its students to do *khuruj* for four months in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, as the center of Jama'ah Tabligh activities.

The shift in the pesantren model and orientation of al-Fatah pesantren from salaf pesantren to established pesantren was more significant after the return of the pesantren leaders from the three countries. The changes that occurred in the pesantren by al-Fatah were deliberate changes by the kyai as the leadership elite in the pesantren. The changes that occurred in the pesantren were caused by dissatisfaction with the education model that had occurred in the pesantren so far.¹⁵³ This dissatisfaction grew due to new elements outside the pesantren that were considered *-by kyai-* to be able to change the orientation of the pesantren to a better direction. The changes that occurred in al-Fatah came from the introduction of the al-Fatah pesantren elite to Jama'ah Tabligh either through Jama'ah Tabligh's visits to the pesantren, or the meeting of the kyai's sons while studying abroad.¹⁵⁴

The da'wah of al-Fatah initially targeted the santri and the people around the pesantren. A noticeable change in the al-Fatah pesantren after the arrival of the Jama'ah Tabligh lies in single-sex education, which means that male and female students are separated.¹⁵⁵ For the local community, one of the ways is to encourage them to build

¹⁵³ At that time, around the 1980s, traditional pesantren began to develop and change by adopting modern pesantren, which for Kyai Mahmoud began to change from the original essence of pesantren education, which focused on developing religious knowledge and character education (although al-Fatah also continued to adopt modern education). For more details, read, Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

¹⁵⁴ In a literature, it is mentioned that one of the supporting reasons that made this pesantren change its education model by collaborating with Jama'ah Tabligh was that Kyai Mahmud's son at that time, Kyai Uzairon, had been acquainted with and intersected with the teachings of Jama'ah Tabligh while studying in Egypt, and his son-in-law, Kyai Noor Thohir, had studied and joined Jama'ah Tabligh activities in Pakistan. For more details, read, Suparta..

¹⁵⁵ Ummi Azizah, Interview with Female Leader in al-Fatah Temboro about development of al-Fatah, March 12, 2024.

silaturrahim. Often, the Kyai comes to the youth and people who play cards and get drunk at the *pos ronda* while carrying a tray of rice with side dishes to gain their hearts. This causes them to feel ashamed, so they stop doing this. Meanwhile, the internalization of da'wah teachings in pesantren begins with inviting santri to do *khuruj*. Some of the santri even admitted that they did not understand and know the reason why they were invited to go out to preach. However, over time, they understood that they were invited to preach, called *khuruj*.¹⁵⁶

From the symbolic side, the internalization of the Jama'ah Tabligh understanding can be seen from the characteristic clothes of the Jama'ah Tabligh, which began to be attached to al-Fatah with the use of the veil in the pesantren environment for female students. The use of the veil began with one of the daughters of Kyai Uzairon, Ummu Fatim, who used the veil after attending *masturah* in the early 1990s. The students followed the use of the veil and also the local community. Another version states that this began with the visit of Jamaah Tabligh from Thailand, who used closed clothing and the veil. Al-Fatah female students who previously used ordinary headscarves then slowly imitated what the Thai Jama'ah did by covering their faces with a slung headscarf until they slowly changed to a full veil. This shift in dressing has become more massive since the female santri of al-Fatah are required to wear the veil in the pesantren. Meanwhile, the internalization of Jama'ah Tabligh ideas is marked by reading typical Jama'ah Tabligh books, namely the reading of the book *Fadha'il al-Amal*, which is read by students in the morning before starting the activity.

Although, at first, they received various pressures and exiles from various parties, Al-Fatah effectively spread the Jama'ah Tabligh ideology not only among the pesantren but also among the local community. Their success in spreading the Jama'ah Tabligh ideology was influenced by the solid religious authority of the kiai who founded and led the institution. As the dominant educational and religious center in Temboro, Pesantren al-Fatah serves as the leading platform that systematically introduces and normalizes the beliefs and practices of Jama'ah Tabligh in the community. Kiai uses various socializations, such as sermons and events in the community, to gradually integrate the new ideological framework into the daily lives of Temboro residents. In addition, the Jama'ah Tabligh ideology was able to gain traction in Temboro because it was considered to be in harmony with the Sufistic practices and Traditional Islam that already existed in the community. This sense of continuity and familiarity, combined with the socio-economic conditions in

¹⁵⁶ Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro*.

Temboro (such as poverty and lack of resources), made the community receptive to the Jama'ah Tabligh's emphasis on simplicity, piety, and collective support, which facilitated the adoption of the new ideological framework.¹⁵⁷

Besides the Temboro Community, as a Tabligh pesantren, al-Fatah has a significant role within the pesantren and the Jama'ah Tabligh's broader da'wah movement. Pesantren al-Fatah has developed its da'wah in various regions in Indonesia through the establishment of branch Tabligh pesantren. To date, it has succeeded in establishing more than 200 branch pesantren in various regions in Indonesia from Aceh to Papua and even in several countries in Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. Al-Fatah has carried out a strategy negotiation on Jama'ah Tabligh's proselytization model so that the local community can more readily accept it. Al-Fatah also adjusted its strategy to its long-term goals by establishing a student team to reach out to young people as a representative of one part of the Islamist movement of Jama'ah Tabligh. Al-Fatah realizes the importance of young people in their da'wah activities. Especially when it comes to what Hasan (2009) mentioned, that for Transnational Islamists, young people serve as an essential entry point in the global Islamic revivalist current who creatively translate the messages into lifestyles, fashion, art, music, novels, books, institutions, and organizations. These messages influence various social and political spheres and inform the construction of collective and transnational identities. Activists in Islamic movements today want to formalize religious expression and establish a moral order that governs behavior, language, and dress.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, as a missionary movement, one of the aims of the Jama'ah Tabligh is to invite people to join its movement and invite them to follow its ideology and practices.

In this study, I added a sample of al-Fatah branch pesantren as a data source that shows how the negotiation strategy of Tabligh pesantren in the broader context of Indonesian society. Another Tabligh pesantren I use as a sample here is Pesantren Darus Sunnah, founded by Ustadz Muhammad Najib, whose real name is Cecep Saifuddin. An alumnus of the Temboro pesantren who studied in Temboro since 1994 completed his education in Temboro in 2004 and returned from his education in Pakistan in 2016. Located in Nanggawer, Bogor, West Java, the pesantren has an area of only 600 square meters. During an interview at his residence, Ustadz Najib said that this pesantren originated from the pesantren of his brother, who was also a Tabligh. His brother is the pioneer of the

¹⁵⁷ Zainal Arifin et al., "The Kiai's Cultural Strategy in Shaping the Religious Culture of the Community of Temboro Magetan Village, East Java," *Dinamika Ilmu*, December 15, 2021, 369–81, <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v21i2.3657>.

¹⁵⁸ Hasan, "Transnational Islam in Indonesia."

Jama'ah Tabligh in his family and has built a Tabligh pesantren since 2006. It should be noted that his brother is not a pesantren graduate and instead tends to get a formal education. However, he is very active in Jama'ah Tabligh activities with his colleagues at STAN, and he built a pesantren after taking *Khuruj* to Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh.

This pesantren is a grant from the local community that gave land to his brother, and then the authority over this pesantren was given to Ustadz Najib. Unlike Temboro, which also builds formal education, Darussunnah only focuses on *Tahfidz al-Qur'an* and Madrasah Diniyah but still practices Tabligh doctrines such as *khuruj* and reading the book *Fadail al-A'mal*. When I visited the pesantren, the male students wore typical Tabligh clothing in robes, and the female students wore black and veiled clothing. Until now, this pesantren has approximately 45 male and female students from various regions and provinces in Indonesia, most of whom are 12-20 years old. In conclusion, I will use these two pesantrens to show how the negotiation strategy carried out by Jama'ah Tabligh through Tabligh pesantrens and Tabligh branches.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter reveals the various strategy models used by Jama'ah Tabligh in various countries, including the arrival of Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesia and its strategies. By examining the different approaches in each country, this chapter provides an understanding of the adaptability and flexibility of the Jama'ah Tabligh in spreading their message. As mentioned above, these strategies include approaching Indian Muslims who have migrated to various countries, shaping narratives and stories that suit the audience, building madrasa, and conducting *khuruj* and ta'lim in mosques in various countries. All these strategies show how vital the local context is in determining the most effective approach to achieve their da'wah goals.

Furthermore, this chapter also explains the definition and relationship between pesantren and Jama'ah Tabligh until it can develop into a Tabligh pesantren accompanied by a description of a sample Tabligh pesantren that will be used in this thesis. Thus, this chapter shows the implementation of Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy and its contributions to the da'wah field.

CHAPTER 4

VARIOUS STRATEGY OF JAMA'AH TABLIGH IN INDONESIAN PESANTREN: AL-FATAH AND DARUS SUNNAH

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have presented the strategic models of transnational Islamic movements that utilize NGOs, educational institutions, population migration, and Islamic activity centers and technology for transnational Islamic movements.¹⁵⁹ As one of the Islamist movements that also developed in Indonesia, Jama'ah Tabligh has now managed to spread in almost all cities in Indonesia. However, it should be underlined that some studies of Jama'ah Tabligh focus on its core strategy, which is centered on utilizing the migration of the Indian population in *khuruj* and *ta'lim* activities in mosques as a form of da'wah dissemination and mass mobilization strategy.¹⁶⁰ This strategy is very similar to the strategy adopted by other Islamists, for example, the Salafists when they first arrived in Indonesia who centered their education on mosques at the grassroots.¹⁶¹ Not only that, this strategy is also used for other groups such as HTI and also PKS through the Tarbiyah movement to spread their ideology. Mosques are considered to have become central institutions for religious practice in Muslim societies and are often used as religious mobilization structures by various Islamist groups.

Within the physical structure of the mosque, Islamists can offer sermons, lessons, and study groups to spread movement messages, organize collective action, and recruit new members.¹⁶² Meanwhile, research on educational institutions, especially related to the role of madrassas and pesantren in the transnational revivalist Islamist movement, is usually carried out more by scholars of the Salafi movement, which highlights the models of madrassas and Salafi pesantren because they have succeeded in integrating and are considered successful in spreading da'wah to instill their Islamist ideology through education. In addition, more interest in Salafi pesantren usually tends to be the suspicion of their da'wah concept, which contains elements of intolerance, violence, and also rigid understanding or their change from radical to moderate. Another educational institution

¹⁵⁹ Marr, "Islam and Transnationalism."

¹⁶⁰ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹⁶¹ Hasan, "The Failure of the Wahhabi Campaign."

¹⁶² Quintan Wiktorowicz, Introduction, in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Mark Tessler (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004).

related to the transnational movement and has an impact on the Islamization of Indonesian education is the Integrated Islamic School, which functions as an ideological training ground for future cadres of the Islamic political movement. Today, integrated Islamic schools in Indonesia are generally affiliated with the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and like-minded modernist Islamic organizations.¹⁶³ Jama'ah Tabligh pesantren, on the other hand, have received less attention among researchers due to their less visible presence, mainly because they are scattered in rural and grassroots focused areas in Indonesia. The main factor is that their pesantren model is similar to the traditional one that is identical to the mainstream Indonesian Islamic organization Nahdatul Ulama.

Talking about the development of the Jama'ah Tabligh movement in Indonesia, pesantren has become one of the institutions that play an important role in the development of Jama'ah Tabligh. Since the 20th century, pesantrens that adopt the doctrines of Jama'ah Tabligh have become one of the strategies that play an important role in the development of Jama'ah Tabligh Indonesia because they become a place to internalize Jama'ah Tabligh's ideas. In an article entitled "*Insights Into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'at*," Nisa, mentioned that Tabligh Pesantren plays a key role in shaping and transmitting religious knowledge to Tabligh followers in Indonesia. Pesantren Tabligh is also an entry point especially for young people to become Jama'ah Tabligh followers. This is worth exploring further, given that this phenomenon contrasts sharply with the doubts of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, the founder of the Jama'ah Tabligh, regarding the effectiveness of Islamic institutions in reforming Muslims who have deviated from the pure path. Maulana Ilyas preferred the missionary da'wah approach to the madrasa model as he believed this approach was more efficient in spreading the true teachings of Islam. However, the Indonesian Jama'ah Tabligh made a unique effort to incorporate local Indonesian elements into the Jama'ah Tabligh and vice versa, infusing local elements of Tabligh elements in the pesantren culture.¹⁶⁴

This integration has shown that the strategies of transnational Islamic movements such as Jama'ah Tabligh are relevant and easily accepted by the local community. They can integrate Jama'ah Tabligh's values into local Indonesian education so that the message delivered feels closer and more familiar. This approach shows that Jama'ah Tabligh's da'wah strategy has evolved and not only relies on traditional methods but is innovative in

¹⁶³ Azmil Tayeb, *Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia* (New York : Routledge, 2018). | Series: Routledge contemporary Southeast Asia series: Routledge, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351116862>.

¹⁶⁴ NISA, "Insights Into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'at."

harmonizing Islamic teachings with Indonesian society's cultural and social context. Therefore, further studies are needed to understand how Jama'ah Tabligh uses pesantren as one of its da'wah strategies and how it impacts Indonesian Islam. This chapter uses two case studies - Pesantren Darus Sunnah (representing the traditional pesantren model) and Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro (representing the modern education model) - to illustrate how Jama'ah Tabligh uses pesantren as part of its proselytization and mobilization strategy in Indonesia. I also examine JT's da'wah strategies in pesantren that utilize digital media by exploring the role of Radio Trangkil as one of their strategy negotiations. Overall, this chapter argues that Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy has been adapted to incorporate local Indonesian elements, particularly by using pesantren, which have played an important role in the movement's ability to spread and gain traction in the Indonesian context. To achieve its da'wah goals and influence society, Jama'ah Tabligh engages strategically with pesantren by sending teams of students for student teams, forming networks, establishing Tabligh Pesantren, using Radio Trangkil to expand its reach, and remaining politically neutral to gain community support and avoid conflict.

4.2 Jama'ah Tabligh Pesantren and Student Team: From Mosque to School?

The term Tabligh pesantren was first mentioned by Eva Nisa (2014), describing it as one that modifies traditional Indonesian pesantren education with the doctrines and practices of Jama'ah Tabligh. In Thailand, they call Islamic education affiliated with Jama'ah Tabligh as Madrasah Tabligh. Unlike other Islamic schools in Thailand, Tabligh schools are private institutions not registered with the government.¹⁶⁵ While in Indonesia, most pesantren affiliated with Jama'ah Tabligh are registered and recognized by the government -even though some of them are not registered or do not register themselves-. This means that these pesantren receive supervision and support from the government and are recognized as part of the national education system.

As a Tabligh pesantren, Pesantren Al-Fatah, at the beginning of its establishment, was a pesantren that used to be closely related to the Nahdatul Ulama organization because its founder, Kyai Mahmud, was a student of Hadratus Syaikh Hasyim Asyari. Al-Fatah grew as an NU pesantren; besides that, Kyai Mahmud, the founder, also succeeded in establishing NU Magetan and was active as *Rais Syuriah* of NU Magetan for the first period with the term of office 1983-1988. In its development, al-Fatah was like other traditional pesantren that responded to the times by adopting madrasah education. It has even adopted

¹⁶⁵ Joseph Chinyong Liow, "Muslim Identity, Local Networks, and Transnational Islam in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces," *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 6 (November 1, 2011): 1383–1421, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X11000084>.

formal educational institutions affiliated with the state, such as MTSN and MAN. Then, because of its development and its intersection with Jama'ah Tabligh, Al-Fatah broke away from state-owned educational institutions because they felt that the state was too interfering in the management of education, so they switched to adopting other educational institutions but more on private education, such as MA and MTs. In his dissertation, Mundzier Suparta states that al-Fatah's contact with Jama'ah Tabligh has made it adopt three kinds of educational models: the first is the traditional education model based on the yellow book, then the reformist education model as carried out by Gontor, they also adopted the Doebandi model of education as shown by their hadith daurah program. In its growth, al-Fatah even had time to establish an Islamic college and secular education in the form of junior and senior high schools, which in its development was abolished because it was deemed incompatible with the vision and mission of the pesantren.¹⁶⁶

The first contact between al-Fatah and Jama'ah Tabligh occurred in 1986. Al-Fatah accepted the Jama'ah Tabligh doctrine because Kyai Mahmud felt their doctrines were the same as the Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah doctrine in Nahdatul Ulama pesantren. Since then, al-Fatah has begun to slowly change its educational model, which was originally identical to the NU pesantren model, starting to modify it by internalizing the ideas of Jama'ah Tabligh, starting from the total separation between female students and male students. Then, there is an obligation to do *khuruj* and practice *masturah* as a form of practice and practice of the Jama'ah Tabligh itself, followed by changes in dress such as maintaining a beard or *jalabiya*. For women wearing all black clothes accompanied by a veil.¹⁶⁷ Until now, formal education that has survived in al-Fatah pesantren is MA and MTs al-Fatah. Based on interview sources, the maintained MA and MTs' purpose also attracts ordinary people interested in studying religion in a pesantren environment.¹⁶⁸

It is important to realize that Tabligh pesantren is embedded in a network of similar pesantren. Thus, it is not isolated but connected to other Tabligh pesantren in Indonesia and abroad. This network is maintained by collaborative activities such as sending teachers to other pesantren. As a pioneer of Tabligh pesantren in its development, al-Fatah is currently able to establish almost 300 branches of Tabligh pesantren in Indonesia and other Asian countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. The development of the al-Fatah pesantren branch model as a Tabligh pesantren is divided into three pesantren models: 1)

¹⁶⁶ Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

¹⁶⁷ Ummu Azizah, Interview with female leader at Pesantren Temboro about the development pesantren, March 12, 2024.

¹⁶⁸ Muna, Interview with female teacher about formal education, 9 March, 2024.

Official Branch Pesantren, namely pesantren that are officially sheltered by al-Fatah and all programs follow the al-Fatah pesantren model 100% both in the teaching system and also cottage activities as well as *tahfidz* and *diniyah* programs. Usually, this pesantren model comes from land grants from donors willing to give their buildings and land to al-Fatah pesantren. The requirement for this branch pesantren is that the owner is required to donate the land to become pesantren property. This model pesantren is also required to send its monthly report regularly. The teacher is also an al-Fatah alumni who is sent to teach there, and the leaders and caregivers who manage it are also ustadz chosen by Kyai at al-Fatah. 2) Alumni pesantren is a pesantren established by al-Fatah alums whose teaching and curriculum follow the al-Fatah pesantren system, but they organize their management structure and activities. Then, the last, 3) namely the assisted pesantren, which is a pesantren that originally stood on its own but involves al-Fatah graduates as teaching staff there or makes al-Fatah pesantren alums responsible for the program. These assisted huts are usually more free and independent regarding systems and programs. Its relationship with the pesantren usually only revolves around the involvement of the kyai al-Fatah in providing input.¹⁶⁹

This Tabligh pesantren also sent many of their students to study in Pakistan and India. The Kyais are also often in contact with Sheikhs such as Maulana In'amul Hasan and Maulana Ilyas. However, their funding system differs greatly from other movement models, such as HTI and Salafi and several other transnational organizations that are given support funds to send their students to the Middle East. Tablighi pesantren use their funds and usually rely on foster parents (other people who are willing to pay for their education abroad).¹⁷⁰ At the beginning of the Jama'ah Tabligh 's presence in al-Fatah, their da'wah model only revolved around the students in the pesantren and the *khuruj* ritual in prospering the mosque. However, over time, the Jama'ah Tabligh, especially those located in Pesantren al-Fatah, began to modify their movement and focus their mission on outreach to young people because of their awareness of the potential of young people who cannot be ignored and are considered to have long-term potential in Tabligh activities. The first effort made by Pesantren al-Fatah to reach out to young people was to establish and create a training ground and sports competitions to get young people interested in Pesantren and da'wah. It was felt that the effort had not been fully successful. Al-Fatah, which at that time was led

¹⁶⁹ Barli, Interview with son Kiai at Pesantren Temboro about pesantren's branch, 11 March 2024. and completed with explanations in the book Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro*.Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

¹⁷⁰ Najib, Interview with leader pesantren Darussunnah Bogor, 20 May 2024.

by Kyai Uzairon, the son of Kyai Mahmud, formed a student tasykil team (tim pelajar) by utilizing their network with university students."¹⁷¹

Negotiations about the need for a student program began in 1996, until finally getting a candidate in charge of the student program in 1999 when nine pilgrims from Trenggalek were khuruj in Maospati, Kyai Uzairon immediately visited them. An agriculture undergraduate student named Abdullah, who was chosen as its leader, led the congregation from Mataram University in Lombok. The formation of this student team was carried out in 2006, after Abdullah and his friend Ainul Yakin did khuruj in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. This student team cooperates with the Tasykil Markaz of JT Temboro headquarters to visit schools or other educational institutions in Magetan, Madiun, and Ngawi. The community has well received the student program. This is evident from the number of schools cooperating with Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro based on this student-team program. This student team is even accommodated in the *pesantren kilat (sanlat)* activities for three days during Ramadan in each section. Since 2007, this Ramadan Santri Kilat activity has become an annual agenda of the Headquarters and Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro. The total number of participants in this Ramadan Sanlat reaches an average of 7000 male and female students from 12 schools. This number has even reached a record of 11000 students in 2014.¹⁷²

I had the opportunity to interview ustadz Abdullah, the leader of the student team; Abdullah said that the first strategy he used was to form good relationships between school institutions, both personally and the pesantren brotherhood, so that they had access to be able to offer assemblies, the science of *dhikr*, *sholawat* and also *tabligh*. This student tashkil program was created based on Kyai Uzairon's worried and concern for the character of today's youth, especially those who only pursue modern education, which is far from religious education and is exposed to negative associations.

Jama'ah Tabligh in Pesantren uses what is used by Islamic movement activities as framing. They use the case of the decline and moral decadence of youth in schools as what is called diagnostic framing to articulate the main problem they need to overcome related to the moral decline of Muslim youth, which is closely related to individual piety for Jama'ah Tabligh. Then, they offer a solution as well as a strategy to overcome the problem with the *santri kilat* program and join the da'wah movement that they carry. Then, the last solution is supported by the credibility of the kyai in the pesantren as a source of authority that can motivate individuals to join. This is in line with Metcalf's opinion, which states

¹⁷¹ Abdullah, Online Interview with Student Team Leader, 30 May 2024.

¹⁷² Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro*.

that "Some Tabligh people will emphasize the failure of Muslims to live morally as the cause of Muslim suffering today"¹⁷³ as a legitimization of their actions to proselytize in society.¹⁷⁴

The student team not only holds Sanlat programs but also Pelmada (Students, College Students, and Youth) programs. As time progressed, the student team became more developed and coordinated. They not only socialize their student programs in other schools but also penetrate other Jama'ah Tabligh headquarters to other institutions, including higher education institutions. Several higher education institutions such as Institut Teknologi Surabaya (ITS), Surabaya State University (UNESA), Unibraw (Brawijaya University), Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) Bandung, and also Universitas Jember (Unej) have adopted their Santri Kilat program. In the development of its da'wah in the university environment, al-Fatah actively fills the studies in campus mosques, which are not only filled by followers of the Jama'ah Tabligh. Some of them are actually the majority of students and lay people who are interested in following the Jama'ah Tabligh studies. When I visited al-Fatah and met one of the Kyai's sons-in-law named Barli, he told me that their access to public universities is usually given by Jama'ah Tabligh followers who become lecturers on the campus or usually motivated by the Jama'ah Tabligh student community on the campus and also alumni who pursue higher education.

Realizing the supportive reception from schools, Pesantren al-Fatah strengthened its alliances and networks with the cooperation of *mahalah and halaqoh* with these schools. Teachers in Magetan, Madiun, and Ngawi keep in touch with Pesantren al-Fatah even after the sanlat is over. Every Friday night, they come to Temboro to listen to *Bayan* at the headquarters. Until before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, 70 schools revived daily taklim as a major impact on the student team. In fact, one state-owned public school, SMK 1 Bendo in Magetan, started a ta'lim and organized daily fiqh studies and Qur'anic deposits, resulting in the formation of a Student Jama'ah Tabligh. Some of the students who graduated from the school even participated in the four-month *khuruj*. Schools that have built networks with Pesantren al-Fatah and also Temboro Markaz, such as SMAN 2 Magetan and SMK 1 Madiun, have changed a lot. This school even tends to be like a school in a Tabligh pesantren because it has daily *ta'lim*, the issuance of *jama'ah* for one-day *khuruj*, and carrying out *muzakarah* and *sunnah*. Often, it school vacations are filled with *khuruj* accompanied by ustadz from pesantren.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Metcalf, "Travelers' Tales in the Tablighi Jamaat."

¹⁷⁴ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*.

¹⁷⁵ Budiana, *Kronik Tiga Abad Temboro*.

This suggests a different approach to their da'wah strategy, particularly about their *mahallah* and *halaqah* as part of student team programs. The program's success in establishing school-to-school networks is a brilliant strategy, especially since, in many cases, the program is actually a local, mosque-based network that facilitates the *khuruj* that will take Jama'ah Tabligh followers throughout the region and abroad. In Indonesia, however, the program has been successful in forming networks between schools as a strategy to reach out to young people.

On another occasion, I interviewed a female teacher named Muna. I learned that the presence of madrasa in the al-Fatah environment has made an important contribution to the spread of da'wah itself. The presence of modern education in the al-Fatah pesantren makes it easy for this school to build cooperation with other schools, supported by the role of the kyai's influence and also the boarding school; many schools around al-Fatah have built relationships with MA and MTs al-Fatah. Some of them also have backgrounds in Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah organizations. The existence of this network between schools makes it easier for al-Fatah's da'wah to penetrate the boundaries of formal state education. This expands their da'wah model, which originally focused on *khuruj* from mosque to mosque but began to develop from school to school. Abdullah recounted that this inter-school proselytization has attracted many young people to join the Jama'ah Tabligh community. He mentioned that some of the students whose schools had invited or were invited by al-Fatah also began to be interested in participating in religious activities in pesantren during vacations.

In Marloes Janson's opinion, the reason why the Jama'ah Tabligh is so attractive to young men is usually because of the democratization of religious authority, in which these young laymen - who have been excluded from the domain of religious expertise - have been further encouraged to claim for themselves the position of religious authority. It is because in Jama'ah Tabligh, the ulama are not the sole guardians of Islam, but the religious authority has fallen to anyone willing to do da'wah -*khuruj*-.¹⁷⁶ For the Jama'ah Tabligh, religious authority must be established within its members as a whole. This is in line with the results of interviews I conducted with young men who joined the Jama'ah Tabligh. One of them, Baqi, a young man from Jakarta, mentioned that the Tabligh activities enable them to continue the Prophet's preaching and spread what the Prophet taught to the wider community.

¹⁷⁶ Janson, "The Global Meets the Local: The Tablighi Jama'at Contextualised."

"I like the Jama'ah Tabligh and doing *khuruj* because it emulates what the Prophet said, then besides that, I am happy because i got new and many friends, and I am most happy when I am *honored and respected in people's houses.*"

Another participant who declined to be named also mentioned

"I just like participating in *khuruj* because it emulates the attitude and character of the Prophet, at the same time traveling, especially when with friends."

A person's participation in an Islamist network such as Jama'ah Tabligh has increased religious career opportunities, cultural capabilities, as well as the prestige that accumulates when being a member is very attractive.¹⁷⁷ This model of Islamic movement activity, such as JT, uses informal networks in the development of its proselytization strategy. *Informal networks* are personal and organizational relationships that are linked to form the basis for movement activities. Networks can be family relationships, friends, and colleagues, which are used for recruitment, communication, and coordination of action. The student team model is an informal network that is often an important resource for movements, especially if a movement is in a state of repression, making it more difficult for the government to identify and control. However, because Jama'ah Tabligh is under Indonesia's democratic government system, which does not consider JT a threat because of its apolitical attitude and also its da'wah model, which is now incorporated into Indonesia's organic education, namely pesantren, making it freer in terms of recruitment and network formation.

Al-Fatah, as a Tabligh Pesantren, can indirectly be identified as one of the movements that have encouraged the process of Islamization of formal education in Indonesia through their da'wah activities. This model of da'wah strategy has also been adopted by other movements in Indonesia, such as the Tarbiyah movement (PKS); in its strategy, PKS also uses a model of ideological dissemination and regeneration through educational institutions at all levels. The PKS Tarbiyyah movement also continuously strives to develop various da'wah activities, including *halqa*, *daura*, recitation, *liqa*, *rihla*, *mabit*, seminars, and workshops as a recruitment system.¹⁷⁸ Meanwhile, Jama'ah Tabligh in formal institutions has also been able to offer assemblies, dhikr science, sholawat and also tabligh. It is even able to internalize its *khuruj* doctrine through *mahallah* and *halaqah* in formal educational institutions.

¹⁷⁷ Alexander Horstmann, "The Tablighi Jama'at, Transnational Islam, and the Transformation of the Self between Southern Thailand and South Asia" in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 27, 2007.

¹⁷⁸ Hasan, "Islamist Party, Electoral Politics and Da'wah Mobilization among Youth: The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia."

4.3 The Spread of Tabligh Pesantren: Pesantren-based Cadre

It has been mentioned earlier that Pesantren Tabligh, especially al-Fatah, has optimized its da'wah in Indonesia also through the construction of branch pesantren. The presence of Jama'ah Tabligh in the pesantren has changed the orientation of this pesantren not only to produce ulama but also to da'I, who are competent in religious matters. These graduates then preach to the community in various regions, both through *khuruj* activities and also through the establishment of branch pesantren.¹⁷⁹ This strategy has made the influence of Tabligh Pesantren on the community even wider.

Until now, Tabligh pesantren have become a fertile ground for Tabligh followers to regenerate their movement, especially for the children of Tabligh followers and also for people who are only interested in Tabligh. This can be seen from the number of students in one of the Tabligh pesantren, al-Fatah, which currently reaches 25,000 students.¹⁸⁰ This data has shown the strong enthusiasm of parents to send their children to Tabligh pesantren. The majority of them are Tabligh followers who choose to send their children to Tabligh pesantren in order to continue their journey in spreading pure Islam. I had the opportunity to interview some alumni and students of al-Fatah and *Darussunnah* Islamic boarding schools by asking them about their reasons for joining the Tablighi boarding schools. Some of them interestingly answered that their parents were not Tablighis but only interested in Tabligh, and they attended the schools because of the input from others such as neighbors, relatives, and friends. Student recruitment is promoted by word of mouth among Jama'ah Tabligh's followers. Recruitment into these activities makes use of pre-existing relationships among relations. Family, friends, and neighbors.¹⁸¹ This allows Islamists such as Jama'ah Tabligh to absorb graduates into their circles based on familiarity and pre-existing trust, thereby avoiding the suspicion engendered by distrust of strangers. The presence of Islamist networks at the local level where people live, study, and work makes them highly accessible and minimizes the social distance between participants and non-participants.

Khoirunnisa, one of Tabligh's *female santri* (*female students in the pesantren*), mentioned her reason for studying in Tabligh's pesantren, which came from her father's friend who is a follower of Jama'ah Tabligh:

¹⁷⁹ Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat*.

¹⁸⁰ Barli, Interview with son Kiai at Pesantren Temboro about pesantren's branch, 11 March 2024.

¹⁸¹ Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America* (Princeton University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv301gtj>, 138-40.

"I learned about Temboro "al-Fatah" from my father's friend, but my father is not a Tabligh follower, but he was interested in the Jama'ah Tabligh and finally I was told to study da'wah in the pesantren."

Another male santri who also came from one of the branches of a Tabligh pesantren called Darus Sunnah in Bogor also mentioned that he did not know that the pesantren was a da'wah pesantren. He said that the origin of his education in the pesantren was because he wanted to study tahfidz at that time. However, several other pesantrens - *he mentioned several other tahfidz pesantrens* - did not accept new students, so he searched through the Google page and found the Tabligh Darus Sunnah pesantren located in Bogor. While some others indicated that at that time, they were not interested in al-Fatah Pesantren, their parents chose to send them there because of their background as a Jama'ah Tabligh family who wanted to send them to Tabligh Pesantren. The following are the results of interviews with the three alumni of the al-Fatah female pesantren.

" My father told me to, because my father is a Tabligh and his friends send their children to Temboro, so my father came."

"I know from my father."

"My father used to be Tabligh, and I have also often been to the al-Fatah pesantren, but at that time I didn't want to go to boarding school there because I saw the culture that was completely closed, but finally I went to school there because my father forced me to, and also coupled with my friends who wanted to go there so I felt like I had friends and wanted to go to boarding school there even though my siblings all graduated from modern huts."

One of my interviewees even mentioned that he was actually reluctant to perform the rituals of the Jama'ah Tabligh even if he joined their movement, however, due to the demands of his family, who are Tablighis. He is required to continue performing the *khuruj* ritual as a Tabligh da'i. This shows that the Jama'ah Tabligh pesantren has become a fertile ground for the regeneration of the sons and daughters of the Tablighis to instill da'wah education among them both forcibly and voluntarily.

Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. argues that the most important dimension in the framing process for the spread of da'wah, as well as the mobilization of the da'wah movement, is the resonance of the frame. The ability of a movement to turn potential mobilization into actual mobilization depends on the capacity of a frame to resonate with potential participants. When a movement frame uses symbols of culture, language, and local identity, it will more easily resonate among constituents, thereby increasing mobilization. However, such reverberation depends not only on its consistency with

cultural narratives but also on the reputation of the individuals or groups responsible for articulating the frame, the salience of the frame to potential participants, and the empirical credibility of the frame.¹⁸² In the case of Jama'ah Tabligh above, the Jama'ah Tabligh Cadre uses informal networks, which are the closest individuals of potential participants, to invite them to study in pesantren. This strategy is effective because pesantren use their framing based on the narrative of tabligh texts that continuously resonate with participants. The pesantren adopted the book *Fada'il al-A'mal* by al-Kandhlawi, which is literature that is always read, studied, and practiced by the Jama'ah Tabligh. This book is read aloud and repeatedly in the pesantren activities in the morning. *Faza'il al-A'mal* is an important framing source because the author tries to convince the reader of the legitimacy and necessity of tabligh by using various arguments. Its role is as a textual vehicle for the Tabligh ideology in changing the subjectivity of the Tablighis."¹⁸³

This is supported by the results of my interviews, which show that the potential participants of the Jama'ah Tabligh are very young santri, who were initially ambiguous and did not understand this movement. However, they later became active in this movement because the practice and repeated reading of Tabligh texts unconsciously made them legitimize this movement and make them active followers of this movement. This reverberation is reinforced by the credibility of the kyai as an articulator of the narrative who not only has a high reputation among the Jama'ah. But also convey messages to constituents and empirics. This is what results in the da'wah frame becoming stronger and more effective in mobilizing potential participants into active participants in pesantren. Moreover, the Jama'ah Tabligh pesantren has established many branches and is located in many places in Indonesia, making its development more massive and faster.

4.4 Trangkil FM Radio: Digital Da'wah

Transnational digital communication networks (TDCNs) - have led to an exponential increase in global interaction capacity. These new media bring millions of users into constant - almost instantaneous - contact with one another. The increased availability of these services, coupled with new opportunities to interact and communicate globally, has facilitated the formation of alternative transnational communication systems shaped by ad hoc digital networks of mutually interested people in the form of individuals and various social groups. The digital communications revolution has mediated significant

¹⁸² Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26, no. 1 (August 2000): 611-39, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.611>.

¹⁸³ Ali and Sahib, *A Sociological Study of the Tabligh Jama'at*.

shifts in the global opportunity structure for collective mobilization in support of diverse transnational political-social projects, including but not limited to demands for democratization and violent fundamentalism. TDCN is an alternative site for transnational struggles that effectively allows a growing number of actors to organize collective action.¹⁸⁴ As a missionary movement that aims to gain followers to join its movement, Jama'ah Tabligh also utilizes the advancement of digital transformation as one of its proselytization strategies.

Jama'ah Tabligh in Pesantren have used public space to spread their models of understanding and ideas. They use the radio as a force to spread their teachings and messages. Pesantren al-Fatah has a radio named Radio Trangkil FM. A radio developed against the need for recitation and da'wah to be spread in the broader circle, not only in the pesantren environment. Radio Trangkil was established in 2004 and began with a regional radio broadcast. Currently, it has been transformed into a systematic and well-organized application as a means of spreading the ideas of the Pesantren as well as Jama'ah Tabligh. This radio application broadcasts various things related to various religious issues.¹⁸⁵ With the slogan "Media Dakwah Seluruh Alam," (*Dakwah Media for the Whole World*) this radio has a vision that aims to make it easier for people to listen to religious advice, with the hope of increasing enthusiasm in doing good deeds and spreading religion to all realms, very much in line with Jama'ah Tabligh's slogan model that targets individual piety and their da'wah movement.¹⁸⁶

Since its establishment, this radio has been one of the media for proselytizing pesantren al-Fatah. However, in its development, it has been transformed into one of the radios that play a role in the spread of Jama'ah Tabligh's da'wah. This radio broadcasts various discussions from books such *asal-Matjar arrobih*, *Riyadhus Sholihin*, *Tafsir, Masāil, Ihya' Ulumuddin*, and *Bayan Markaz*. The discussions broadcast on this radio are recitations conducted within the pesantren and also the JT Temboro markaz. However, this radio was created because some pesantren parties felt these recitations needed to reach a wider audience, especially alums and Tabligh followers.

Barbara Metcalf, in her article, mentions that the primary goal of the Jama'ah Tabligh movement is Tabligh itself, which means to convey. To achieve this goal, the movement consistently used vernacular works based on translations of the Qur'an and

¹⁸⁴ Lemke and Habegger, "A Master Institution of World Society? Digital Communications Networks and the Changing Dynamics of Transnational Contention."

¹⁸⁵ Qudus, Interview Online with Radio Trangkil Staff about dakwah with radio and application, 24 June 2024.

¹⁸⁶ <https://trangkilfm.net>, diakses 01 June 2024.

hadith in its covert work to inculcate correct and devotional religious practices among Muslims. They used publications of translated texts to communicate their teachings in addition to using practice.¹⁸⁷ Over time, with the advancement of digital information and communication technology. The movement also utilizes technology to disseminate its ideology and da'wah in addition to its practices and translated publications. The discussions in their recitations also indirectly discuss the ideas of their movement that emphasize da'wah and hadith and Sufistic books; there is no attitude towards the source of law, no debate over the style of prayer or participation in customary practices, the Tabligh say that they emphasize on *fazail* and not on *masa'il*. The da'wah that emphasizes the ideas of the Jama'ah Tabligh on the radio lies mainly in the broadcasting of bayan headquarters, which contains lectures by Tabligh scholars that emphasize *fadail al-Muslim*, especially about faith, Ihsan, and amal. On one occasion, I asked one of the teacher at pesantren about Bayan Markaz, and they answered:

"Bayan markaz is usually filled by ulama, kyai, or alumni, it is not just a sermon, but also a concrete invitation to exercise and practice religious faith and religious deeds in daily life. People are invited to try and pray, and to follow the ways of the ancients in religion. Bayan markaz usually emphasizes the importance of faith and charity. Then they are also invited to tasykil or practice themselves in preaching, to get tarbiyah and *tazkiyatun nafs*. It is usually accompanied by stories of previous companions in terms of their methods, their merits, and the way they spread the faith, to motivate people in religion. If the ancients spread Islam and passed on the faith by preaching to the community, we also use that method to get Allah's help through worship, *mu'amalah*, *mu'asarat* and morals."

From this explanation, it can be concluded that Radio Trangkil is one of the media used by Jama'ah Tabligh followers in pesantren to spread da'wah. What has been said about what bayan markaz is has shown the harmony of bayan markaz in Trangkil FM radio applications with the ideas of Jama'ah Tabligh. They combine the ideas of Jama'ah Tabligh with various references to supporting books that are very familiar to NU pesantren, such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin*. The *Kitab al-Matjar al-Robbih* and *Riyadhus Sholihin* are also used to tell the stories of the previous people and the prophet's traditions to motivate Muslims through narration. In their broadcasts on Trangkil FM Radio, Pesantren Tabligh also refused to discuss *ikhtilaf al-hukm*, which was directly implied in one of their broadcasts:

"So among the temptations of the shaitan to Muslims, even to some Islamic intellectuals, are busy talking about ikhtilaf. They forget to fulfill what they agreed to fight for. What is agreed upon is the most important pillar of Islam."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Metcalf, "Living Hadīth in the Tablighī Jama'āt."

¹⁸⁸ Recording from the March 17, 2024 edition of the Trangkil FM Radio App.

4.5 Neutral as a Strategy: Questioning Apolitical Claims

In various literature, Jama'ah Tabligh makes a persistent apolitical claim, saying that it never interferes in politics and is also neutral in every political activity." As Farish states:

"They never discuss politics, let alone criticize the government in power, or condemn the ceremonies of other Islamic groups as deviant or infidel. The movement is apolitical and non-violent ."¹⁸⁹

However, given what Sikand says, the JT's strategy changes according to context, whereas in countries with Muslim minorities or where political activity is strictly dealt with, the JT follows a strict political line. However, the JT plays an active political role in more favorable situations. While JT does not officially take a political stance and adheres to an apolitical line, it can be concluded that, given the congruence between its long-term goals and those of Islamist political formations, JT has the potential to act as an advocate for Islamist parties if circumstances so require.¹⁹⁰

Before going deeper, we need to know that the santri culture, which includes *kiai*, NU, and pesantren, is an essential target in every election in Indonesia's political contestation. Candidates for both state and local leadership try to showcase the best religious populist ideas by approaching kyai and pesantren networks. They often join religious ceremonies and build good relationships with local elites and leaders. This strategy is used to win elections. Their idea is simple: candidates believe their promises will be better delivered through these three elements. Individuals within the three elements would be offered better access to patronage resources and improved facilities.¹⁹¹ Although Jama'ah Tabligh has repeatedly expressed its apolitical stance in Indonesia as a pesantren under the auspices of the government, at least the political stance of the Tabligh pesantren will affect its long-term goals. Moreover, Sikand asserts that the need for survival and expansion of the movement has determined the political role that JT has played in different social contexts. Without necessarily joining politics structurally, another way in which prominent JT activists actively intervene in politics is the patronage they receive from state authorities on occasion.¹⁹²

Based on a visit to Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro, which is a Tabligh pesantren, it seems that there has been a shift in their apolitical claims. This stems from the results when

¹⁸⁹ Noor, "At Home Across the Sea: The Arrival of the Tablighi Jama'at and Its Spread Across Southeast Asia."

¹⁹⁰ Sikand, "The Tabligh? Jama'at and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal."

¹⁹¹ Yanwar Pribadi, "Islam and Politics in Madura: Ulama and Other Local Leaders in Search of Influence (1990 – 2010)" (Leiden University, 2013), 206-222.

¹⁹² Sikand, "The Tabligh? Jama'at and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal."

I managed to interview one of the pesantren parties related to the general election event. I concluded that there was a presence of political tendencies there. Suspicion began when I asked about the presence of state officials at the al-Fatah Islamic boarding school during a political party. Moreover, an ustadz there answered that it was very often done.

"Often, in every event, from Head of Village to the President, from Prabowo, Amien Rais, Muhaimin, party leaders, Khofifah Indah Parawangsa."

This is not surprising because many studies have mentioned that pesantren is usually a place of clientism that fosters political patronage. However, what I am concerned about is that this will also affect Jama'ah Tabligh's claims of its apolitical nature, especially in the pesantren environment. The latest news a few months before the 2024 election, precisely in October 2023. One of the political candidates, Muhaimin Iskandar from the AMIN (Anies-Muhaimin) pair, visited the al-Fatah pesantren to ask for their political support. However, it was not directly spoken, but Muhaimin made *silaturrahim* and asked for prayers to be the best. Although this is not directly considered a request for political support, in her book, Caroline Psakarina emphasizes that *silaturrahim* has become the dominant campaign mode since 2014. The *silaturrahim* approach in a political context usually has two purposes. First, it is an easy way to present candidates to constituents in populist clothing and connect them personally with voters. Secondly, it also allows candidates to build clientelistic networks up to the community level and strengthen those cultural networks by injecting elements of cultural traditions and built-in emotional ties. Political candidates usually select influential local actors to fill out their campaign networks. In addition, they often help improve their client's social status and leadership reputation and provide access to government funds and projects.¹⁹³

When questioned, is there any political support there? The pesantren repeatedly revealed that they were neutral and never had the inclination to vote for any candidate; they also claimed that they did not participate in any political campaign. However, I found data that related to this apolitical claim and indicated the possibility of patronage. In the 2024 election, Al-Fatah mentioned that it remained neutral in any camp. However, the political results showed that the presidential candidate Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin won a landslide victory in Temboro, Magetan. AMIN won 7636 votes in 36 polling stations in the al-Fatah pesantren area, Temboro. Even in 9 out of 36 polling stations, Prabowo Gibran did not get

¹⁹³ Caroline Paskarina, "Bandung, West Java: Silaturahmi, Personalist Networks and 203 Patronage Politics," in *Electoral Dynamics in Indonesia: Money Politics, Patronage and Clientelism at the Grassroots*, ed. Edward Aspinall and Mada Sukmajati (Singapore: NUS Press, n.d.), 203–16.

any votes, aka zero.¹⁹⁴ This is different from the previous election in 2019, in which Prabowo-Sandi won the majority of votes at the Temboro Ponpes polling station. Their votes soared above the Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin pair, who only received three votes. Moreover, in the previous election, Prabowo held a gathering at the pesantren and even participated in Sholawatan for Dzikir and Wirid.¹⁹⁵ However, based on the official claims of the pesantren above, the institution repeatedly claims that it does not provide political direction, and its members may choose to act based on personal beliefs; perhaps this apolitical claim can still be maintained. However, based on data, Jama'ah Tabligh pesantren is sometimes not apolitical.

This is certainly in line with Sikand's opinion that JT will tend to choose leadership candidates pragmatically because their silence in political affairs allows them to support secular political parties of their choice and make pragmatic decisions. Given that JT is in a pesantren environment, he will most likely support a candidate who is an alumnus of the pesantren because being an alumnus of a pesantren student (here Muhaimin Iskandar) will provide significant practical benefits for JT and his pesantren. In addition, Pesantren Tabligh also developed within the framework of NU's *amaliyah*, which suggests that candidates supported by JT are likely to be those who have an affiliation or support for NU because it was implicitly mentioned by Gus Ubaidillah (one of the kyai in the hierarchical structure of Temboro pesantren):

"Because Cak Imin (Muhaimin) is also an alumnus of a pesantren, even though later Cak Imin will only be Anies Baswedan's vice president, pro-people policies can come out of Cak Imin," and "The ideas of NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), the ideas of ahlul sunah wal jamaah are getting stronger in Indonesia, and ahlul sunah wal jamaah have been proven to be able to govern the world in peace, govern the world with all kinds of conditions, can be peaceful ,"¹⁹⁶

Meanwhile, in the case of the previous election, I managed to get video footage related to Prabowo's visit during the 2019 election, which indirectly sought sympathizers

¹⁹⁴ Sugeng Hariyanto, "Suara Ponpes Temboro Dulu Milik Prabowo, Kini Direbut Anies," detik jatim.com, February 17, 2024, <https://www.detik.com/jatim/berita/d-7198637/suara-ponpes-temboro-dulu-milik-prabowo-kini-direbut-anies>. Dan Sugeng Hariyanto "Tak Cuma Area Ponpes, AMIN Menang Mutlak di Desa Temboro Magetan. Detik jatim.com, February 16, 2024, <https://www.detik.com/jatim/berita/d-7197696/tak-cuma-area-ponpes-amin-menang-mutlak-di-desa-temboro-magetan>.

¹⁹⁵ Irwan sy, "Sowan ke Ponpes Al Fatah Magetan Prabowo didoakan jadi Pemimpin Indonesia," surya.co.id, November 1, 2018, <https://surabaya.tribunnews.com/2018/11/01/sowan-ke-ponpes-al-fatah-magetan-prabowo-didoakan-jadi-pemimpin-indonesia>.

¹⁹⁶ Miftakhul Erfan, Kiai Ponpes Al Fatah Temboro beri Pesan ke Pasangan AMIN : Satukan Kebhinnekaan dan Perbanyak Tirakat" in tvonenews.com, Oktober 15, 2023, <https://www.tvonenews.com/daerah/jatim/159612-kiai-ponpes-al-fatah-temboro-beri-pesan-ke-pasangan-amin-satukan-kebhinnekaan-dan-perbanyak-tirakat?page=2>.

in the Pesantren area.¹⁹⁷ In the video, Prabowo managed to gain the sympathy of the Tabligh followers and the students because of his tawadhu's attitude towards the pesantren leaders. He even promised to give the pesantren leader, Gus Ubed, a horse. Prabowo also offered the kyai leader a visit to his house and promised to visit Temboro often. Jama'ah Tabligh is very fond of models of kindness and respect for themselves and others, especially for the people they follow, Kiai. So Prabowo indirectly succeeded in inviting sympathizers because of his kind and respectful attitude towards pesantren leaders. Moreover, Prabowo was the first presidential candidate to visit and honor the pesantren. This support is also directly implied by Kyai Ubaidillah's words

"Santriwan and Santriwati come from East Java, Central Java, West Java Kalimantan, Sumatra and others, this includes representing the people of Indonesia and of course they pray for his success in the 2019 presidential election,"¹⁹⁸

Considering that occupying a neutral position for Tabligh pesantren is profitable, Neutrality means maintaining good relations with all political parties. In a grassroots society that tends to be antipathetic towards politics, this so-called neutral attitude - although doubtful- brings sympathy. Clerics who choose this stance usually have many followers because constituents from various parties can still make the cleric a patron in religious understanding. This choice to be neutral is a very political decision for Tabligh pesantren to attract and maintain their influence in society.

4.6 Conclusion

Jama'ah Tabligh has conducted a series of strategic negotiations in the pesantren environment through several approaches. The first is forming a team of students sent to schools to carry out *santri kilat* activities and student training by forming an informal network. They have also successfully carried out their da'wah activities through *mahalla* and *halaqah* activities in schools, as shown by their success in internalizing the teachings of Jama'ah Tabligh. Second, the Jama'ah Tabligh strengthened its strategy of spreading its teachings more strongly by establishing Tabligh Islamic Boarding Schools. The existence of these pesantren strengthens their regeneration strategy, which not only expands the

¹⁹⁷ Gerindra Tv, Prabowo Subianto Sowan ke Ponpes Al-Fatah Temboro. (youtube.com). June 1, 2024.

¹⁹⁸ Irwan sy, "Sowan ke Ponpes Al Fatah Magetan Prabowo didoakan jadi Pemimpin Indonesia," surya.co.id, November 1, 2018, <https://surabaya.tribunnews.com/2018/11/01/sowan-ke-ponpes-al-fatah-magetan-prabowo-didoakan-jadi-pemimpin-indonesia>.

network but also ensures the continuity of education and training of cadres. Third, the Jama'ah Tabligh expanded its proselytizing activities by constructing Radio Trangkil, which was used as an effective medium to reach a wider audience.

Jamaah Tabligh also builds relationships with the government by remaining politically neutral. Although doubtful, what they call an apolitical attitude is part of their strategy to attract the sympathy of the wider community and avoid conflict with the government authorities. Thus, the strategy of Jama'ah Tabligh in pesantren includes various aspects that complement each other to achieve the goals of da'wah and influence the community.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization, Islamic revivalist ideas, and movement have shown their ability to spread and adapt in various parts of the world. They have been able to cross national boundaries through technological advances, social networks, transmission, population migration, and also sending and returning of students studying in Muslim countries as a base that strengthens this Islamic revivalist movement. This movement, a transnational movement, has undergone a strategic transformation in preaching (da'wah). In Indonesia, pressure from the government and pro-democracy Muslim groups on Islamist discourse, however, has gradually forced these transnational Islamist groups to abandon their violent strategies (especially those that focus on high-level politics) and switch to a more subtle and unobtrusive strategy of implementing shari'ah that focuses on the grassroots level. Transnational Islamist movements present in Indonesia, such as HTI, Salafi, and the Muslim Brotherhood-inspired PKS, no longer see violent jihad as a relevant way to realize goals. These movements now argue that da'wah is more appropriate for raising the awareness of Indonesian Muslims of their duty to uphold the supremacy of shari'ah. Currently, the focus more on grassroots da'wah by directly targeting the community through various religious activities, recitations, and fostering Muslim communities. This dynamic has shown that transnational Islamic movements have adapted to the socio-political context in Indonesia.

As one of the Islamic revivalist movements that tends to be a missionary movement, the Jama'ah Tabligh movement has also shown its ability to adapt various situations and environments that allow it to continue to be relevant and effective in spreading Islamist ideas that strengthen its position in an increasingly connected world. In its history of movement in all parts of the world, The Jama'ah Tabligh has shown remarkable strategic flexibility that can adapt to different traditions and cultures in different parts of the world. The Tabligh Jama'ah's main strategy for developing their network was to use the movement of Indians to various locations as a basis for spreading their ideas. Their outreach strategy centered on conducting *khuruj* and *talim* activities in all locations they visited. This was evidenced by their skill in conveying the message and concepts of Islam amidst the challenges in their chosen locations. They set up educational institutions in certain areas, employ popular figures, and utilize technology to develop their following

and attract new members. This is reinforced by the non-political language they encourage, which allow them to reduce oppression more easily in the countries they visit.

The presence of Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesia demonstrates their remarkable ability to be versatile and adaptable in various situations. There is hardly a city in Indonesia that their da'wah movement has not reached. The Jama'ah Tabligh in Indonesia has capitalized on the strategic importance and appeal of pesantren as the main component of Islamic education in Indonesia. Pesantren, deeply embedded in Indonesian culture and tradition, are crucial in spreading Islamic principles and shaping the character of the ummah. The Tabligh Jama'ah's non-confrontational style of preaching, which emphasizes personal piety and improving the quality of Muslim beliefs and ethics, is in harmony with the teachings of pesantren. This unity makes Jama'ah Tabligh acceptable to pesantren and able to utilize the existing pesantren infrastructure, as well as the social networks and religious authority of the kyai in the pesantren and the community. The Indonesian Jama'ah Tabligh has adapted its approach to match the strengths and qualities of pesantren. Starting from the mosque, the Jama'ah Tabligh in pesantren has shifted its strategy to young people in formal educational institutions, or public schools. They created student group to promote moral improvement among young people and used it to encourage them to join Jama'ah Tabligh. Jama'ah Tabligh has built a solid and committed cadre base through education and guidance in pesantren and schools by focusing da'wah among the young generation.

Pesantren Tabligh has become a strategic base for the development of Jama'ah Tabligh cadres. Through developing branch pesantren in various regions throughout Indonesia, Pesantren Tabligh, especially al-Fatah, and its branches, including Darussunnah, can utilize extensive social networks to disseminate their values and ideas. The existence of this approach has made Pesantren Tabligh a very effective regeneration strategy. Pesantren can intensively educate santri with the ideas and practices of Jama'ah Tabligh by forming student teams; Pesantren Tabligh can reach out to students outside the pesantren environment, expand their da'wah and introduce Jama'ah Tabligh values to young people in the public schools which increases the likelihood of these young people joining. In this context, we can conclude that the Tabligh Jama'ah has played an important role in the Islamization of formal education.

In addition to educational strategies, the Jama'ah Tabligh also uses modern communication media as a tool for their da'wah; they established a radio station managed by the pesantren, This radio station, which in this thesis is Radio Trangkil FM, established by al-Fatah, they can deliver their lectures, studies, movement ideas more quickly and

widely while strengthening their relationship with pesantren alumni and community. Finally, one of the critical aspects of Jama'ah Tabligh's strategy in pesantren is their apolitical claim, which shifts to a neutral claim on the government system, especially during elections. By maintaining this neutral stance, they can gain sympathy from various groups without getting involved in divisive political conflicts. Although officially not actively involved in politics, there are indications that Pesantren Tabligh has indirectly supported specific candidates during the general elections. This has led to some doubts regarding the extent of their apolitical stance in the practice of politics in Indonesia. With this flexible and adaptive strategy, Jama'ah Tabligh can negotiate itself within the pesantren body by trying to remain relevant and practical in fulfilling its da'wah mission amidst complex social and political dynamics. They can adapt to the local context and utilize various platforms to spread their da'wah message and regenerate their movement both in the school environment and pesantren. So overall, the conclusion of this analysis leads to Jama'ah Tabligh's ability to associate itself with the pesantren and utilize various kinds of establishment within it is a new strategy that can be more effective in spreading da'wah and mass mobilization.

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ATTACHMENTS

No	Name	Time and Place	Position
1	Azizah	12 Maret 2024, Magetan	Leader of Pesantren al-Fatah
2	Barli	10 Maret 2024, Magetan 12 Maret 2024, Magetan 01 Juni 2024, Online Interview	Ustadz and also Leader of Pesantren
3	Abdullah	30 Mei 2024, Online Interview 7 Juni 2024, Online Interview	Leader of Student Team
4	Vadhi	15 Juni 2024, Online Interview	Student and Alumni al-Fatah Temboro
5	Qudus	24 Juni 2024, Online Interview	Staff Radio Temboro
6	Ica	3 Maret 2024, Online Interview 29 Mei 2024, Online Interview	Alumni al-Fatah Temboro
7	Sarni	6 Juni 2024 , Online Interview	Alumni al-Fatah Temboro
8	Muna	9 Maret 2024, Online Interview	Ustadzah at MTs Al-Fatah Temboro
9	Najib	1 Juni 2024, Bogor	Leader of Darussunnah Bogor
10	Baqi	20 Juni 2024, Bogor	Student at Darussunnah Bogor
11	Syauqi	20 Juni 2024, Bogor	Student at Darussunnah Bogor
12	Ahmad	20 Juni 2024, Bogor	Student at Darussunnah Bogor
13	Khoirunnisa	12 Maret 2024, Magetan	Staff and also Student at Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro
14	Aisyah	12 Maret 2024, Magetan	<i>Ndalem</i> (Helper) and also Student at Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro

Figure 1. Student Team at SMPN 3 Magetan



Figure 2. Male Student Team



Figure 3. Student Team at SMPN Karangrejo



Figure 4. Interview with Leader of Pesantren Darussunnah



Figure 5. Interview with Ustadz and also Leader of Pesantren al-Fatah Temboro

