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## *Dakwah*, competition for authority, and development

### *Introduction*

The Arabic word *da`wah* – literally call or invitation – is a general term which denotes propagation of the Islamic religion. The Malay/Indonesian term, derived from the Arabic, is *dakwah*.<sup>1</sup> Although the concept includes efforts to convert non-Muslims to Islam, *da`wah* primarily refers to activities aiming at strengthening and deepening the faith of Muslims and helping them lead their daily lives in conformity with Islamic principles. Since the birth of Islam, *da`wah* has been an important aspect of this religion and *da`wah* activities have always been highly appreciated in Muslim societies. However, in the course of the twentieth century, *da`wah* activities and organizations have grown particularly strong all over the Muslim world and have adopted new forms and new aims. This phenomenon is related to two major developments which were partly contradictory: a renewed aspiration for international unity of all Muslims, on the one hand, and the formation of modern nation-states with their different religious traditions and – more importantly – their conflicting political interests, on the other hand. Additional factors include the development of modern means of transport and communication as well as Christian missionary activities.<sup>2</sup> Although often associated with revivalism, competition with other religions, or opposition to a secular political establishment, *da`wah*, understood more generally as organized efforts to strengthen the Islamic faith and its practice, is not limited to movements characterized by such associations. As a matter of fact, *da`wah* initiatives have varied greatly in their religious interpretation, standpoint – if any – on political issues, involvement

<sup>1</sup> This article uses the spelling *da`wah* in a general context and *dakwah* in an Indonesian context.

<sup>2</sup> A survey and discussion of the development of *da`wah* during the twentieth century is offered in Schulze 1995 and Masud 1995, which also cover most of the details mentioned in the following paragraphs.

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of public authorities, social basis, and types of activity.

In a general review of *da`wah* as it developed from the late nineteenth century onwards, mention should first be made of the initiative of the Ottoman sultan, Abdülhamid II (reign 1867-1909), to revive *da`wah* as a duty of the caliph. The context and objective of this aspect of late-Ottoman imperial policy were quite different from those of *da`wah* in the classical periods of the Muslim caliphate: rather than the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims and its consolidation among Muslims, *da`wah* became an instrument to promote the unity among all Muslims under the authority of the Ottoman sultan (Masud 1995:350; Schulze 1995:346).

During the first half of the twentieth century, in various parts of the Muslim world organizations were founded that considered *da`wah* their main or a major objective. They represented widely varying dogmatic and social traditions, including the (neo-) Salafi movement, mystical orders, and Islamic reformism. A prominent example of the first category is the Jam`iyyah al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn (Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928 in Egypt). Examples of the second category are the Tablighī Jamā`at (also known by the Arabic name of Jamā`ah al-Tabligh wa-al-Da`wah – Association for Preaching and Propagation, created in India in 1926) and, of a different nature, the Sanūsiyyah and the Tijāniyyah, both in West Africa.<sup>3</sup> The Jam`iyyah al-Da`wah wa-al-Irshād (Society for Propagation and Guidance, established in Cairo in 1911 by Rashīd Ridā) is an example of the third category.<sup>4</sup> Further away from mainstream Islam, groups such as the Isma`iliyyah and the Ahmadiyyah also put much effort into *da`wah*.

Not only the Ottoman sultan with his transnational ambitions but also the regimes of several nation-states which came into being in the Muslim world after the disintegration of the Ottoman empire as well as European colonial empires considered international religious outreach as an important duty. From the 1960s onwards, and more intensively from the 1970s, various regimes of the Muslim world became involved in international competition between *da`wah* organizations and networks they founded or sponsored. Main players in this competition were the Rābitah al-`Ālam al-Islāmī (Muslim World League, founded in 1962) and al-Nadwah al-`Ālamiyyah lil-Shabāb al-Islāmī (World Assembly of Muslim Youth, created in 1972), both closely linked to the Saudi Arabian regime, and the Jam`iyyah al-Da`wah al-Islāmiyyah (Islamic

<sup>3</sup> On Tablighī Jamā`at, see Ahmad 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Schulze 1995:347. The main achievement of this organization was its creation of a training institute for preachers of Islam among Muslims, who took a three-year course, and for *da`wah* agents (*dā`īs*) for the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims, who needed an additional three years of training. This institute, known as the Dār al-Da`wah wa-al-Irshād (House for Propagation and Guidance) or Madrasah al-Da`wah wa-al-Irshād (School for Propagation and Guidance), was opened in 1912. Its operations were interrupted by the First World War and never resumed (Adams 1933:197-8).

Call Society, established in 1972) and its sub-organization, al-Majlis al-`Ālamī lil-Da`wah al-Islāmiyyah (World Council for Islamic Propagation, set up in 1982), close to the Libyan regime. The Cairo-based al-Majlis al-A`lā lil-Shu`ūn al-Islāmiyyah (High Council for Islamic Affairs, founded in 1960) had its own international network. After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Iran created yet another network, which defended Iranian and Shiite interests. For this reason, Reinhardt Schulze (1995:349) concludes his article on the institutionalization of *da`wah* as follows: 'In fact, institutional *da`wah* continues to be mainly a medium of the patron regimes for the establishment of an informal, but religiously legitimated, foreign policy'. Other international *da`wah* organizations, such as the Tablighī Jamā`at, have no connections to a particular state or regime.<sup>5</sup>

For a complete picture of international influences on *da`wah* in various countries, a note should be added about the policies of a number of non-Muslim, Western states and organizations, the aim of which was not to reinvigorate Islam as such, but to enhance particular interpretations and practices of Islam which are considered to conform with modern, open, and peaceful societies. These policies have been implemented through financial and technical support for publication programmes, training programmes, and other activities, as well as exchange programmes and academic cooperation programmes, including scholarship programmes for Muslim leaders and specialists and students in Islamic studies to study at Western universities. Such programmes have existed since the 1980s, but have taken on a new dimension after the events of 11 September 2001.

Emulation – imitation and rivalry – of Christian mission was another important aspect of the twentieth-century development of Islamic *da`wah*. The international role of the Pope within the Roman Catholic Church was a source of inspiration for Sultan Abdülhamid II and his ambitions for *da`wah* (Masud 1995:350). Rashīd Ridā's decision to create the Jam`iyyah al-Da`wah wa-al-Irshād was a response to the perceived threat of Christian mission in Muslim areas. The creation of al-Majlis al-A`lā al-`Ālamī lil-Masājid (World Council of Mosques) during an international *da`wah* conference of the Muslim World League in 1975 was meant as a counterweight to the World Council of Churches.<sup>6</sup>

A particularly important aspect of this emulation of Christian mission was the novelty of combining *da`wah* with social welfare activities. As noted by Muhammad Khalid Masud (1995:352-3), this trend became widespread from about the 1970s. Its beginnings may be traced back to several decades earlier. During the 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood initiated social welfare and development activities. As explained by Umar Ryad, this policy was

<sup>5</sup> This does not mean that they have no political dimension. See Sikand 2003; Gaborieau 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Schulze 1995:348. More details relating to Rashīd Ridā' and his Jam`iyyah al-Da`wah wa-al-Irshād can be found in Adams 1933:195-8.

directly inspired by resistance to Christian missionary efforts to convert poor Muslims to Christianity through social welfare incentives. Resistance to the activities of Christian missionaries among Egyptian Muslims and dissatisfaction with the attitude of the al-Azhar establishment who were considered too lenient were among the main motives which inspired the founding of the Brotherhood (Ryad 2006:301-4). The combination of religious, political, and social welfare projects has become characteristic of the Brotherhood. Later *da`wah* movements in various parts of the world adopted social activities as a complement to their religious message, even though they did not share the political objectives of the Brotherhood.

This article concentrates on *dakwah* in Indonesia. It demonstrates that Indonesian *dakwah* shared many of the features already mentioned: it extended beyond religious activities proper; it involved competition for authority; it emulated Christian mission; it was marked by a complicated division of roles between state and non-governmental initiatives; and it developed within particular national and international political contexts. The article also highlights a number of particularities of *dakwah* in Indonesia. In order to achieve these objectives, various *dakwah* initiatives are discussed. Special attention is paid to the particularly illustrative period of the New Order, when Soeharto led the country, and, in this period, to the phenomenon of 'development *dakwah*'.

#### *The development of dakwah in Indonesia*

Like many other countries with large Muslim populations, Indonesia underwent a conspicuous growth of *dakwah* activities and organizations during the twentieth century. The growth of such activities and organizations was rapid after the country gained its independence and it accelerated after the establishment of the New Order regime, led by former president Soeharto, in the mid-1960s. This phenomenon is partially a result of the same mechanisms which were active in the development of *da`wah* worldwide. Some of the Indonesian *dakwah* organizations belonged to or were closely related to the international organizations and networks mentioned in the preceding section. Competition between various doctrinal traditions and social styles was a prominent feature of *dakwah* in Indonesia as it was elsewhere. Like many regimes in other parts of the Muslim world, the New Order regime believed it had a duty to play an important, although not exclusive, role in *dakwah*. Finally, *dakwah* in Indonesia was also characterized by emulation of Christian missionary organizations and, in a number of cases, competition with Christianity.

However, domestic social, economic, and political developments had a large impact on the development of *dakwah* movements in Indonesia too. The gradual and interrelated processes inherent in the rise of living standards, the

extension of education to increasingly large sections of the population, urbanization, the development of non-agricultural economic activities, and the rising influence of foreign cultural, social, intellectual, and spiritual models all contributed to the growth of new spiritual needs and questions which were addressed in diverse ways by these *dakwah* movements.<sup>7</sup> Among the questions addressed was the issue of protecting the Islamic religion and its social and cultural aspects from the influence of past Western colonization and the recent expansion of Western values through globalization. Related, but not identical, questions that some *dakwah* movements tried to answer concerned Muslim life in a post-traditional, primarily urban society. With the growth of an educated Muslim middle class, new needs and habits of reading about and discussing Islam arose, which were met by a number of organizations through activities which lie at least partially within the domain of *dakwah*. Responses offered to these questions and needs varied widely. This diversity corresponds to the different attitudes of *dakwah* movements towards tradition, modernity, and reform; the all-encompassing or open character of Islam as a social and legal system and the acceptability of local and foreign ways of life and thought; and towards various foreign centres of Muslim religious authority. The diversity of *dakwah* activities also conforms with the specific situation and needs of various social groups within the Indonesian Muslim community.

Political transformations had their impact on the development of *dakwah* in Indonesia too. Authors including Robert W. Hefner and Martin van Bruinessen have analysed the particularly intensive development of Indonesian *dakwah* movements in the New Order period. They consider this process to be a major element of a wider transformation, namely the withdrawal of most Muslim activists from party politics and their concentration on the implementation of Islamic values through educational and social activ-

<sup>7</sup> A few figures may illustrate the considerable increase of the urban population and progress of education. In 1930, 3.8% of the population of the Dutch Indies lived in urban areas, in 1950 it was 12.4% of the population of the Indonesian Republic, and in 2005 48.1% (*Statistical pocket book 1947*; <http://esa.un.org/unup/> (accessed 24-3-2011)). In 1930, 6.8% of the total population of 60,402,000 aged 15 and above were literate; in 1970 56.1% among a total of 69,527,000 were literate, and in 2005 90.6% among a total of 155,549,724 (*Statistical pocket book 1947*; *Statistik Indonesia 2007*; <http://www.unescap.org/stat/data/syb2008/13.1-Children-reaching-grade5-literacy.xls> (accessed 17-8-2010)). During the school year 1939-1940 the country had a total of 2,415,253 students at all levels (primary to tertiary), in 1952-1953 5,798,759, and in 2004-2005 42,064,156 (*Statistical pocket book 1947*; *Statistik Indonesia 2006, 2008*). These figures do not include the considerable numbers of children attending Islamic schools such as *madrasah*, *pesantren*, and similar types or non-subsidized institutions. During the school year 2001-2002, a total of 5,698,143 pupils were registered at 37,362 *madrasah* (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels; public and private combined). In 2003, 14,017 *pesantren* were listed at the Ministry of Religious Affairs (no figures available for the number of pupils) (data from Subhan 2009: Table 2 (p. 278) and Table 8 (p. 286), based on data from the Bagian Data dan Informasi, Departemen Agama RI, 2002 and *Statistik Pondok Pesantren*, Departemen Agama RI, 2003, respectively).

ities. Coercion by the regime and strategic wisdom of the Muslim community were parallel factors in this reorientation and cannot be totally separated.<sup>8</sup> After the fall of the restrictive New Order regime in 1998, a partial reversal took place. Activists from a number of *dakwah* movements formed Islamic political parties such as the Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB, Moon and Star Party) and the Partai Keadilan, later rebaptized Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, Prosperous Justice Party). This did not imply the abandonment of *dakwah* and other activities in educational and social domains, however.

The most prominent case of the transition from party politics to *dakwah* was the establishment of the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII, Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation) in 1967 by leading figures of the former Masjumi party. This process has been studied by a number of authors. Many of them have focused their attention on the apparent fact that this transition from party politics/Masjumi to *dakwah*/DDII was accompanied by a parallel transformation of the attitude of leading personalities of the former Masjumi party towards constitutional democracy, reformist conceptions of Islam, and the Western world from a more positive attitude to quite a negative one. Particular attention has been paid to Mohammed Natsir, who chaired the Masjumi party and later the DDII. On the one hand, commentators including the Indonesian Muslim intellectual and activist Dawam Rahardjo have argued that the basically progressive and open-minded ideas of M. Natsir were later usurped and distorted by conservative and anti-Western Muslims active within the DDII and related movements. On the other hand, Nurcholish Madjid contends that M. Natsir's ideas really changed under the impact of political repression and the feeling of having been betrayed by Soeharto. Akh Muzakki (2005:182) has lent his support to the second view (see also Husin 1998:53-4, 182).

Allan Samson has gone beyond this focus on one particular figure and concentrated on the balance of power between different categories of Muslim political activists. He distinguishes three categories: accommodationists, reformists, and fundamentalists.<sup>9</sup> In normal times, reformists, of whom M. Natsir was a prominent representative, are dominant. In times of crisis, however, when the Muslim community feels its basic convictions and interests are threatened, fundamentalists, with their uncompromising and emotional attitude in the public arena, tend to gain the upper hand at the expense of reformists and accommodationists, Samson (1972:106-7, 139-43) argues.

<sup>8</sup> Hefner 1993:6-7, 1995:37, 42, 1997:82-3; Van Bruinessen 1998a:181-4, 1998b:307-10, 317.

<sup>9</sup> He uses the term 'accommodationists' for those Muslim politicians and activists who concentrate on the articulation of the social and economic interests of Islamic organizations; 'reformists' for those who emphasize the compatibility between Islam and modernity and try to realize their objectives through pragmatic, political means; and 'fundamentalists' for those who strive for the implementation of Islamic imperatives on the basis of a purist interpretation of Islam.

Hefner (1997:93-4) has added that the abolishment of a democratic political system based on compromise led Muslim activists to emphasize their own, distinctive convictions. International developments, such as the involvement of the United States in the Middle East conflict and fear of an invasion by non-Islamic Western culture, reinforced this change of attitude. When analysing longer-term transformations in Muslim attitudes, generational changes should also be taken into consideration.<sup>10</sup>

Although pressure by the New Order regime was an important factor driving Muslim activists and their organizations away from political activism towards *dakwah*, it was not the only one. Other factors were competition with Christianity on the one hand and with communism on the other hand. Many Muslims resented the progress both had made during the later period of the Old Order, the regime led by President Soekarno. This progress, it was often felt, had been encouraged, directly or indirectly, by the regime. Moreover, the increasing popularity of both Christianity and communism among the Indonesian population was related to their offering not only abstract world views but also ideas about social progress and justice and, most importantly, concrete acts in support of those suffering from material and social deprivation (Vredenburg 1969). This last factor in the success of Christianity and communism led Muslim *dakwah* not only to resist Christianity and communism as rivals, but also to adopt elements of their missionary styles.

Competition with Christianity, especially opposition to what was understood as a wave of *kristenisasi* (Christianization), became a particularly strong factor in the development of Indonesian *dakwah*. The threat of *kristenisasi* was felt to be strongest among marginalized sections of the population, for example, political prisoners linked to the former Indonesian Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI, Communist Party) and the families they had left behind in extremely difficult situations, especially in Java; and transmigration communities (Vredenburg 1969). The *dakwah* organization best known for its repeated protests against *kristenisasi* is the DDII.<sup>11</sup> However, this organization was not the only one to complain about *kristenisasi* and to be motivated by interreligious competition to promote *dakwah*. Muhammadiyah circles, among others, voiced similar concerns. Significantly, this attitude was particularly strong within the section of the Muhammadiyah specializing in *dakwah* among transmigration communities and other communities in marginal situations, namely the Badan Dakwah/Bimbingan Masyarakat Terasing (Agency for Dakwah/Guidance of Marginalized Communities), later known as the Lembaga Dakwah Khusus (Institute for Special Dakwah).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See sub-section *Diversity and rivalry within Indonesian society*.

<sup>11</sup> Various articles criticizing *Kristenisasi* published in *Majalah Media Dakwah*, the periodical of the DDII, have been collected and republished in Hakiem 1991.

<sup>12</sup> Examples are *Dakwah terhadap masyarakat* n.y.:4; Burhanuddin et al. 1990:10, 64, 90, 102-3, 123;

As for opposition to communism, this was an important element of *dakwah* in circles of the Pendidikan Tinggi Da'wah Islam (PTDI, Higher Education in Islamic Dakwah). This foundation was established in 1963 in Solo and its head office was transferred to Jakarta in 1965.<sup>13</sup> In order to combat the growing influence of communism among the masses through the establishment of *universitas rakjat* (people's universities), this foundation emulated the example of its adversaries by creating a higher education institute focusing on *dakwah* (Vredenburg 1968:7-8). The threat that communism posed to the rural property of Muslims was an additional motive for combatting communism. The idea of creating the PTDI was developed by a group of Muslims who organized religious lectures in Solo and other parts of Central Java. The initiative for these *dakwah* activities had been taken in 1960 by young intellectuals who were offered funding and facilities by Solo-based batik entrepreneurs. United by a common opposition to communism, after one year they sought and obtained support from a number of top-ranking police and military officers (Ridwan 2004:189-93). High-ranking military officers assumed leading positions in the foundation.<sup>14</sup> Opposition to the spread of Christianity was also among the motives of the early activities in Solo (Ridwan 2004:189-90).

The struggle against the spread of Christianity and communism was primarily a domestic phenomenon. It had international dimensions, however. The struggle against the spread of Christianity and the emulation of Christian missionary methods were major features of international *da'wah*. This development in Indonesian *dakwah* reflected similar developments earlier in Egypt and other countries. Opposition to communism was part of a global Cold War. For geographical and demographic reasons, Indonesia, one of the largest developing countries in the world and the country with the largest number of Muslims, occupied a strategic position in both global competitions. The interrelationship of domestic and international processes will become clearer in the next section.

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Zubir and Siandes 1997:14-5, 41, 59, 1999. The Badan Dakwah/Bimbingan Masyarakat Terasing was created on the basis of a decision of the 40th *muktamar* (conference) of the Muhammadiyah, held in 1978 in Surabaya. After the 41st *muktamar*, held in 1985 in Solo, its name was changed to Lembaga Dakwah Khusus (Burhanuddin et al. 1990:23-4).

<sup>13</sup> Ridwan 2004:192; Vredenburg 1968:7. The correct year for the founding of the PTDI, 1963, is mentioned in *Himpunan ketentuan PTDI* 1966:3, 8 and Ridwan 2004:192.

<sup>14</sup> Major General Soedirman was the chairman of the founding committee (Ridwan 2004:192). At the time of its transfer to Jakarta, Major (later Lieutenant) General Mohammad Sarbini, then minister for Veteran Affairs and Demobilization, chaired the foundation, while the positions of the five vice-chairmen were held by top-ranking officers of the police and the three armed forces (including Soedirman) and one civilian (charter of foundation, article 7, in *Himpunan ketentuan PTDI* 1966:11).

*Beyond the religious domain: The wider dimensions of dakwah**Diversity and rivalry within Indonesian society*

The social and cultural diversity of Indonesian society and the radical transformations it underwent stimulated the growth of a large diversity of *dakwah* movements. Different *dakwah* organizations addressed different categories of Muslims. Of the large Islamic mass organizations created during the 1920s and 1930s, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, Awakening of the 'Ulamā' (religious scholars; singular: 'ālim); founded in 1926) had its base among the rural population of the island of Java, the Muhammadiyah (established in 1912) in urban circles. During the New Order period, smaller movements and organizations arose, which appealed to different social groups of the urban Muslim community, such as the Gerakan Pembaharuan Islam (Movement for the Reform of Islam) and the DDII.

However, *dakwah* organizations not only supplemented each other by addressing different audiences; in a number of cases they also competed with each other for followers. Moreover, *dakwah* movements quite frequently competed for religious authority. In other words, they defended different types of religious authority and categories of persons considered or who consider themselves entitled to hold authority in religious matters. The main objective of the Nahdlatul Ulama has been to defend the authority of the Indonesian 'ulamā' and their legal and cultural tradition against new types of leaders trained in the modern, Western tradition, in the allegedly 'pure' tradition of the first generations of Muslims (*salaf* in Arabic, hence the appellation Salafi), or in various combinations of both. There are links between differences in audience and social base, on the one hand, and disagreements on religious authority, on the other hand: the authority of the 'ulamā' was primarily based on the many *pesantren* – traditional Islamic boarding schools in which pupils reside throughout the year – spread all over the Javanese and Madurese countryside; both Salafi ideas and Western ideas about lifestyle and education were popular predominantly among the urbanites, exposed to Western and Middle Eastern influences.

The role of mass education in this growth of diversity and competition deserves particular emphasis. The impact of mass education on religious interpretation and authority in Muslim-majority countries has been highlighted by authors including Dale F. Eickelman. They have argued that mass education has led to the fragmentation of interpretations of Islam and to ensuing competition for Islamic religious authority and the control of Islamic religious institutions and organizations (see especially Eickelman 1992). This argument is confirmed by developments in Indonesia.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> As indicated in Hefner 1997:80, focusing on the development of Islamic publications.

A recent study by Akh Muzakki has contributed to our understanding of divisions within the Muslim community of urban Indonesia. This author has highlighted the contrast between Muslims who became urbanized in relatively recent times and underwent a process of upward social mobility within the modernizing urban environment, on the one hand, and Muslim families that had settled in urban areas long ago, and were threatened by social regression and marginalization as a result of the transformation of the urban environment, on the other hand. Among both groups, *dakwah* flourished during and after the New Order period, but it has taken different forms. Among the former – the recently urbanized – *dakwah* featured mainly in numerous courses, debates and publications of a relatively high intellectual level, and, more recently, through articles online. Many of their meetings are held in five-star hotels. Among the latter Muslim community, *dakwah* operated mainly through mosques and mosque-related facilities, especially in the older urban districts, in the form of sermons and religious lectures as well as ‘light’ publications. The Gerakan Pembaharuan Islam is popular among the newly urbanized Muslims. The central figure of this movement was Nurcholish Madjid and an important institute was his Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina (Paramadina Foundation). The Jaringan Islam Liberal (Liberal Islam Network), which was established around 2001 and operates mainly through a website, may be considered its offspring.<sup>16</sup> The most prominent *dakwah* institution active among the second category of Muslim urbanites is the DDII, whose main vehicle for transmitting its ideas has been *Media Dakwah*, a periodical with short articles accessible to a wide Muslim audience, distributed mainly at mosques on the occasion of Friday prayers (Muzakki 2005:167-72).

Different generations and periods faced different competitions. The late colonial period and early years of independence were marked by competition between the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama. During the New Order period, their rivalry lost much of its original intensity, but vehement opposition developed between the Gerakan Pembaharuan Islam and the DDII. Their rivalry as well as conflicts between newer organizations gradually increased in intensity and scale. As mentioned by Andrée Feillard and Rémy Madinier, generational changes have contributed to the strengthening of this competition. These authors refer in particular to the development of a more vehement and rigid opposition to new interpretations of Islam within the DDII, in contrast with the more open-minded attitude of its precursor, the Masjumi party. Feillard and Madinier attribute this change in attitude

<sup>16</sup> For this reason, and within the framework of the broad definition of *da`wah* offered in the opening section of this article, JIL may be considered a *dakwah* organization, although some people, limiting their understanding of *da`wah* to revivalist organizations, tend to qualify JIL as an anti-*dakwah* movement. For an explanation of the use of the term ‘liberal’ in the name of this organization, see <http://islamlib.com/en/pages/about> (accessed 24-3-2011).

to two related factors: the younger generation found little room within the established Islamic organizations; and the fact that they had not known the period in which Christians and the Western world had been considered allies in the struggle against communism drove them more easily towards fervent anti-Christian and anti-Western positions. Moreover, through literature, the Internet, studies abroad, and in other ways, young Muslims have increasingly developed their international contacts in the Middle East and the Western world. In particular those who have studied Islamic theology in the Middle East have returned with claims to authority as well as ideas they consider superior to those of the older generation. In the opinion of Feillard and Madinier (2006:34-5, 107, 168), this is an important factor in the development of more narrow-minded and even – and this is the core subject of their book – ‘radical’ attitudes within the DDII and various more recent and more ‘radical’ Islamic movements in Indonesia. Hefner (1997:94-5) has drawn attention to another aspect of generational change within the DDII. As a consequence of social and economic transformations, the social base of the DDII gradually shifted from the Muslim middle class of entrepreneurs and well-educated persons towards poorer and less-educated groups who had conservative and anti-cosmopolitan religious and cultural attitudes.

In addition to the change of generations, the collapse of the New Order system in 1998 contributed to the intensification of competition between various Islamic movements. New Order authoritarianism had repressed all types of conflict among the Indonesian population. Its breakdown led to open conflicts throughout the country. On frequent occasions, tensions between different ethnic and religious communities have led to large-scale violence. During the same period, polemics between movements representing different interpretations of Islam, through periodicals, books, and public discussions, have become a conspicuous feature of contemporary Indonesian Islam. Contrary to most other countries with Muslim majorities, violence between different Muslim movements is almost non-existent and, in spite of their vehement polemics and serious allegations of deviation from Islam, representatives of opposing camps have generally continued to meet each other and to hold public and private discussions with a degree of mutual respect.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, competition for and about authority among the various *dakwah* movements has grown stronger.

<sup>17</sup> Muzakki (2005:118, note 62) mentions a number of recent public discussions in which representatives of what he labels ‘liberal’ and ‘anti-liberal’ camps participated. The claim on the next page that the fatwa declaring that the coordinator of Jaringan Islam Liberal, Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, merited the death penalty for his deviant ideas – issued on 30 November 2002 – had severely damaged such contacts seems to be disproved by the data offered by the author himself.

*Foreign involvement*

In addition to domestic factors, foreign influences have intensified competition between various Indonesian *dakwah* organizations. In the course of the twentieth century, *dakwah* has become a privileged arena for a number of regimes not only to enhance their role in the religious and social lives of their own countries, but also to increase their spiritual and political influence in the world. The country with the world's largest Muslim population did not remain unaffected by this phenomenon. Quite a number of foreign states and organizations have become interested in the development of Islam in Indonesia. They have offered financial support, training, and support for publication programmes to various Indonesian Islamic organizations, including organizations focusing on *dakwah*. In addition, they have offered scholarships for study abroad to students and lecturers in Islamic studies or to prominent Muslim figures, and they have launched academic exchange programmes. In some cases, they have sent teachers to Indonesia and opened educational institutes in the country.

Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Muslim-majority countries, including Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, and Saudi Arabia, as well as from a number of Western countries, including Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have put much effort in contributing to the development of Islam in Indonesia in a direction which suits their ideals or interests. Conversely, Indonesia, in conformity with the size of its Muslim community, has aspired to a prominent international role within the Muslim world. This aspiration translates into participation in official international forums such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference rather than into Indonesian *dakwah* activities in foreign countries.

Saudi Arabian aid to Indonesian *dakwah* organizations concentrated on the DDII and other Muslim organizations with conservative religious attitudes. The Muslim World League, founded in 1962, during its early years concentrated its missionary efforts on Africa and Southeast Asia. In the 1970s, it restructured its organization through the establishment of national bureaus. The first of these was the Indonesian national bureau – which was identical to the DDII – headed by Mohammed Natsir. This same person was also a vice-chairman of the Mu'tamar al-'Ālam al-Islāmī (Muslim World Conference), a close affiliate of the Muslim World League, and he and Ahmad Syaikhū of the Nahdlatul Ulama were the Indonesian members of al-Majlis al-A'lā al-Islāmī lil-Masājid, created in 1975 (Schulze 1990:260, 266-75, 281, 285; see also Van Bruinessen 2002:123). The Muslim World League focused its activities on mosques, which conformed with the focus of its main Indonesian counter-

part, the DDII.<sup>18</sup> More recently, various, often competing, strands of Saudi-Arabian-based Salafism have extended their influence among Indonesian Muslims. Indonesians returning from studies in Saudi Arabia have played a fundamental role in this process.<sup>19</sup>

Western governmental and private organizations have preferred to support Islamic organizations which adhere to interpretations of Islam considered compatible with Western social and intellectual values. The earliest and most influential Western assistance programmes include the Indonesian programme of the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit. From 1971, this foundation, closely related to the German Liberal Party, the Freie Demokratische Partei, was the main donor of the Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial (LP3ES, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Education and Information), which was not an Islamic organization, but had many Muslims among its participants. Two LP3ES activities which were sponsored by the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung and which had a large impact within the Indonesian Muslim community and beyond were the monthly publication of the journal *Prisma*, dedicated to social and economic analyses, as well as a major programme for stimulating economic development through *pesantren*. From 1983, the latter was implemented by a new organization, Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat (P3M, Association for the Development of Pesantren and Society).<sup>20</sup>

A large part of the assistance originating from the United States has been channelled through private foundations such as the Ford Foundation and the Asia Foundation. These foundations have offered financial support to projects relating to civil society, governance, reproductive health, women's empowerment, and similar concerns.<sup>21</sup> Whereas Saudi Arabian support for Indonesian *dakwah* organizations was probably strongest for the duration of the New Order, and the involvement of the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung with *pesantren*-based development started in the late 1970s, support from United States

<sup>18</sup> See Schulze 1990:282-3, 288-9, on this strategy of the Muslim World League.

<sup>19</sup> Numerous details are offered in Hasan 2006, especially chapters 1 and 2; see also Thalibi 2007.

<sup>20</sup> See Van Bruinessen and Wajidi 2006:218-25 and short notes on the websites of LP3ES (<http://www.lp3es.or.id/profil/proltr.htm>; accessed 24-3-2011) and the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung ([http://www.freiheit.org/webcom/show\\_article.php/\\_c-263/i.html](http://www.freiheit.org/webcom/show_article.php/_c-263/i.html); accessed 24-3-2011). See also Fakhri n.y.:113-4.

<sup>21</sup> Whereas the Ford Foundation covers its general expenses and grants with income generated by its own assets, a substantial part of the expenses of the Asia Foundation is covered by contributions from various – mainly American – enterprises and foundations as well as government institutions such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). For details about income and expenses, including grants, see the annual reports and other documents available on the websites of both foundations, [www.fordfound.org](http://www.fordfound.org) and [www.asiafoundation.org](http://www.asiafoundation.org); see also the core data on the Asia Foundation at the online 'Foundation Finder' of the Foundation Center: <http://dynamodata.fdncenter.org/990s/990search/ffindershow.cgi?id=ASIA003> (accessed 24-3-2011).

public funds and American private organizations for Indonesian Muslim organizations grew especially during the last two decades, even more so since 11 September 2001. It is likely that the decrease of Saudi Arabian financial support for Indonesian organizations in more recent times is due to a reduction of available funds, on the one hand, and on the other hand a reluctance of the Saudi Arabian authorities to offer financial support to foreign organizations. This reluctance grew after 11 September 2001 and is due partly to Western, especially US pressure, and partly to Saudi Arabian concerns for its own stability. Among the American officials who have been instrumental in establishing contacts between US government authorities and various Indonesian NGOs, including a number of Muslim organizations, was Paul D. Wolfowitz, during the period of his ambassadorship in Indonesia from 1986 to 1989. After 11 September 2001, the Indonesian Muslim community has drawn special attention from the US State Department, Department of Defense, and Congress, and their services and advisors.<sup>22</sup>

Available publications offer no details on the amount of Saudi Arabian financial support for the DDII. More is known about American aid. Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, coordinator of the Jaringan Islam Liberal, indicated that his organization received about Rp. 1.4 billion yearly from the Asia Foundation, besides smaller amounts from other American, European, and Indonesian sources.<sup>23</sup>

Up to the present day, Middle Eastern sponsors of Islamic organizations have tended to concentrate their assistance on the construction of mosques, whereas Western sponsors have tended to favour projects in capacity building and empowerment of marginal groups.<sup>24</sup> Support from the Muslim World League and related organizations for Muslim initiatives in Indonesia is

<sup>22</sup> Cases in point are Rabasa 2001 and 2004. Angel M. Rabasa is a senior policy analyst at RAND, specializing in political Islam in Southeast Asia. Before joining RAND, he served in political-military positions in the Department of State and the Department of Defense. Both reports were written in the framework of RAND Project Airforce, a project of the RAND Corporation for policy analysis and advice, and the United States Department of the Air Force (<http://www.rand.org/paf/about/steering.html>, accessed 24-3-2010). Especially Rabasa 2004 (see in particular p. 409) advocates support for 'moderate' Islam. A more recent call for US engagement with moderate Muslim networks all over the world, in which Indonesia is an important reference, is Rabasa et al. 2007.

<sup>23</sup> 'Ulil Abshar: "1,4 milyar itu kecil"', Hidayatullah. [http://www.hidayatullah.com/search\\_hit-com.php](http://www.hidayatullah.com/search_hit-com.php) (accessed 28-3-2011). On the date of this interview, 6 December 2004, Rp. 1.4 billion was equivalent to about EUR 115,000 or USD 155,000. Complete yearly surveys of projects sponsored by the Asia Foundation can be found on the website of this organization (<http://www.asiafoundation.org>) but they contain no financial details.

<sup>24</sup> As emphasized by Budhy Munawar-Rachman, programme officer, Islam and Civil Society of the Asia Foundation, Jakarta Representative Office, in an interview in Jakarta on 25 September 2006. In addition to various cooperation and assistance programmes with partners in the United States, there are Dutch, Canadian, Australian, and German scholarship programmes relating to Islamic studies and to young Muslim leadership, an exchange programme for imams from Indonesia and the United Kingdom, and other similar initiatives.

a case in point. There are, however, exceptions to this general tendency. One of them is the Islamic Development Bank's assistance to Muslim communities all over the world, primarily in Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia. It focuses on economic and social development, including capacity building in science, technology, and management.<sup>25</sup> Another exception is the Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab (LIPIA, Institute for Islamic and Arab Science), opened in Jakarta in 1980 as a project of the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University of Riyadh. It aims at training Arabic language teachers and specialists in Islamic law.<sup>26</sup> Although this institute is generally considered to be an institute that promotes a more conservative interpretation of Islam that is dominant in Saudi Arabia, in an effort to counterbalance certain scholarly and intellectual developments in Indonesia, a number of figures known for their critical attitudes towards traditional Muslim thought and practices have received part of their training at LIPIA. They include Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, coordinator of the Jaringan Islam Liberal.<sup>27</sup>

The case of Egypt deserves discussion too. Together with Saudi Arabia, this Arab republic has been one of the main competitors for domination within the Muslim world. As was the case with Saudi Arabia, *da`wah* played a prominent role in Egyptian foreign policy, but the aspirations for foreign influence extended well beyond the religious sphere. Unlike the Saudi Arabian involvement in international *da`wah*, Egyptian involvement has not been focused on mosques. For several decades, Egypt has been sending teachers of Arabic to many Indonesian *pesantren* and other educational institutes. Most have been dispatched through the al-Azhar office for international outreach. At a higher level, on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed in 1999 between Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta and the al-Azhar University of Cairo, a faculty teaching in Arabic and following the al-Azhar model has been opened at this Indonesian Islamic university. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has also inspired many Indonesian Muslims, especially students and the well-educated, who are drawn to the

<sup>25</sup> The Islamic Development Bank is affiliated with the Islamic Conference Organization. It has its headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Details of this organization and its programmes may be found on its website, [www.isdb.org](http://www.isdb.org).

<sup>26</sup> Details of this institute may be found on its website, [www.lipia.org](http://www.lipia.org). See also Hasan 2006:47-50.

<sup>27</sup> His knowledge of Islam was enhanced by his undergraduate studies in Islamic law at LIPIA. His interpretation of Islam can only partially be attributed to this institute. He was raised in a Nahdlatul Ulama environment and, at a later stage of his training, was offered an MA scholarship at Boston University, then a – Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal – PhD scholarship at Harvard University (for details of his biography, see <http://www.tokohindonesia.com/ensiklopedi/u/ulil-abshar-abdalla/index.shtml> (accessed 17-8-2010)); [http://www.islamicstudies.harvard.edu/graduate\\_fellowships.php](http://www.islamicstudies.harvard.edu/graduate_fellowships.php) (accessed 24-3-2010). A similar case is Ahmad Baso, who was raised in a Nahdlatul Ulama environment in Makassar, South Sulawesi, but also received training at LIPIA and has become an activist and author closely affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama and critical of various forms of traditionalism and dogmatism (see Baso 2006:v, and back cover).

Brotherhood's ideas concerning religious training and social development rather than its political ideas.<sup>28</sup>

Recently, certain Malaysian institutions have partially replaced Middle Eastern support for conservative *dakwah* in Indonesia.<sup>29</sup> C.W. Watson (2005:202-3) has pointed out special links between a number of conservative Islamic activists in Indonesia and the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS) of the International Islamic University Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur. Although relations between Indonesian and Malaysian Muslim religious activists and specialists in Islamic studies and thought as well as between their institutions intensified after the collapse of the New Order, it would be erroneous to speak of a general support by Malaysian public or private institutions for Indonesian movements which oppose renewal in Islamic thought. Relations between Malaysia and Indonesia as well as relations within each country are more complex. On the one hand, Malaysia, contrary to Indonesia, is officially an Islamic state. During the last phase of Mahathir Mohamad's premiership and thereafter, the Malaysian regime has increasingly stressed its Islamic character before a national and international audience. Moreover, since the beginning of Mahathir's government, Malaysia has aspired to become a leading nation of the Third World. Both tendencies appeal to a number of Indonesian Muslims and both have contributed to rivalry between the Malaysian and Indonesian states (Liow 2005:134-40). Internal competition for political and religious leadership, however, will prevent Malaysian public institutions from lending strong and exclusive support to adversaries of 'liberal' or 'secular' Muslims in Indonesia. Note the recent reduction of the autonomy of ISTAC within the International Islamic University; the rivalry between the Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS, All-Malaysian Party) and the Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu alias UMNO (United Malays National Organization); the rivalry between Mahathir and the leadership which succeeded him in 2003 on the one hand, and Anwar Ibrahim on the other hand; and the threat of groups of radical Muslims allegedly linked to al-Qā'idah (Al Qaeda) within Malaysia.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See the discussion of the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Indonesian Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party) in Furkon 2004.

<sup>29</sup> This development has been signalled, but not analysed in depth, in Muzakki 2005:242-3.

<sup>30</sup> Information on the reduction of the autonomy of the ISTAC was received from the then rector of the International Islamic University of Malaysia, Mohd. Kamal Bin Hassan, interview, Mecca, January 2004. The founder and long-time director of the ISTAC, Naguib Al-Attas, had to leave his position. As for the rivalry between Anwar Ibrahim and the Malaysian political establishment, his positive opinion of Wolfowitz and his praise of contemporary Indonesia as a democratic state, contrary to Malaysia, are not irrelevant factors. On Anwar Ibrahim, see Billington 2005. The many publications which mention links between Al Qaeda and Malaysian organizations include, with different analyses, Gunaratna 2002; *Jemaah Islamiyah* 2003.

*The role of the state*

The relationship between the various non-governmental *dakwah* organizations and the Indonesian state and its successive regimes is quite complex. The New Order regime is a prime example of this complexity. Although a number of Muslim organizations had contributed to its establishment, the regime soon monopolized political power and restricted the activities of Islamic movements, including *dakwah* activities, to social and cultural spheres. Even beyond the domain of politics proper, the New Order regime brought an increasing number of organizations, activities, initiatives, and discourses under its sway. This process – referred to as corporatism – extended to industry, labour, education, culture, and other domains. Donald J. Porter (2002) and, following him, Moch. Nur Ichwan (2006:10-3) have analysed this process in Islam.

Nonetheless, through its educational and development policies, the Indonesian state, especially during the New Order, contributed to the emergence of new spiritual needs, which it could not always fulfil, and religious questions, which it could not always answer, in spite of the extensive religious apparatus it developed. This was one of the causes of a conspicuous growth in the number of *dakwah* organizations. Education policies led to a massive increase in the number of educated Muslim citizens. Moreover, religious instruction was made an integral part of public education. The government itself became active in religious education by establishing a large number of Islamic educational institutions, stretching from primary-level *madrasah* up to tertiary-level state institutes for Islamic studies.<sup>31</sup> These were presented as models for the much larger number of private institutes for Islamic education.

While opposing the existence of independent political parties inspired by Islam, the New Order supported *dakwah* movements to the extent that they contributed to political stability and social progress. An important illustration in the early years of the New Order is the support given by a number of top-ranking police and military officers to the PTDI because the anti-communist accent of its *dakwah* mission suited the regime. Even with the DDII, generally considered a potential major competitor of the regime, positive relations existed during certain periods. A 1985 report on East Java, for example, mentions DDII preachers frequently being invited to the *kabupaten* (regencies) of this province as part of the government policy known as *masuk desa* (entering the villages).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> These higher education institutes are known as Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN), with the more recent variants Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (STAIN) and Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN).

<sup>32</sup> Labrousse and Soemargono 1985:220. See also *Pangdam ajak kerjasama* 1992:30-1, on a speech by Major General R. Pranamo, commander of the military region of Bukit Barisan, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the DDII, delivered in Brastagi, North Sumatra, in which he emphasized the contribution the DDII could make to stability in the region through its *dakwah* activities.

Moreover, the government stimulated and even initiated various *dakwah* programmes. It did so in several ways. Policies and special projects implemented under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs were particularly important. However, this ministry was never granted a monopoly of government policy relating to *dakwah*. Other ministries, including the Interior Ministry, the Ministry of Transmigration, and the Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (BAPPENAS, National Planning Board), were also involved.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, under the New Order regime, organizations affiliated with the Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya (Sekber Golkar, Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups), the regime-sponsored political party and confederation of professional organizations, were also active in *dakwah*. The most important organizations include the Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Islam (GUPPI, Association of Efforts to Improve Islamic Education) and later the Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah (MDI, Council for Islamic Dakwah).<sup>34</sup> Finally, initiatives by foundations established by President Soeharto and his family, although formally in their capacity as private persons, should also be included in this category of *dakwah* initiated by public authorities. The prime example is the Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila (YAMP, Foundation for 'Pancasilaist' Muslim Voluntary Work).<sup>35</sup>

Developments in Indonesia bear a strong similarity to phenomena Gregory Starrett has studied in Egypt. Starrett (1998:8-10) argues that strong state intervention in religious affairs combined with the provision of mass education largely carried out by the state led to the objectification (a concept adopted from Eickelman) and functionalization of Islam: Islam was made an object which people spoke about – and therefore could have different opinions about – and which was used for non-religious ends, for instance social stability or economic development. An unintended consequence of this public promotion of a particular view and use of religion was that competitors of the established state might propose their own interpretations. Therefore, the restrictive and repressive policies of the New Order regime in religious matters contributed to turning Islam into an arena for competition between the state and its opponents. It was an important factor in turning religion into a referential framework for conflicts between various groups of citizens as well. The regime itself, and the state it dominated, sometimes complemented, sometimes guided non-governmental religious initiatives, and sometimes became a competitor itself. Its unintended enhancement of the competition between the various movements and interpretations manifested itself

<sup>33</sup> See Ridwan 2004:195 on the Unit Daerah Kerja Pembangunan (Regional Unit for Development Work) programme of the Interior Ministry and the National Planning Board.

<sup>34</sup> See also Cahyono 1992. On the complexity of government involvement in *dakwah*, see also Porter 2002: 85-6; Ichwan 2006:354.

<sup>35</sup> Pancasila, the 'Five Pillars', is the official ideology of Indonesia.

most clearly after the collapse of the New Order, which had systematically repressed communal tensions (Bertrand 2004:72-113).

### *Dakwah pembangunan*

#### *Conceptual interference and the functionalization of religion*

The role of the Indonesian state in *dakwah* can be analysed in more detail by studying what became known as *dakwah pembangunan* – development *dakwah*. National development, with a strong focus on economic development, was the main task the New Order regime had assigned itself and this policy was to be implemented primarily by the state. Within this framework, the Ministry of Religious Affairs was assigned a fundamental role in what can be seen as the spiritual and moral dimensions of this policy.

Within this Ministry, the main administrative entity in charge of *dakwah pembangunan* policy was the Proyek Penerangan, Bimbingan dan Dakwah/ Khutbah Agama Islam Pusat (Central Project for Islamic Information, Guidance, and Dakwah/Sermons), a project under the supervision of the Direktorat Penerangan Agama Islam (Directorate for Islamic Information) which came under the Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam dan Urusan Haji (Directorate-General for Guidance of the Muslim Community and Hajj Affairs). Within the framework of this project, the Ministry published various booklets which were meant as guides for various forms of *dakwah*. This guidance not only addressed those involved in *dakwah* within the nationwide bureaucracy of the Ministry itself, but was meant for *dakwah* organizations outside the state sector too. The concrete information as well as the discourse conveyed by these publications is an important source of information on the concepts, objectives, organization, and planning of *dakwah* activities by or under the guidance or coordination of the Ministry. The most important of these booklets are *Pedoman pembinaan dakwah bil-hal* (Guide for the training for *dakwah bil-hal* – *dakwah* with deeds, not only words), published during the administrative year 1988/1989, and a series of seven booklets published during 1992/1993.<sup>36</sup>

The main terms and concepts in these texts may be classified into four categories: policy and politics, ideology and morality, history, and religion. Political concepts refer to the political situation and development of

<sup>36</sup> The Indonesian administrative and fiscal year starts on the first of April. The titles of the seven booklets published in 1992/1993 are as follows: *Peta dakwah*; *Direktori lembaga dakwah*; *Fungsi majlis taklim dalam era globalisasi*; *Metodologi dakwah pada masyarakat suku terasing*; *Metodologi dakwah pada kehidupan remaja*; *Metodologi dakwah pada masyarakat industri*; and *Metodologi dakwah pada masyarakat transmigrasi*.

Indonesia, such as *bangsa* (nation), *aspirasi-aspirasi bangsa* (aspirations of the nation), and *kemerdekaan* (liberty), and to the New Order regime and its policies, including the concept of Orde Baru (New Order) and concepts relating to its development policy. Among the concepts belonging primarily to the domain of ideology and morality, some refer to the ideological and/or moral background of Indonesian politics. For this reason, they are closely related to the political sphere. Conspicuous examples are *harkat bangsa* (dignity of the nation) and the Pancasila. Other concepts emphasize the negative aspects of modernization and industrialization, such as materialism, secularism, dehumanization, and alienation, which should be avoided by infusing these processes with the right ethical and spiritual values. The historical concepts relate to the establishment of Indonesia as an independent state and to the New Order period. The religious concepts, finally, are rather diverse. On the one hand, there are abstract theological concepts, such as *ikhtiar* (choice, free will), *ketuhanan* (belief in God), *iman* (faith) and *taqwa* (piety). Other concepts relate to social and moral matters, namely *khairu ummah* (the best community), *ahlakul-karimah* (noble morals), and the *sunnah*, or exemplary practice of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>37</sup>

Textual reference and interference are fundamental constituents of human discourse in general.<sup>38</sup> In texts written for political guidance, textual reference and interference are enhanced and often exploited consciously. Even more so in political texts containing religious elements. In publications of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, most textual references are not stated explicitly. References to religious texts, mainly the Koran and Hadith (the collection of reports on the exemplary practice of the Prophet Muhammad), are frequent, but exact citations are often missing. The texts contain numerous political and ideological formulas which were widespread and often repeated in New Order Indonesia. On a few occasions their official sources are explicitly mentioned, for example the official formulation of the Pancasila and of the Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara (GBHN, Broad Guidelines of State Policy). The texts also include references to a number of Western philosophical and moral texts on the processes of dehumanization and alienation. These texts are not identified explicitly, but are recognizable in the use of particular terms, concepts, and ideas.

The boundaries between the categories into which terms and concepts may be classified are fluid. The use of a term originating from one category

<sup>37</sup> A particularly revealing text is Chapter 3, entitled 'Peranan agama dalam masyarakat industri', in Yahya et al. 1992/93 (*Metodologi dakwah pada masyarakat industri*). All terms in the religious domain mentioned except *ketuhanan* are Arabic words – in most cases slightly adapted.

<sup>38</sup> This phenomenon has been noted and analysed in various ways by a large number of scholars, including authors affiliated with the French journal *Tel Quel* (Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and others, from the 1960s onwards) and, more recently, by Norman Fairclough and other advocates of critical discourse analysis. In this article I will not discuss their studies in more detail.

of discourse or domain of reality in another one is among the features that characterize the involvement of politicians and bureaucrats with religion. Starrett defines 'functionalization' as 'refer[ring] to processes of translation in which intellectual objects from one discourse come to serve the strategic or utilitarian ends of another discourse' (Starrett 1998:9). *Dakwah pembangunan* is a good example of 'functionalization' of religion, in which the Indonesian state played a central role.

### *International comparisons*

To what extent does the remarkable phenomenon of *dakwah pembangunan* stand isolated or bear similarity to other experiences in the Muslim world? Moch. Nur Ichwan indicates that *dakwah pembangunan* was closely related to New Order policy. As a concept it existed from the early New Order, and as a term it was launched in late 1974 (Ichwan 2003:10-1). Because it is a term with a particular religious connotation and because Islamic religious ideas generally develop from age-old international traditions in Islamic thought, one might assume that *dakwah pembangunan* has some connection to earlier Islamic thought in other Muslim countries. However, no use of this term – in Arabic or other languages – appears to exist in classical works of Islamic thought and jurisprudence.

Although the exact term or concept seems unknown in other countries, the amalgamation of the Islamic religion – or some particular aspect of it – and national development can be found in other developing countries with large Muslim populations. Examples will show both similarities and differences with the Indonesian case.

Egypt is an important case. Starrett and other authors have explained that, since the nineteenth century, successive regimes in Egypt have been involved in a continuing process of functionalizing Islam with the aim of achieving reorganization and reform. Within this framework, Egyptian regimes have made increasingly intensive – but not totally successful – efforts to monopolize religious authority and power through an extended religious bureaucracy and system of education, which had its beginnings and apex in al-Azhar University. However, although religion has been mobilized in Egypt in support of values and attitudes such as tidiness and discipline, no Egyptian government has emphasized *dakwah* and the role of the state in *dakwah*, as was the case in New Order Indonesia. In development policy too, the emphasis on *dakwah's* spiritual and religious aspects was not as strong in Egypt as in Indonesia. On the other hand, Indonesian regimes have never aspired to promoting a particular interpretation of Islam, as Egyptian regimes have done, primarily through the al-Azhar structure. The Indonesian New Order regime promoted a particular *use* of religion – meaning Islam – to provide a spiritual

and moral framework for economic development and to combat communism that was considered the primary threat to the establishment. It did not impose a particular interpretation – theological doctrine or legal school – of Islam. However, interpretations which jeopardized the state's use of Islam, for example because they threatened social harmony, were not tolerated.<sup>39</sup>

In this respect, Indonesia also differs from Malaysia. Contrary to Indonesia, Islam in Malaysia has the status of official religion. Through the Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia), in cooperation with national and state-level fatwa institutions, the Malaysian government has assigned itself not only the task of administration and guidance in Islamic affairs, including those relating to *dakwah*, but also the task of defining and defending the correct theological and legal interpretation of Islam.<sup>40</sup> In addition to the emphasis on uniformity and the correct interpretation of Islam, Malaysia differs from Indonesia in another respect: the problems relating to economic development faced by Malaysia have been of quite another – smaller – order than those faced by Indonesia. Moreover, if successive Malaysian governments offered a place to Islam in their economic and other policies, this was primarily by emphasizing Islamic values thought to inspire a positive and correct attitude in civil servants and citizens in general, and Islamic institutions, such as financial institutions operating on the basis of Islamic principles (Haneef 2008). Furthermore, rather than economic development and the indispensable role of Islam in this connection, Malaysia has stressed the aspiration for civilization and modernity and the compatibility, even correspondence, of Islam with this aspiration.<sup>41</sup> Contrary to Indonesia, Malaysia has never developed a *dakwah* policy in direct support of economic development.

Algeria is another country worth comparing. After recovering its independence in 1962, the Algerian regime opted for a strong socialist orientation. At the same time, it stressed the special position of the Islamic religion, which nearly all of the population adhered to, and it declared Islam the religion of the people and the state. Nevertheless, the role of religion in public and politi-

<sup>39</sup> Meuleman 1996:61-2. Use and interpretation of Islam cannot be separated absolutely. For this reason, the claim of the New Order regime that it did not interfere in the 'internal' affairs of religion cannot be totally upheld (Ichwan 2006:9).

<sup>40</sup> For a more in-depth analysis of the contrast between the administration of Islam in both countries, see Meuleman 1996:50-1, 61-2. For the history of the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia and its precursors, Bahagian Agama, Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Religious Department, Office of the Prime Minister), later Bahagian Hal Ehwal Islam, Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Religious Affairs Department, Office of the Prime Minister), all generally referred to by the name of the building they have been located in, the Pusat Islam (Islamic Centre), see its website: <http://www.islam.gov.my/portal/>.

<sup>41</sup> Leading concepts in this connection are *tamaddun Islam* ((development of) Islamic civilization) and *Islam hadhari* ('civilizational Islam', see <http://www.islam.gov.my/islamhadhari/>), both derived from Arabic terms, which have acquired particular meanings.

cal life remained very limited. A Ministry of Religious Affairs was created and, through this Ministry and the security services, the state has always tried to maintain a monopoly on religious matters. References to religious values were rare in public life, however. This is clearly shown in a key political document from Algeria's socialist period, the 1976 National Charter.<sup>42</sup> This 190-page text contains a one-page section entitled 'L'Islam et la révolution socialiste' (*Charte Nationale* 1976:21-2). It opens as follows:

Le peuple algérien est un peuple musulman.  
L'Islam est la religion de l'Etat.

The remainder of the section refers to the Islamic values which are part of the historical personality of the Algerian people and which have contributed significantly to the resistance against colonization. Furthermore, it emphasizes that the right understanding of Islam inspires its adherents to choose the road of progress and socialism. The rest of the National Charter contains no reference to Islam or religion at all, and mainly discusses economic development and economic organization. This does not mean that the Algerian people or its leaders were not serious Muslims, but that Islam played no direct role in government policy or political discourse. Under French colonization not much had been left of the tradition of Islamic education and scholarship and, although a fairly powerful movement of reformist Islamic religious scholars arose in the 1930s, religious scholars and their institutions played no significant role after the country recovered its independence.

For the Indonesian New Order regime, economic development was the primary objective. Other aspects of life were subordinate to this aim. Therefore, political freedom was restricted, political stability given a high priority, and the Islamic religion was put at the service of economic development. In the pursuit of economic development, the state played a central role at various levels. However, it did not monopolize economic initiative or the implementation of economic development policy. In line with these principles, *dakwah pembangunan* and its successor, *dakwah bil-hal*, increased the role of the state, in particular the Ministry of Religious Affairs with its offices and agents spread all over the country. However in conformity with these principles, the Ministry played a guiding and coordinating role, not an exclusive one. It also had a supervisory task. Together with various security services and the public prosecutor's office, it watched over religious ideas and movements.<sup>43</sup> Therefore,

<sup>42</sup> *Charte nationale* 1976. The official language of Algeria is Arabic, but it is generally known that in this period Algerian political and administrative texts were first drafted in French, then translated into Arabic. Therefore, we have good reason to view the French version of official texts as the original one.

<sup>43</sup> On the role of *dakwah* in preventing the development of communal conflicts (SARA: *suku, agama, ras, dan antargolongan* – (conflicts relating to) tribe, religion, race, and communal (rela-

in addition to enhancing the authority of the state in religious matters, the *dakwah pembangunan* policy strengthened the position of those 'ulamā' who were considered moderate and open to modernization. Furthermore, it promoted the training of so-called *ulama-plus*, that is to say 'ulamā' who, besides their knowledge of religious sciences, had acquired vocational or management skills. Therefore, the position of the Indonesian state in religious matters, especially those relating to Islam and the Muslim community, was characterized by guidance, coordination, and supervision, sometimes even repression. The state's position expanded and strengthened during the New Order period. However, Indonesian regimes have never aspired to a monopoly on religious matters. The Indonesian situation differed not only from that of Egypt or Algeria. It also differed from the Malaysian situation, in which, on the one hand, economic development never received the central place in government policy it acquired in Indonesia and, on the other hand, much more importance was attributed to uniformity in religious interpretation (Meuleman 1996:50-7). *Dakwah pembangunan* was a uniquely Indonesian phenomenon.

#### *Antecedents and later developments*

To say that *dakwah pembangunan* was unique to New Order Indonesia does not mean that expansion of *dakwah* beyond the domain of religion proper and the linking of *dakwah* to social and economic development were devoid of precursors or successors, whether in Indonesia or in the Muslim world at large. Proposals that Islamic *dakwah* should be combined with measures improving the everyday lives of the poorest and most marginal groups of society were made by Indonesian Muslim groups from the early 1960s at least. Such proposals were stimulated by opposition to the rise of Christianity and communism and emulation of their tactics. The example of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, dating from the 1930s, may well have been a source of inspiration for these Indonesian initiatives. And opposition to the spread of Christianity was among the motives of the Muslim Brotherhood too.

In his lectures at the PTDI in Solo, director Shalahuddin Sanusi stressed from the start the idea that community development – he used both the English term and the Indonesian '*pembangunan masyarakat*' – was a fundamental component of *dakwah*. The same idea was voiced by A. Mukti Ali, later Minister of Religious Affairs, in the speech he gave at the inauguration of the PTDI. Both referred to the Christian example.<sup>44</sup> Natsir, chairman of the DDII, during a DDII conference in May 1968, mentioned the intensification of *dakwah* in the form of concrete socio-economic assistance, especially for the

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tions)) and the need for non-governmental *dakwah* organizations alongside state initiatives, see Sholihin et al. 1992:17-8.

<sup>44</sup> Sanusi 1964b:16-7, 67-8, 71, 75; Mukti Ali 1964; see also Sanusi 1964a:3.

economically less privileged, as one of the missions of *dakwah* (Vredenburg 1968:8). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, A. Surjadi (1971), a lecturer affiliated with the Bandung branch of the PTDI, promoted the idea of integrating *dakwah* and rural development.<sup>45</sup> On the initiative of the Pusat Da'wah Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Centre for Islamic *Dakwah*, founded by persons in PTDI circles), a conference Musjawarah 'Alim 'Ulama se-Indonesia (All-Indonesian Consultation of 'Ulamā') from 30 September until 4 October 1970 discussed themes such as the necessity of 'mental' (spiritual) development in addition to physical development; the participation of 'ulamā' in national development; and modernization – as distinguished from Christianization or Westernization. High-ranking government officials delivered speeches at this conference (Ali et al. 1971).

The case of the Muhammadiyah deserves mention. From its very founding in 1912, *dakwah* and social development were major objectives of this organization. However, until the late 1970s these two fields of activity remained separated. *Dakwah* remained limited to preaching – *tabligh* ('passing messages') or, a later term, *dakwah bil-lisan* ('*dakwah* with the tongue') – and one of its main objectives was resistance to the spread of Christianity. Muhammadiyah's social development policy, most of all through the founding of a large number of educational institutions, was distinguished from *tabligh*, and often emulated the Christian example (Hasyim 1990:181, 294).

The idea of linking religion and development existed in Nahdlatul Ulama circles too. It manifested itself primarily in the proposal that *pesantren* – 'traditional' Islamic boarding schools which formed the main infrastructure of the Nahdlatul Ulama – might be used as a basis for economic development. This idea was first proposed by the then Minister of Religious Affairs, A. Mukti Ali, who had studied at a *pesantren* himself, but was a fervent advocate of the modernization of Islamic education and institutions. He launched this policy in the mid-1970s, that is to say in the period when the government pushed the concept of *dakwah pembangunan*, but was not very successful in implementing it. The adoption of the same idea in the circle of young intellectuals of the LP3E had a larger impact. They succeeded in involving various *pesantren* and Muslims educated at *pesantren* affiliated with the Nahdlatul Ulama. This programme was implemented from the late 1970s and supported financially by the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (Van Bruinessen and Wajidi 2006:215-25).

Some time after the concept *dakwah pembangunan* became popular, a new term was introduced: *dakwah bil-hal* (*dakwah* with deeds, *dakwah* through example).<sup>46</sup> The *Pedoman pembinaan dakwah bil-hal* (Guide for *dakwah bil-hal* training) published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs traces the origin of *dakwah bil-hal* back to a pilot project which started in 1982 and involved 144

<sup>45</sup> In this publication, he also refers to his earlier publication on the same theme: Surjadi 1968.

<sup>46</sup> The term is also spelt *dakwah bil hal*.

cooperatives, the majority of which were affiliated with a mosque and a *majlis taklim*, a religious study group (Rasyid et al. 1989:5). The explanations in this guide suggest that *dakwah bil-hal* was influenced by and may well be a continuation of *dakwah pembangunan*; it may even be simply a new name for the same concept (Rasyid et al. 1989). Since then, this term has become very popular in government circles and among non-governmental Islamic organizations.

The gradual expansion of *dakwah* has continued after the fall of the New Order regime. A number of organizations began to interpret *dakwah* as community development, sometimes using this English term. Examples are the organizations led by Tutty Alawiyah, the female leader of the nationwide network of *majlis taklim* and other *dakwah* institutions. The lecture she gave on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate in *dakwah* by the Syarif Hidayatullah State Institute for Islamic Studies in Jakarta in 2001 was entitled 'Paradigma baru dakwah Islam: Memberdayakan masyarakat melalui pengembangan sosio kultural mad'u' (A new paradigm of Islamic *dakwah*: Empowering society through social-cultural development of its addressee (the person who is the recipient of *dakwah*)) (Alawiyah AS 2001). The Muhammadiyah has also emphasized the cultural aspect of *dakwah*. The notion of *dakwah kultural* was suggested at its *sidang tanwir* of 24-27 January 2002 and a more extensive version was adopted at its *sidang tanwir* of June 2003 in Makassar.<sup>47</sup>

Foreign examples and trends have been a factor in recent developments of *dakwah*. This was explicitly the case in the introduction of 'community development' as an objective in a longstanding cooperation programme between McGill University in Montreal and Indonesian state institutes for Islamic studies because the main sponsor, the Canadian government, could no longer gain approval from the Canadian Parliament for the funding of projects of a religious nature. In the framework of this revised Canadian-Indonesian cooperation programme, lecturers from these Indonesian institutes were invited to follow a short course in Community Development-Social Work at the School of Social Work of McGill University, and the *dakwah* faculty of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (formerly Institute) in Jakarta has started a pilot project of community development carried out by groups of its students.<sup>48</sup> Other *dakwah* faculties recently undertook similar initiatives, combining the teaching of *dakwah* as a subject of modern, academic research, the interpretation of *dakwah* as community development inspired by Islamic values, and the implementation of concrete development projects. These pro-

<sup>47</sup> *Dakwah kultural* 2004:vi. Within the Muhammadiyah, a *sidang tanwir* (enlightenment meeting) is a national meeting convened in addition to the periodical *muktamar* (conference, nowadays held once every five years).

<sup>48</sup> Interviews with Arief Subhan, Deputy Dean, Academic Affairs, Faculty of Dakwah, and others at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Jakarta, September 2006; Kilun 2007; Subhan and Kilun 2007.

jects offer practical training for students and at the same time fulfil the social mission with which academic institutions are officially assigned.<sup>49</sup> Using religious institutions as vehicles for community development and linking *dakwah* and community development was not an entirely new idea. It had been a key tenet of the PTDI which was founded in 1963. From the 1970s the idea had grown in the circles of the LP3ES and the P3M, both of which were sponsored by the German Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (Oepen and Karcher 1988; Fakhri 1988).

### Conclusion

*Da`wah* has been an important aspect of Islam from the very beginning. Since the late nineteenth century, however, as a result of political and social transformations, it has taken on new forms. Far from being the distinctive attribute of a particular tradition or interpretation of Islam, *da`wah* has been practised in one form or another by a wide variety of Islamic movements and organizations. Although complementary to each other in certain cases, in others their relations have tended to be characterized by competition for authority and power, not only between various *da`wah* organizations, but also, through these organizations, between regimes, categories of religious and social leaders, and social categories of Muslims. For this reason, *da`wah* has had dimensions beyond the domain of religion proper. Moreover, *da`wah* has been connected with political and social causes such as the struggle against communism and Christianity as well as community development. Quite a few *da`wah* initiatives, state-sponsored or non-governmental, have taken on a transnational scope.

Because it has undergone similar social and political transformations as in many other Muslim-majority countries and because it has been exposed to transnational religious movements, Indonesian *dakwah* shares most of the above features. The analysis of *dakwah* in Indonesia confirms the existence of such features and adds to our understanding of them. It substantiates theories on the objectification of Islam in modern societies: the spread of mass education has contributed to the fragmentation of religious interpretations, which has led to a fierce competition for religious authority and for control of religious institutions and organizations. Just as in many other Muslim-majority countries, in Indonesia the state has played a prominent role in the provision and expansion of mass education, the ensuing competition for religious authority, as well as the functionalization of religion. As was the case elsewhere, *dakwah* in Indonesia has extended beyond the religious domain.

<sup>49</sup> For example, the Faculty of Dakwah of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta; see Ulum et al. 2007; Basit and Wachid 2006, which focuses on the aim of developing *dakwah* as an object of modern, academic study.

On the other hand, because Indonesian *dakwah* not only developed in the context of shared, international transformations and foreign influences, but has also been shaped by specific national and regional circumstances, it shows a number of particularities. Firstly, the many organizations involved in one form of Indonesian *dakwah* or another, in spite of similarities and sometimes relations with Muslim movements abroad, have been specific to Indonesia. So too have been the ways they interacted as complementary or competing organizations. Secondly, as the country with the largest number of Muslim inhabitants in the world, while at the same time being situated outside the traditional core region of the Muslim world, Islam and the Muslim community of Indonesia have attracted particular attention from governments and NGOs of Muslim-majority countries and other countries. This attention, inspired by religious motives as well as strategic interests, has influenced *dakwah* in Indonesia and the competition between movements and organizations involved in *dakwah*. Thirdly, the combination of similarities with *da`wah* as it developed elsewhere and Indonesian particularities has been shown in the case of *dakwah pembangunan*. Neither the functionalization of Islam for the benefit of economic development nor state involvement in religious beliefs and practices is a unique phenomenon, but *dakwah pembangunan* certainly was unique to Indonesia.

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