

## **Ideological Framing, Mosques, and Conflict: Bargaining Position of the Salafi Movement in Lombok, East Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

The Salafi movement is a transnational Islamic group that uses mosques to mobilize its followers and promote its ideological framing. The differences in understanding and practicing religious rituals and worship between the Salafi and mainstream Islamic organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Nahdlatul Wathan (NW), have triggered tensions and social conflicts during the construction of new Salafi mosques. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze how Salafi strengthened its existence amid the conflicts by disseminating its ideological framing through the new mosque on the Island of Lombok, Indonesia. Based on the theory of social movement as the cognitive framework, this study also argued that although the ideological framing propagated by Salafi through its mosques fueled social conflicts, it became the strategy for bargaining position amid the mainstream Muslims in Lombok. The emergence of the conflicts was used as the reason for the Salafi group to build new mosques or seize control of pre-existing mosques. This condition did not undermine Salafi as a minority and a new emerging Islamic group. Instead, it empowers the bargaining position of the transnational Islamic group in its own right. For Salafi, owning and controlling the holy places is the opportunity to mobilize collective actions and its social proponents to disseminate the *Manhaj Salaf* ideology. In conclusion, this study contributed to explicating the dynamics of local Salafi in the discourses of the contemporary global Islamic movement.

**Keywords:** Ideological Framing, Salafi Mosques, Manhaj Salaf, Religious Conflict

### **Introduction**

Salafi is one of the transnational Islamic movements viewed as a school of thought by the local communities in Lombok, Indonesia. Since the 1998 Indonesian reformation, it has flourished alongside other transnational Islamic movements, but little is known about its original entry into the island.<sup>1</sup> It has contributed to the emergence of a new paradigm in diversity in Lombok Island. This movement remains a minority and gains resistance from the mainstream traditional Islamic groups, such as Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). However, it perpetually grows and resonates through the districts on the island.

In spite of unfavorable stereotypes and opposition to NU and NW, the Salafi movement continues to acquire public attention, as indicated by the proliferation of Salafi mosques and schools and its yearly increase in believers.<sup>2</sup> The growth of Islamic schools based on Salafi indicates the proliferation of its movements, such as Abu Hurairah, Ubay bin Ka'ab, and Imam Syafi'i in Mataram; Abu Zar al-Ghifari and Abu Abdillah in West Lombok; al-Sunnah, al-Manar, al-Shifa', Anas bin Malik, and Jamaludin in East Lombok; as well as Abu Darda in Central Lombok.<sup>3</sup>

Growing in the mid of the mainstream Islamic group, such as NW and NU, the Salafi movement situates mosques as the primary media and networking. Some of the multitudes of strategic movements in the mosques used as the basis for preaching its theology include: First, regularly carrying out mobile Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> Robert W. Hefner (2017), "Islamic Schools, Social Movements, and Democracy in Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner (ed.), *Making Modern Muslims*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 55-105; Noorhaidi Hasan (2007), "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia: Transnational Dynamics and Local Development," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 83-94; Martin van Bruinessen (ed.) (2013), *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; Hakimul Ikhwan (2018), "Fitted Sharia in Democratizing Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 12, No. 1, p. 17; Abdul Basit (2016), "The Ideological Fragmentation of Indonesian Muslim Students and Da'wa Movements in the Postreformed Era," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 185-208.

<sup>2</sup> Jamhari Makruf and Saifudin Asrori (2022) "In the Making of Salafi-Based Islamic Schools in Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 1, pp. 227-264.

<sup>3</sup> Saparudin (2020), *Berkembang Di Tengah Resistensi Reproduksi Apparatus Ideologi Dalam Pendidikan Salafi Di Lombok*, Mataram: Sanabil.

teachings from one Salafi mosque to the other. Second, mobilizing its followers from one congregation to the other. Third, *disseminate* 15 to 20 Islamic preachers and teachers into various local congregations, mosques, and local government offices under the auspices of a particular preaching team.<sup>4</sup> This preaching technique is conducted mainly in the area where the number of followers remains sparse. Consequently, the entire Salafi mosques look crowded when conducting congregations, although their followers remain limited. This may convince the public that Salafi is gaining followers at a rising rate.

Situating mosques as the basis of movements has theological and sociological implications. According to Bogdana Todorova,<sup>5</sup> Nubowo,<sup>6</sup> and Chaplin<sup>7</sup>, mosques are considered sacred places where Islamic rituals are regularly practiced. Furthermore, Abdullah, the chairman of Ponpes, an Islamic boarding school in Assunnah Bagek Nyake East Lombok, claimed that there had been about 90 Salafi-based mosques in the area in the last fifteen years. Although the number is insignificant compared to the overall number of mosques in Lombok,<sup>8</sup> it will continue to escalate due to the sponsorship of Saudi Arabia and the success of the region's ideological framing.

Salafi promotes distinctive Islamic teachings from the mainstream Islam embraced by most Muslims in Lombok. It describes the puritanical mission and claims that the Islam practiced by the mainstream local Muslims has been distorted by the local culture. In this situation, Salafi propagates the doctrine of *tahzir*, isolating itself from the local Muslims who practice any religious actions and worship unjoined by the Qur'an or prophetic teachings.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, they are unable to regulate religious activity at surrounding mosques and are compelled to construct their own, despite being geographically close to existing mosques. Jajang stated that this is the way the Salafi averts conflicts.<sup>10</sup> For that reason, it is not surprising that each sub-village in Lombok has several mosques with distinctive religious practices and teachings. The label "Masjid Salafi", which means "Salafi mosque" or "Masjid Wahabi" meaning "Wahabi mosque" is written against the mainstream local mosques. These holy sites are sacred to express an identity that involves the power and authority of specific religious groups.<sup>11</sup>

Salafi's puritanical approach, as demonstrated by the separation of mosques from local Muslims, encounters social opposition.<sup>12</sup> The ideological framing propagated by the Islamic group has fueled religious conflicts, mainly burst during the building of their mosques. The results of previous studies, focus group discussions, and media indicate that there have been a minimum of twenty-one religious conflicts primarily involving Salafi mosques in the last fifteen years. The religious violence also results in the destruction of followers' houses and their exclusion from the mosques. The worst consequence is severing social and familial relationships between family members, particularly among parents, children, and siblings, not to mention divorces,<sup>13</sup> which is a new phenomenon.

Despite fueling the conflicts, the ideological framing upheld by the Salafi through its mosques successfully and effectively attracted many new followers. The claims as a puritanical Islamic group, enjoined by the Qur'an and Hadith, the prophetic attitudes and preaching, encapsulate that confronting them means hating the prophet Muhammad PBUH. Such normative arguments based on the Qur'an and Hadith, among other ideological framings, are enticing to its new followers.

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<sup>4</sup> Jajang Jahroni (2020), "Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 1, pp. 35-62; Leonard C. Sebastian, Syafiq Hasyim and Alex Arifianto (eds.) (2021), *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia: Islamic Groups and Identity Politics*, London and New York: Routledge.

<sup>5</sup> Institute of Philosophy and Sociology – BAS and Bogdana Todorova (2021), "Monitoring of the New Identities (Salafi and Sunni) in Islam and the Role of Social Conflicts," *Research Result. Sociology and Management*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 8-20.

<sup>6</sup> Sebastian, Hasyim and Arifianto (eds.) (2021), *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia*.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Chaplin (2020), "Communal Salafi Learning and Islamic Selfhood: Examining Religious Boundaries through Ethnographic Encounters in Indonesia," *Ethnography*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 113-132; Chris Chaplin (2014), "Imagining the Land of the Two Holy Mosques: The Social and Doctrinal Importance of Saudi Arabia in Indonesian Salafi Discourse," *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 217-236.

<sup>8</sup> Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat (2021), Mataram, p. 223.

<sup>9</sup> 'Abd al-Salām al-Suhaimy (1423 H.), *Kun Salafiyyan 'alā al-Jaddah*, Madinah al-Nabawiyah, pp. 99-100; Mizan Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, Jakarta: Pustaka Imam Asy Syafii, p. 50; Nāshir ibn 'Abd al-Karīm Al-'Aql (2007), *Islāmiyah Lā Wahabiyah*, Saudi: Dār al-Fadlilāh, p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Jahroni (2020), "Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism," p. 44.

<sup>11</sup> Yulia Eka Putrie, Widjaja Martokusumo and Bambang Setia Budi (2020), "Defending Spaces, Preventing Conflicts: The Politics of Identity Representation in the Nahdliyin Mosques in Malang Raya," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 26, pp. 26-50.

<sup>12</sup> Chaplin, (2020). "Communal Salafi Learning," pp. 113-132.

<sup>13</sup> Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (2016), "Report Part Title: The Anti-Salafi Campaign in Aceh," *IPAC Report*, October 6, 2016; Saparudin Saparudin (2017), "Salafism, State Recognition and Local Tension: New Trends in Islamic Education in Lombok," *Ulumuna*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 81-107; Faizah Faizah (2017), "Pergulatan Teologi Salafi Dalam Mainstream Keberagamaan Masyarakat Sasak," *Ulumuna*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 375-402.

Some existing studies provided some explanations for the growth of the Salafi movement. Jahroni,<sup>14</sup> Sinani B,<sup>15</sup> Chaplin,<sup>16</sup> Liow,<sup>17</sup> Noorhaidi,<sup>18</sup> and Wiktorowicz,<sup>19</sup> reported that the financial supports of the Saudi kingdom are the significant driver of Salafi development. Furthermore, funding by Saudi Arabia is the primary reason for the growth of the Salafi in Indonesia. The results of Fauzan and Fata suggested that Salafis are growing steadily by using local figures as preachers.<sup>20</sup> Based on the Indonesian historical context, Imron Rosidi stated that the growth of the Islamic movement, including Salafi, is influenced by the tension between Muslim and secular intellectuals.<sup>21</sup>

The previously mentioned studies ignored the role of the local dynamic of the Salafi amid the ideological contestation of more complex religious groups. However, this study does not refute the pivotal role of Saudi Arabia in the thriving of the transnational Islamic group. It advocates that the Islamic group's financial support from the Middle East is not the primary cause of its development. Based on the theory of social movement coined by Glenn E. Robinson<sup>22</sup> and Quintan Wiktorowicz,<sup>23</sup> this study argued that the ability of the Salafi elites to establish the ideological framing propagated through its mosques is the determinant of its thriving. Although Salafi propagated ideological framing through its mosques that stoked religious conflicts, it was an effective negotiating strategy among the majority of Muslims in Lombok. The escalation of the conflicts allowed the Islamic group to build new mosques or utilize the pre-existing mosques. Possessing and controlling the mosques is the critical strategy for the Salafi to disseminate and mobilize their ideology of *manhaj salaf* (Salaf doctrine and method) and social proponents.

### **The Dynamic of Salafi in Lombok**

The origin of the Salafi in Lombok is unknown due to the paucity of studies or discourses on the Islamic group. It is also considered as a relatively new reality compared to pre-existing Islamic organizations, such as NW, NU, and Muhammadiyah. An investigation traced its origin to the late Tuan Guru Husni in Bagek Nyake East Lombok as the prominent figure who initially introduced Salafi in Lombok in 1989.<sup>24</sup> Tuan Guru Husni is an Islamic scholar brought up in a family affiliated with NU. The father of this scholar was a charismatic and respected Islamic preacher that spent his youth studying and teaching in Mecca. Due to his deviant teaching, his parents strongly condemned him when introducing the Salafi ideology. As a result, he was not allowed to do preaching until his father's death.<sup>25</sup>

The origin of the transnational Islamic movement can be traced back to Islamic education. Ponpes Al-Manar, established in 1989 by Tuan Guru Husni, is believed to be the first Islamic school-based Salafi, which has become the center for producing cadres. Tuan Guru Husni, a visionary leader, is credited with successfully promoting the Salafi movement in the region. His efforts to build new mosques and schools in various parts of Lombok Island have left a lasting impact on the community.

In the 1980s, Tuan Guru Husni returned from Makkah but did not introduce and preach the Salafi ideology. He began to preach Salafi ideology to the local people after his second arrival in 1990, making Aik Mel District the center of Salafi. The social rejection and clashes thrust him to return to Mecca for the second time. However, a few days before returning to Makkah, some of his followers from Suralaga begged and promoted him to stay and continue his preaching, as well as offered land to establish a boarding school. As

<sup>14</sup> Jahroni (2020), "Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism."

<sup>15</sup> Besnik Sinani (2022), "Post-Salafism: Religious Revisionism in Contemporary Saudi Arabia," *Religions*, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 340.

<sup>16</sup> Chaplin (2014), "Imagining the Land of the Two Holy Mosques," pp. 217-236.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Chinyong Liow (2011), "Muslim Identity, Local Networks, and Transnational Islam in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 6, pp. 1383-1421.

<sup>18</sup> Noorhaidi Hasan (2008), "The Salafi Madrasas of Indonesia," in Farish A. Noor, Yoginder Sikand and Martin van Bruinessen (eds.), *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 247-274.

<sup>19</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz (2000), "The Salafi Movement in Jordan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 219-240.

<sup>20</sup> Pepen Irpan Fauzan and Ahmad Khoirul Fata (2022), "Madjilis Ahli Soennah Garoet: Local Islamic Puritanism Movement and Its Roles in West Java during the Colonialism Era of 1926 – 1942," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 141-155.

<sup>21</sup> Imron Rosidi (2022), "From Political Parties to Cultural Organizations: Indonesian Islamic Movements during the New Order," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 43-53.

<sup>22</sup> Glenn E. Robinson (2004), "Hamas as Social Movement," in Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>23</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.) (2004), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>24</sup> Tuan Guru Manar, Salafi figure, interviewed, September 7, 2020.

<sup>25</sup> Saparudin (2020), *Berkembang Di Tengah Resistensi Reproduksi Apparatus Ideologi Dalam Pendidikan Salafi Di Lombok*, Mataram: Sanabil.

a result, Tuan Guru Husni decided to stay in Lombok and continue his preaching of As-Sunnah.<sup>26</sup>

Although Salafi was first introduced in East Lombok, it soon gained rapid development in Mataram, West Lombok. The al-Hunafa Lawata Mataram Foundation facilitates the growth of the Salafi movement in this area through the Aisyah Mosque. In 2002, the foundation established Abu Hurairah Islamic Boarding School. This Islamic boarding school successfully carried out formal education institutions of various levels and types, from kindergarten to high school, between 2002 and 2006.

The construction of this Islamic Boarding School receives financial support from Middle Eastern donors and Saudi Arabia, particularly the Kuwait-based Ihya Al-Turath institution. Until 2017, the Abu Hurairah Salafi Boarding School received at least IDR 7.5 billion from this institution. The financing component is dominantly limited to physical buildings.<sup>27</sup> During the period of this study, there were 2.309 students enrolled in the school.<sup>28</sup> As an ideological movement, the development of Salafi in Lombok coincided with the common trend in Indonesia. LIPIA and the Ibn Saud Islamic University facilitated and graduated students who later became cadres in the 1980s and gained wider opportunities after the fall of Suharto in 1998.<sup>29</sup> The openness of information and transportation promoted this movement on Lombok Island. Most of the Salafi figures on the island graduated from both institutions. Regarding the essence of its teachings, the historical roots of Salafi can be traced to the arrival of Muhammadiyah in Lombok. According to Ruslan Nedy, Muhammadiyah first penetrated the island in 1930,<sup>30</sup> and ever since, the issues regarding *shirk* (polytheism), *bid'ah* (heresy), and superstition became the objects of debate that framed Muhammadiyah as the Salafi movement at that time. Although Salafi shares a similar progressive ideology, Muhammadiyah has traditionally supported a progressive philosophy rather than a Salafi. Muhammadiyah does not reject the modern nation-state but embraces those elements that it perceives conform to Islamic values.<sup>31</sup> This indicates that the essence of Salafi ideology had far existed before its first introduction as an independent religious movement by Tuan Guru Husni. Recently, the Salafis have continued to develop their preaching strategies by formulating several ideological framings through their mosques.

### **Manhaj Salaf and Ideological Framing**

The Salafi movement declares itself as the legal followers and preachers of *manhaj salaf*, a doctrine that relates to the understanding and practices of Islam during the time of *salafal-saleh*, namely Prophet Muhammad PBUH, and his companions, *tabi'in*, and *tabi'in al-tabi'in*. The doctrine reflects the teachings of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ahmad ibn Taimiyah, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and was recently promoted by Muhammad al-Uthaimin, Abdul Aziz bin Baz, and Muhammad Nathiruddin al-Albani.<sup>32</sup> Wahabism, the school of thought associated with Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab, is now the legal ideology of the Saudi Arabia government, known as *manhaj salaf*.<sup>33</sup> The appearances of followers include *lihya* (long beards) and *isbal* (wearing trousers right to ankles) for men and *niqab* (enveloping black veil) for women.<sup>34</sup>

The Salafis elites promote *manhaj salaf* doctrine through several ideological framings. First, Salafi is the only legitimate pure Islamic group free from *shirk* (polytheism) and *bid'ah* (heresy). In their opinion, the Islam practiced by the mainstream Islam group in Lombok has been corrupted by local culture and tradition and must therefore be purified. This group established itself as a puritanical movement that aimed to purify the Islamic communities. The Salafi movement also identifies itself as the pure Islamic

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<sup>26</sup> Sofyan, Salafi Figure, interviewed, September 9, 2020.

<sup>27</sup> Fakhruddin, Head of Ponpes Abu Hurairah Mataram, interviewed, November 9, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Ponpes Abu Hurairah, Data Siswa Tahun 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Noorhaidi Hasan (2014), "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia," pp. 83-94; Din Wahid (2014), "Nurturing Salafi Manhaj: A Study of Salafi Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia," *Wacana: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 367-376; M. Imdadun Rahmat (2005), *Arus Baru Islam Radikal: Transmisi Revivalisme Islam Timur Tengah Ke Indonesia*, Jakarta: Erlangga, p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> Ruslan Nedy (2009), *Merajut Perjalanan Muhammadiyah Di Lombok Barat*, Lombok Barat: PDM Lombok Barat, p. 3-4.

<sup>31</sup> Zuli Qodir et al. (2020), "A Progressive Islamic Movement and Its Response to the Issues of the Ummah," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 323-352.

<sup>32</sup> Farish A. Noor, Yoginder Sikand and Martin van Bruinessen (eds.) (2008), *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 249-250; Hefner (2017), "Islamic Schools, Social Movements, and Democracy in Indonesia," pp. 87-88; Media Tarbiyah (2013), *Kompilasi Tiga Ulam Besar*, 10th ed., Bogor: Media Tarbiyah.

<sup>33</sup> Mani' bin Hamad al Juhni (1417 H.), *Al Mawsu'ah al Muyassaratu Fi al Adyan wa al Madzahib Wa al Ahzab al Mu'ashirah*, Riyad: Darul al Nadawah al Alamiyah.

<sup>34</sup> Hasan (2014), "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia," pp. 83-94.

group, the correct Islam, and a preaching movement enjoined by prophetic guidance.<sup>35</sup> They even consider themselves to be the blessed one who is safe from all apostasy and heresy.<sup>36</sup>

The issue of *bid'ah* becomes a theological term among the followers used as a refutation and sociologically becomes a distinctive feature from other Islamic groups.<sup>37</sup> One of the Salafi figures, Mizan Qudsiyah, states that the term *bid'ah* as generally conceived by Salafis refers to any new religious innovations that contest the given Islamic principles, intentionally aimed to exaggerate the worship of God.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the issue of *bid'ah* is related to the claims of righteousness and salvation that frequently contradict the inclusive, mainstream interpretation of Islam in the local culture. By relying on Hadith of the Prophet, "*man 'amila 'amalan laisa 'alaihi amruna fahua raddun*", the Salafis firmly believe that they are the agent of pure Islam.

Qudsiyah opines that *bid'ah*, as a concept or behavior in the principle of *manhaj salaf* refers to hatred, a lack of empathy, exclusiveness, and unwillingness to listen and discuss with polytheists and heretics. These are intended to guard against listening to misguided or false utterances that may uproot the tawhid. Based on this principle, followers are forbidden from learning from other Islamic groups.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the key criterion for Salafis to disassociate from others is heresy because heretics contain danger and wicked behaviors, not to mention that associating with them might be poisonous. The heretics circumvent the practices of Sunnah (emulating the life of the prophet PBUH) while making the heresy Sunnah and vice versa. Associating with them means death or at least sickness.<sup>40</sup>

The doctrine of *manhaj salaf* does not justify all the heretics to receive equal treatment depending on the level of heresy. There are three levels of heresy in *manhaj salaf*, including heresy leading to apostasy, those causing great sins, and one causing little sin. These categories influence the way Salafis interact with the presupposed heretics. In this situation, Qudsiyah advises that any heretics explicitly preaching their heresy should be disobeyed, hated, and even excluded from social communication and interaction.<sup>41</sup> Salafis also firmly declared that any Muslims who practice heresy are apostates and placed in hell.

For Salafis, denouncing their preaching means negating the Messenger of Allah. Consequently, they publicly and massively publish jargon through various social media, saying, "negating the salaf means rejecting Islam, loving them means loving Islam, hating them means hating Islam, and even the Prophet Muhammad."<sup>42</sup> Abdullah, another figure of Salafi, opined that Salafism is not a new Islamic school of thought or understanding. It accords with the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the models exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. For this reason, there is no room for other Muslims to hate Salafis, and it is a total fallacy for them to deny Salafism.<sup>43</sup>

Salafi is the guardian and agent of the authentic tawhid, and they claim to the Islamic community that preserves and develops the true tawhid.<sup>44</sup> Its movement is disclosed as the one that derives from the *haramain* (Meca and Medina), namely the holy and merciful cities where the Prophet Muhammad PBUH originated and introduced Islam. Abd al-Salam al-Suhaimy further asserts that Saudi Arabia is *daulah salafiyah*, where Salaf preaching is promoted, and the leaders adhere to Salafism, and it is obligatory for them to uphold the Qur'an and Hadith.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the Messenger, his companions, and followers introduced the concept of the believed tawhid.

<sup>35</sup> al-Suhaimy (1423 H.), *Kun Salafiyyan 'alā al-Jaddah*, pp. 38-39; Wazarah al-Tarbiyah wa al-Ta'lim (1999), *Al-Tauhid*, Riyadh: Wizarah al-Ma'arif; Wazarah al-Tarbiyah wa al-Ta'lim (1999), *Al-Tauhid Lisaf al-Awwal al-Thanawiya*, Riyadh: Wizarah al-Ma'arif.

<sup>36</sup> Al-'Aql (2007), *Islāmiyah Lā Wahabiyah*, p. 35.

<sup>37</sup> Muhammad Zainal Abidin and Yulia Hafizah (2019), "Conflict and Integration in The Salafi-Wahabi Purification Movement in South Kalimantan," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama dan Sosial Budaya*, Vol. 4, Nol. 2, pp. 191-201.

<sup>38</sup> Abd al-Razak Al-Dawish (1317 H.), *Fatāwa Al-Lajnah al-Daimah Lilbuhuthi al-'Ilmiyah Wa al-Ifta*, 2, Riyadh: Dār al-Nasyiah li Nashr wa al-Tauzīr, p. 461; Al-Suhaimy (1423 H.), *Kun Salafiyyan 'alā al-Jaddah*, pp. 91-92; Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 37.

<sup>39</sup> Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 50.

<sup>40</sup> Jamaluddin (2013), "Begini Seharusnya Memilih Teman," in MA Plus Abu Hurairah, *Media Madrasah*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

<sup>41</sup> Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 51.

<sup>42</sup> Abu Muslih (1427 H.), *Lebih Dekat Mengenal Manhaj Salaf*, Yogyakarta: n.p.

<sup>43</sup> Abdullah, Salafi Figure, interviewed, March 2, 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Hasbullah Hasbullah et al. (2022), "Acceptance of the Existence of Salafi in the Development of Da'wah in Riau Islamic Malay Society," *Cogent Social Sciences*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2107280.

<sup>45</sup> al-Suhaimy (1423 H.), *Kun Salafiyyan 'alā al-Jaddah*, pp. 50-51.

Salafi formulates the doctrines, such as *tahzir*, *hajr*, and *wala' wa al-bara'*, to maintain the purity of tawhid and Islam. *Tahzir* refers to the avoidance and self-isolation from individuals who are believed to practice shirk and heresy.<sup>46</sup> In the Salafis' principle of *manhaj salaf*, it is incumbent upon them to hate, disassociate, ignore, and discuss with the heretics. Based on this principle, learning from them is strictly forbidden. Qudsiyah further explains that any heretics openly preaching their heresy should be denied, hated, and even isolated from social interaction and communication (*hajr*).<sup>47</sup>

The concept of *hajr* is popular among the Salafis as a strong remark for negating heresy, which is the antithesis of its danger. Therefore, *hajr* for Salafi is not exaggerated because heretics are deviant from the Islamic path modeled by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions. Furthermore, some of those heretics can be categorized as infidels for the Salafis not to associate with them. Mizan firmly stated that *hajr* is the primary characteristic of *ahl al-Sunnah* Ulema. This is also a consequence of the meaning of *ittiba'* connoting not only kneeling to the Prophet Sunnah but also simultaneously abandoning the heresy and acting against any of its practices (*tahzir*).<sup>48</sup>

In addition to *hajr*, the concept of *al-wala' wal bara'* is also known in Salafism. *Al-wala'* is building a relationship with religious people by caring for, helping, and living with them. On the other hand, *al-bara'* refers to disassociating with the non-Muslims or evil-doers by hating, not assisting, and ensuring self-isolation.<sup>49</sup> Similar to *hajr*, this concept is adopted to circumvent heresy, strengthen the unity among the followers, and revive the life following the *salaf al-salih*. A further implication of *hajr* is disallowing the attendance of Salafis in any congregation of heresy in the case that they are unable to alter their heresy. Qudsiyah emphasizes that anyone who sincerely believes in this holiest way of Islam will be able to discern the danger of associating with heretics rather than those who do what is strictly banned by God.<sup>50</sup> This doctrine encapsulates that heresy remains the central instrument of refuting and has complicated sociological implications.

As mentioned above, the cultural framing propagated by Salafi is central in the realm of social movement. It obliges religious movements, such as Salafi, to outspoke the claims against other Islamic groups' understanding and practices while simultaneously preparing the most suitable and righteous alternative.<sup>51</sup> Salafi conducts this transnational ideological movement to influence local social fragmentations and conflicts.<sup>52</sup> Based on activities, Salafi views what Ali Maksum et al. called Islam as religion and ideology.<sup>53</sup>

### **Responses of Mainstream Islam: Conflicts and Social Fragmentation**

Salafi propagation of ideological framing immediately gained harsh responses from mainstream Islamic organizations, namely NU and NW, that have practiced the Islamic traditions, which Salafi claimed to be heresy. The spread of the doctrine of *manhaj salaf* is perceived to harm the diversity of the Sasak community, the indigenous of Lombok Island. The claim of truth, salvation, and refutation using the jargon "*bid'ah*" and "*dlalalah* (deviant)" is seen as brave and provocative acts against the religious rituals and traditions of mainstream Islam. The different ideologies in the religious practices and the provision of ideological framing propagated by Salafi have sparked social conflicts in Lombok.

NW and NU believe that the Salafi interpretation of Islam undermines the long-established diversity in the community. Salafi claim of truth and salvation triggers social tensions and conflicts among the Muslims in Lombok. Since its emergence in the 2000s, there have been about 21 conflicts involving Salafi and mainstream Islamic communities. On January 2, 2022, Pondok Pesantren Assunnah, the largest Salafi boarding school, was burned by local people in Bagek Nyake, East Lombok.<sup>54</sup> Thousands

<sup>46</sup> al-Suhaimy (1423 H.), *Kun Salafiyyan 'alā al-Jaddah*, pp. 99-100; Al-'Aql (2007), *Islāmīyah Lā Wahabīyah*, p. 359; Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 50.

<sup>47</sup> Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 51.

<sup>48</sup> Tabloid Al-Furqon, "Metode Hajr Terhadap Ahli Bid'ah," V/ 1426, p. 29-34.

<sup>49</sup> MA Abu Hurairah (2014), "Al-Wala wa al-Bara," *Media Madrasah*, June, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, p. 26-27.

<sup>50</sup> Qudsiyah (2013), *Kaidah-Kaidah Penting Mengamalkan Sunnah*, p. 54.

<sup>51</sup> Wiktorowicz (ed.) (2004), *Islamic Activism*, p. 16; Robinson (2004), "Hamis as Social Movement," p. 116.

<sup>52</sup> Basit (2016), "The Ideological Fragmentation of Indonesian Muslim."

<sup>53</sup> Ali Maksum et al. (2022), "Islamic Movements in Indonesia: A Critical Study of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and Jaringan Islam Liberal," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 71-82.

<sup>54</sup> Kompas TV (2022), "Ponpes As-Sunnah di Lombok Dirusak dan Dibakar oleh Orang Tak Dikenal," Kompas TV, <https://www.kompas.tv/article/248058/ponpes-as-sunnah-di-lombok-dirusak-dan-dibakar-oleh-orang-tak-dikenal>.

of people demonstrated against the construction of a new Salafi mosque in Mamben East Lombok on November 2, 2021.<sup>55</sup> In 2016, the mainstream Muslim communities destroyed the Salafi mosque in Suela East Lombok. Seven followers of Salafi were dismissed from their village in Batu Keliang, Central Lombok, in 2005. Some were evacuated, and the local people burned down their homes. The destruction of Salafi Schools occurred in Mataram City in 2006, not to mention the closure of mosques and the Islamic school of Ubay bin Ka'ab in Cakra Negara Mataram in 2015. These riots proved that the ideological contestation had reached a high level,<sup>56</sup> where the differences involved physical tensions.

On the other hand, local reactions to Salafi ideologies portrayed by various conflicts can also be understood as the efforts of NW and NU to maintain their dominance. For example, H. Mahsun and H. Said are two current Salafi figures who graduated from an NW Islamic boarding school. Since the 1990 emergence of Salafi, some followers of the two Islamic organizations have joined and even become preachers for the worldwide Islamic organization. After becoming Salafi preachers, H. Mahsun and H. Said were expelled by residents in the village and had not been involved in religious rituals at the local mosque. In 2006, the local community destroyed the Bani Salih School, which he chaired. Similar incidents of expulsion and damage have occurred in other locations in Lombok.

The tension between Salafis, NW, and NU also occurs within the family. Some individuals are not allowed to return home by their parents after studying at the Assunnah Salafi School, some spend years not saying hello to their siblings, husband and wife are forced to cut ties with their parents, the seizure of the burial rights of parents by their children, and various other forms.<sup>57</sup> Several cases showed a severance of family ties involving theological and ideological sentiments. It indicates that religious ideology and ideological linkages are more pervasive than family kinship bonds. The patrilineal interaction pattern underlying the Lombok kinship system accords with the more substantial penetration and ideological ties.

Responses to the thriving of Salafi can also be found in the textual discourses, such as in the preface section of Nahdlatul Wathan's *Shield of Aswaja* book by Abdul Aziz Sukarnawadi, Tuan Guru M. Sahrullah Ma'shum, and Tuan Guru Sholah Sukarnawadi. The statement of the two NW figures are:

Likewise, the role of Tuan Guru Zainuddin, founding father of NW, in maintaining the integrity of ahl sunnah wa al-jama'ah is crucial. The Wahhabi sect (Salafi), which became the sworn enemy of ahl sunnah wa al-jama'ah did not escape his attention. It was declared that the hizib NW, 17 of the highest-ranking anti-Wahhabi book, is owned and imbued by all the followers of NW. A pocketbook had been compiled entitled NW: No Wahabi. This book is a perfunctory shield to anticipate and prevent Wahhabi viruses from penetrating the NW environment. The antipathy attitude towards Wahhabis was inspired by the founder of this organization, who strongly rejected Wahhabism, and based on the consensus of the scholars of ahl sunnah wa al-jama'ah in the world. Wahhabi ideology should be watched out for and even shunned from all servants of Allah and followers of the Prophet.<sup>58</sup>

The social tensions between mosques and Salafis also exist in other regions in Indonesia. The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict also reports on the emergence of the anti-Salafi movement in Aceh. Since the emergence of democracy following the fall of the Suharto dictatorship, Salafism has been viewed as incompatible with the mainstream concept of Islam held by the majority of the Aceh population. Salafis are trying to gradually take over the role of Imam and various activities in several mosques in the region. The anti-Salafi group, the dominant Islamic group in Aceh, is trying to replace the Imams of the mosque and various religious activities that have recently begun to be controlled by Salafi clerics.<sup>59</sup> Diversity of religions, ethnicities, tribes, and languages cannot be avoided in Indonesia due to Islam engagement with local cultures, in contrast to several Middle Eastern nations. Therefore,

<sup>55</sup> Jejak Lombok (2021), "Ribuan Warga Mamben Daya Tolak Pembangunan Masjid As-Sunnah, *Jejak Lombok*, <https://www.jejaklombok.com/2021/12/ribuan-warga-mamben-daya-tolak.html>.

<sup>56</sup> Antje Wiener (2014), *A Theory of Contestation*, New York: Springer.

<sup>57</sup> Saparudin (2017), "Salafism, State Recognition and Local Tension," pp. 81-107.

<sup>58</sup> Abdul Aziz Sukarnawadi (2016), *Perisai Ke-Aswaja-an Nahdlatul Wathan Membedah 17 Literatur Anti Wahabi Rekomendasi Pendiri NW*, Yogyakarta: Samudera Biru, pp. xi-xx.

<sup>59</sup> Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (2016), "Report Part Title: The Anti-Salafi Campaign," p. 1.

the indigenous character of the Indonesian Muslim population has adopted moderate Islam.<sup>60</sup> As its implication, Indonesian people have various mindsets, behaviors, and religious expressions.<sup>61</sup>

The ideological fragmentation and its sociological implications above are not unique to Lombok people. The involvement of the Salafi movement in the formation of transnational identities and efforts to construct religious authority, which led to Salafis vis-a-vis local communities, also occurred in various regions and countries.<sup>62</sup> The ability of Salafis to use mosques as a forum for forming and disseminating ideological identities results in the establishment of new formations in the religious culture of the Lombok community. Finally, even though it is accompanied by tension and conflict from mainstream groups, the mosque has effectively become a vehicle for proponent mobility to empower the existence of Salafi groups in Lombok.

The rise of social conflicts above is not solely fueled by theological issues of religious differences, as some scholars advocate in general. It is also more likely triggered by a competition among mainstream Islamic groups to establish and validate Salafi existence. Following the growing confidence of the Salafi group, which received ideological and financial support from several Middle Eastern donors in carrying out their preaching, the theological differences between the groups are now turning into rivalries to control religious authority and society.<sup>63</sup> At the same time, NU and NW consider the development of Salafism as an ideological rival and a new threat. As the dominant groups that have long used tradition as an expression of Islam, NU and NW believe that the openly propagated rebuttal by Salafi is a provocative attitude and ignores religious differences. Tensions became even more pronounced when many followers of these two groups joined the transnational Islamic group. The exclusion of some mosques previously affiliated with prominent Islamic groups, now under the control of the Salafi elites, adds more fuel to the contestation.

### **Controlling Mosques and Bargaining Position of Salafi**

The ability of Salafi groups to make and use mosques, referred to as social mobility by Robinson, has contributed significantly to the dynamics of the transnational Islamic group movement in Lombok. According to Jajat Burhanudin, this group successfully filled the vacuum previously under the control of traditional Islamic elites. Religious studies in mosques, which traditional Islamic elites once conducted intensively and sincerely, are gradually losing momentum.<sup>64</sup> This situation affords the Salafi group to fulfill the spiritual needs of the surrounding people. Salafi elites have now controlled some mosques previously affiliated with NU and NW.

The Salafi movement used mosques as the basis for preaching and ideological networking. The ability to strategically position the mosques as media for preaching the *manhaj salaf* enables this movement to gradually and significantly influence the pattern and behavior of religious lives in Lombok. This is because mosques are place of worship and a site to sow certain ideologies to promote the existence of the Islamic group. Although theoretically and institutionally distinct from the mainstream religious conceptions and movements in Lombok, such as NU and NW, the Salafi movement has acquired support from the middle class of rural towns as it competes with other religious groups. These people consider Salafism as an alternative to their religious needs as it offers the concept of "Sunnah" to frame its preaching. Therefore, the growth of Salafi is inseparable from their control, and taking over the mosques affiliated to NU or NW are Islamic groups. This phenomenon is explained in the following section.

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<sup>60</sup> Inayatillah, Kamaruddin and M. Anzaikhan (2022), "The History of Moderate Islam in Indonesia and Its Influence on the Content of National Education," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 213-226.

<sup>61</sup> Abidin and Hafizah (2019), "Conflict and Integration in The Salafi-Wahabi," pp. 191-201; Basit (2016), "The Ideological Fragmentation of Indonesian Muslim," p. 189.

<sup>62</sup> Hayat Alvi (2014), "The Diffusion of Intra-Islamic Violence and Terrorism: The Impact of the Proliferation of Salafi/Wahabi Ideologies," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 38-50; Nuhrison M. Nuh (2009), "Kelompok Salafi Di Kabupaten Lombok Barat," in Ahmad Syafi'i Mufid (ed.), *Kasus-Kasus Aliran/Paham Keagamaan Aktual Di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Puslitbang Kehidupan Keagamaan.

<sup>63</sup> Jahroni (2020), "Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism"; Rahmat, *Arus Baru Islam Radikal*; Saparudin (2017), "Salafism, State Recognition and Local Tension," pp. 95-97.

<sup>64</sup> Jajat Burhanudin (2010), "Redefining the Roles of Islamic Organizations in the Reformasi Era," *Studia Islamika*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 403-406.



### ***Losing to Win: The case of Jamaludin Mosque Construction***

The quote “taking the challenges as the opportunities” can be used to portray the background of building the Jamaludin, one of the two mosques Salafi built due to the two ideological contestations with the NU group in Bagek Nyaka, East Lombok. Tuan Guru Manar, the mosque’s founder, explained that the building is a product of the significant challenges of the Sunnah preaching in its initial period in this village. He described that this occurred during its introduction, specifically in our father, Ustaz Husni, who confronted decisive refutation from the community. He was challenged and refuted at the Syamsul Palah, particularly regarding Islamic worship. Manhaj salaf, believed to be a pure and authentic Islam, is seen as a new school of thought by the people and even deemed false Islamic teachings. Jamaludin Mosque was established actually to avoid the conflict.”<sup>65</sup>

As in several other places, the establishment of a new Salafi mosque can be seen as a preaching or contestation strategy amid numerous challenges. This includes establishing Jamaludin Bagek Nyake Mosque and gaining the local community’s appreciation despite remaining as a minority group in this village. Through this mosque, under the guidance of Tuan Guru Manar’s da’wah, the Salafi group freely and independently disseminates and implements *manhaj salaf* according to their Islamic understanding. Furthermore, the mosque is the most crucial part of forming the religious-cultural identity of the people in this area. Tuan Guru Manar preached in thirty from hundreds of Salafi-affiliated mosques in Lombok.

Tuan Guru Manar added that Middle Eastern donors financed the construction of Jamaludin Mosque under the auspices of the Ihyat al-Turats Foundation. All mosques affiliated with the Sunnah da’wah have the support of Saudi Arabia.<sup>66</sup> It is not surprising that Sheikhs often visit Salafi Mosques from Saudi Arabia to observe the physical condition of the buildings and religious activities, as well as for the sake of preaching. The Ihya al-Turats foundation, as a facilitator, only requires a land area as a place of development, then the construction costs and even the mosque management allowance are the foundation’s responsibility. It can be ascertained that all physical buildings, educational institutions, and mosques scattered in Lombok result from the funding of this institution. In addition, certain instructors earn salaries and stipends from this school, as well as from private and institutional contributors. This remuneration is typically paid to persons in charge of institutions or mosques.<sup>67</sup>

The above conditions echo the result that Salafis development cannot be separated from the support of Middle Eastern institutions, donors, and foundations, such as Rabitah al-Alam Islami.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) has contributed.<sup>69</sup> Recently, several institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank, the Saudi Ministry of Education, the King of Qatar and Kuwait, and private donors in the United Arab Emirates region, have been involved in this project.<sup>70</sup> The Ihya al-Turats institution and the Jami’iyah Darul Birr foundation also actively provide financial support for educational institutions and mosques in various regions in the country.<sup>71</sup> Consequently, the evolution of Salafi preaching exhibits periodic progress.

### ***Fighting to Win: The Case of Taking over An-Nur Bebidas Mosque***

Bebidas is one of the villages in East Lombok which becomes the basis for the development of the Salafi movement. A Salafi mosque is separated from the local mosques in general, almost in all hamlets of this village. One of the prominent mosques that become the center of Salafi preaching is the Assunnah An-Nur in Lampit Hamlet. The Salafi group has taken over the mosque from the NU group. Before the followers took it over, An-Nur Mosque was one of the public mosques for the Bebidas community, specifically for the people of Dusun Lampit. All religious activities reflect traditional Islamic teachings and society in general. The celebration of various religious rituals and traditions is centered in this mosque. Mawlid tradition, which is the prophet’s birthday ceremony, as well as sermons, congregational recitation, and various religious activities, contributed to this mosque’s religiosity.

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<sup>65</sup> Tuan Guru Manar, Salafi Leader, interviewed, September 7, 2020.

<sup>66</sup> Jahroni (2020), “Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism,” p. 35-62.

<sup>67</sup> Abdullah and Syafi’, Salafi figure, interviewed, March 1, 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Noor, Sikandi and Bruinessen (eds.) (2008), *The Madrasa in Asia*, p. 255; Bruinessen (ed.) (2013), *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>69</sup> Abdurrahman Wahid (ed.) (2009), *Ilusi Negara Islam: Ekspansi Gerakan Islam Transnasional Di Indonesia*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, Jakarta: Wahid Institute, p. 75.

<sup>70</sup> Liow (2011), “Muslim Identity, Local Networks, and Transnational Islam,” pp. 382-421.

<sup>71</sup> Chaplin (2014), “Imagining the Land of the Two Holy Mosques,” pp. 225-226; Jahroni (2020), “Saudi Arabia Charity and the Institutionalization of Indonesian Salafism,” p. 35-62.

However, the emergence and development of Salafi groups that bear the issue of shirk and heresy have diminished these religious practices, not to mention labeling the practitioners as heretics and shunned.<sup>72</sup>

Following the increasing number of Salafi followers in this village, the Islamic group took over the mosque in 2012 and subsequently changed its name from An-Nur to Assunnah An-Nur Mosque<sup>73</sup>. It depicts the importance of ideological identity embedded in places of worship. This mosque later became a center for the study and development of Salafis in the village of Bebidas. Similar to Bagek Nyake, Tuan Guru Husni played an important role in Bebidas Village. Since the introduction of Salafi in the 1990s, the movement has continued to gain appreciation despite several rejections from some people in Bebidas. Tuan Guru Husni slowly managed to recruit new followers by propagating the ideological framing of “returning to the Qur’an and Hadith.” This was supported by normative arguments that everything Allah and His Messenger did not command is heresy, and heresy is misguidance, which in turn, is hell.

The growing number of followers promotes the confidence of the Salafi congregation to use the existing mosque as the basis of preaching. After successfully taking over An-Nur Mosque, as described above, the clerics freely and openly conveyed the doctrine according to their understanding. In Bagek Nyake Village, the Salafi faction yielded and constructed Jamaludin Mosque, but in Bebidas Village, the situation was reversed. The Salafi group managed to take over the existing mosque, which indicates that it gained more support in the village.

### ***Winning the Conflict: The Establishment of Ummu Sulaiman Suela Mosque***

Suela is one of the villages in East Lombok with Salafi followers. Although the number of Salafi followers remains small, they managed to take over one mosque. The history of the entry of Salafi teachings in Suela Village is not too long. Its teachings were first introduced by the late Amaq Baiah, one of the Qur’anic teachers, who was influenced by Ustaz Syafi, a Salafi figure in Bebidas. Because he was comfortable with what he believed in, he finally decided to select and be involved in the spread of Salafism.

Similar to Bagek Nyake and Bebidas Villages, there was controversy in the early days of the Salafi congregation, as the local community rejected its presence. Since the development of the Salafi, people have been distinguished based on their respective mosques. It found its culmination when the Salafi group changed the name of Sulaiman Mosque to Umm Sulaiman Mosque. Umm Sulaiman Mosque was initially a Mushalla (small mosque), a waqf of a congregation founded around the 1987s. In general, the Mushalla was only used for the five daily prayers and to recite the Qur’an on a small scale. Several Islamic preachers from other villages led the religious activities in the mosque facilitated by Amaq Baiah and Ustadz Rusli. Ustaz Syafi, one of the Salafi figures, turned the prayer room (*Mushalla*) into a mosque, later named Umm Sulaiman Mosque.

In 2014, Ustaz Syafi commenced the construction of a mosque to strengthen his movement. Ustaz Rusli stated there was rejection from the surrounding community because the teachings and religious practices were seen as deviating from Islam. This condition led to the destruction of Ummu Sulaiman Mosque.<sup>74</sup> The mosque is the only center for Salafi development in Suela, although it is still a minority in this village. According to Rosyidi, Head of Suela Village, there is no reason to prohibit the existence of Salafi congregations, they are still the same religion, and their teachings do not deviate. Islamic organizations such as NW, NU, Muhammadiyah, and Salafi are developing equally. Rosyidi emphasized that the conflict was more influenced by people’s ignorance of Salafi teachings, which were considered new and heretical.

Salafi’s achievement in capturing many mosques allows its followers to fortify their existence. Indeed, the mosque now becomes a place to express an identity that involves the power and authority of religious groups.<sup>75</sup> In addition to changing or adding names, Salafis also modify the design according to the name and construction of Salafi mosques in general. Through their mosques, the Salafi movement

<sup>72</sup> Nawawi, Leader of Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School, interviewed, Oktober 7, 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Amaq Ati, Manager of the Salafi Assunnah An-Nur Mosque, interviewed, Oktober 21, 2021.

<sup>74</sup> Rusli, Manager of the Salafi Ummu Salamah Mosque, interviewed, Oktober 21, 2021.

<sup>75</sup> Putrie, Martokusumo and Budi (2020), “Defending Spaces, Preventing Conflicts,” pp. 26-50.

developed significantly and was actively involved in forming the structure and religious culture of the Lombok people.

The social tensions involving theological issues and ideological competition above reflect how mosques become a strategic position to gain the authority of the religious elite. The elites of religious organizations appear to share the belief that having or managing a mosque is a sign of existence.<sup>76</sup> Based on the above phenomenon, the movement successfully created a new identity for the Muslim generation in Lombok despite the conflict with NU and NW as the two dominant groups. The increasing conflict between followers contributes to social transformation and the religious culture of the community. This condition reinforces Bogdana Todorova's view that the stability of the social system is a temporary balance of power, and conflict is a factor in determining a new balance of power in society.<sup>77</sup>

The ideological framing promoted by Salafis in various mosques is seen as a success even though it has triggered conflicts. It occurs because the Salafi leaders adjust their preaching strategies in light of structural opportunities.<sup>78</sup> According to Nubowo, this adjustment was accompanied by mixing local and transnational ideologies and preaching methods. Nubowo provided an example of the behavior of Wahdah Islamiyah, one of the Salafi groups in Makassar. Wahdah Islamiyah, in its preaching in many ways, uses the strategy of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and the Ikhwan al-Muslim tarbiyah.<sup>79</sup>

Based on the social movement theory developed by Wiktorowicz, Salafi has successfully conceptualized the collectivity of its followers to recruit new followers. The mobilization of the congregation from one mosque to another is the primary indicator. Furthermore, the spread of cultural framing practiced by Salafis is essential in a social movement. It requires religious movements such as Salafis to blame other groups' religious beliefs and practices while preparing alternative views that are considered the most acceptable or solutive.<sup>80</sup> Salafi claims to be the agent of pure Islam and authentic monotheism while attributing other Islamic beliefs and practices to heresy and *dlolalah* (deviant). Despite the fact that the ideological framework taught by Salafi through its mosques exacerbated social conflicts, it became a bargaining strategy amid the mainstream Muslims in Lombok.

## Conclusion

In recent years, mosques have served not only as a place of worship but also as a place of identity formation, ideological contestation, and the authority of a specific religious group. The growth of Salafi mosques driven by the resistance of mainstream Islamic organizations, such as NU and NW, generates new phenomena in Lombok Island. There are always challenges and conflicts associated with the building or takeover of mosques. However, with ideological framing that carries the claim of pure Islam and authentic monotheism campaigned through mosques, the Islamic group has continuously gained increasing followers.

The phenomena showed that although the ideological framing has triggered the conflicts, it is seen as a strategy for Salafi to gain a bargaining position amid the mainstream Muslims in Lombok. These conflicts promote transnational Islamic groups to build new mosques or take over pre-existing ones. For Salafis, owning and controlling mosques is an opportunity to establish collective action and social mobilization of *manhaj salaf* proponents to propagate their ideology. This indicates a new explanation of the local dynamics of Salafi in the global discourse of contemporary Islamic movements.

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<sup>76</sup> Chaplin (2020), "Communal Salafi Learning," pp. 113-132; Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (2016), "Report Part Title: The Anti-Salafi Campaign," p. 32

<sup>77</sup> Institute of Philosophy and Sociology – BAS and Todorova (2021), "Monitoring of the New Identities (Salafi and Sunni) in Islam and the Role of Social Conflicts," pp. 4-9.

<sup>78</sup> Wiktorowicz (2000), "The Salafi Movement in Jordan," pp. 189-190.

<sup>79</sup> Sebastian, Hasyim and Arifianto (2021), *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia*, pp. 182-186.

<sup>80</sup> Wiktorowicz (ed.) (2004), *Islamic Activism*, pp. 15-16; Robinson, " Hamas as Social Movement," p. 116.

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## **Interview**

Abdullah and Syafi', Salafi figure, interviewed, March 1, 2021.

Abdullah, Salafi Figure, interviewed, March 2, 2020.

Amaq Ati, Manager of the Salafi Assunnah An-Nur Mosque, interviewed, Oktober 21, 2021.

Fakhruddin, Head of Ponpes Abu Hurairah Mataram, interviewed, November 9, 2020.

Nawawi, Leader of Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School, interviewed, Oktober 7, 2021.

Rusli, Manager of the Salafi Ummu Salamah Mosque, interviewed, Oktober 21, 2021.

Sofyan, Salafi Figure, interviewed, September 9, 2020.

Tuan Guru Manar, Salafi figure, interviewed, September 7, 2020.