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Mediating Islam in Post-Suharto Indonesia: performing Dakwah through popular TV shows

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Chapter 4

CONTESTED RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY
The Case of Salafi *Dakwah*

The rise and popularity of TV-*dakwah* has gained the attention of various Muslim organisations. Some organisations, such as NU, Muhammadiyah and MUI have expressed their concerns about the quality of *dakwah* programmes due to an apparent lack of Islamic education content. In some cases, they have offered their own preachers to the TV stations. Their concerns have been heard by some TV stations, which have begun to invite the preachers from these organisations for *dakwah* programmes on their TV channels. Some concerns of the quality of *dakwah* programmes also have emerged from several producers of TV programmes. They attempt to provide better *dakwah* programmes on their TV channels, which provide stronger Islamic education content. These concerns cause some producers to invite the preachers they follow in Islamic learning groups to deliver their sermon on TV stations. In this situation, TV stations compete to provide better *dakwah* programmes in terms and more authoritative voices of Islam from their preachers.

This chapter focuses on the Salafi *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV to see how religious authority is contested in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV channels and its consequences in the society. It includes Salafi *dakwah* formats, agendas, and networks. The various programmes of *dakwah* available on TV facilitates some preachers from Muslim organisations to participate in its broadcast to spread their principles and reach their audiences. As a result, disputes, debates and conflicts among Muslim organisations concerning the contents of *dakwah* programmes on TV is unavoidable. In what follows, I will discuss the Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia to give social and cultural backgrounds of Salafi movement in the country. It includes the way how Salafi ideology has arrived, influenced and spread throughout Indonesia. I will discuss its *dakwah* methods through educational institutions and media (radio and TV). I will elaborate the emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on the national commercial TV channels and the key role of TV producers. Afterwards, I will discuss the public debates caused by the controversies of Salafi *dakwah* programmes to see the competition of religious authority in the broadcast of *dakwah* on TV.

Salafi *dakwah* in Indonesia: a brief overview

Some extensive studies on Salafi movement in Indonesia have been conducted by several researchers (Jahroni 2015, Wahid 2014, and Hasan 2006).¹⁴⁰ The most extensive study on it has been conducted by Noorhaidi Hasan (2006) in his book *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia*. There are, however, only a few studies on Salafi *dakwah* movement in the media. One study is Sunarwoto's (2016) research on Salafi radio in Surakarta (also known as Solo). To avoid redundancy, I will provide a brief explanation on Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia to provide social and cultural backgrounds of the emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TV.

The term 'Salafi' is an Arabic word, which comes from the verb 'salafa' which means 'to precede' and 'salaf' means 'predecessor'. A Salafi is known as 'a person who follows the *manhaj* (path) of the *salaf*, the first three generations of the Muslim community who are perceived as exemplary Muslims' (Tasman and Kirana 2017: 262 and Wahid 2014: 18). These first three generations consist of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (*sahabah*), their followers (*tabi'un*), and the followers of their followers (*tabi'ut at-tabi'in*), who are considered by Muslims as the true voices of Islam. However, traditionalist, reformist, and even liberal Muslims also claim to be the followers of the pious predecessors. The claim to be Salafi is quite popular among Muslim scholars and activists, who claim themselves as Salafis exclusively, while denying its use by others. This is the reason why it is important to sort these claims into several groups to understand what is the difference between Salafism and Wahhabism and what type of Salafism is broadcast on TransTV and Trans7. Some Muslim scholars and activists are confused and question whether *dakwah* programmes on TransTV and Trans7 are Salafi or Wahhabi.

In respect of the emulation of the predecessor, Salafi scholars, in general in the Muslim world, have different opinions on the way they base their opinions to deal with their legal and theological matters. Consequently, they were divided into two groups. The first group, *ahl al-ra'y* (the people of

¹⁴⁰ See other examples in Sukidi Mulyadi. 2003. "Violence under the Banner of Religion: The Case of Laskar Jihad and Laskar Kristus." *Studia Islamika* 10 (2): 75 – 109, Muhammad Sirozi. 2005. "The Intellectual Roots of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia: Ja'far Umar Thalib of Laskar Jihad (Jihad Fighters) and His Educational Background." *The Muslim World* 95 (1): 81-120, and Saiful Umam, 2006. "Radical Muslims in Indonesia: The Case of Ja'far Umar Thalib and the Laskar Jihad." *Explorations in Southeast Asian Studies* 6 (1): 1-26.

considered opinion), emphasised ‘their own scholarly views as a source for establishing legal rulings’ (Wagemakers 2016: 3). This group answer the questions concerning Islam based on the verses of the Quran, the practices of early Muslims including the Prophet Muhammad, their opinion, and *ijmāʿ* or the consensus of Muslim scholars (Wagemakers 2016: 28–38). On the contrary, the second group emerged as the people of the prophetic tradition (*ahl al-hadith*). They believed that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the numerous prophetic traditions were more authoritative and authentic than just Muslim scholars’ opinion (*raʾy*) (Wagemakers 2016: 3). The debate between *ahl al-raʾy* and *ahl al-hadith* leads to:

A realization among the former group that the traditions (*ḥadīths*) ascribed to the prophet could not be ignored. Under the guidance of especially Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī (767–820), the eponymous “founder” of the Shāfiʿī school of Islamic law, a middle way was found between the different approaches that incorporated both the Qurʾān and the Sunna of the Prophet as major—though not the only—sources of a single legal system that developed into various schools (*madhāhib*, sing. *madhhab*). The result became the legal basis of what can be considered orthodox or mainstream Islam as adhered to by most Sunni Muslims.

In response, *ahl al-hadith* oppose the middle way and defended their approach to Islamic law by focusing entirely on the Quran and Hadiths. Their opposition results in their separation from the orthodox Sunni. Some of the exponents of this approach are Aḥmad b. Taymiyya (d. 1328) and his student Muḥammad b. Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350), who are major sources of inspiration for Salafism today. Afterwards, they inspire the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia established through an agreement between Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792) and Muḥammad b. Saʿūd (d. 1765).

In terms of religious matters, Salafism and Wahhabism have the same objectives to reinforce the doctrine of Islamic theology and purify Islam misleading practises influenced mostly by local traditions in a particular society. In this respect, Wahhabism can be considered to represent the first truly Salafism even though it takes until the 20th century before this turn into the worldwide trend (Wagemakers 2016: 5). In politics, this Salafism inspires political Islam such as Ikhwanul Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood)¹⁴¹ and

¹⁴¹ Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn (Muslim Brotherhood) is a transnational Sunni Islamist organisation, established in Egypt by Hassan Aal-Banna in 1928. Muslim Brotherhood combined political activism with Islamic charity work in their movements, which has

Hizbut Tahrir (Islamic Party of Liberation).¹⁴² It also has radical groups including al-Qaeda¹⁴³ and Jemaah Islamiyah or JI,¹⁴⁴ which conducted several terror attacks in several countries in the world.¹⁴⁵ These Salafi groups are transnational, which have branches worldwide (Fealy & Bubalo 2005: viii).¹⁴⁶ Salafi groups usually propose the reestablishment of Islamic caliphate, implementation of Islamic law, and purification of the creed of Islam (Abuza 2007: 78–79).

Salafi *dakwah* movement has reached Indonesia through two ways. First, it came to Indonesia through Muslim scholars who travelled to the archipelago before Indonesian independence in 1945. They taught Islam to the people and spread Islam throughout the archipelago.¹⁴⁷ The early presence of Salafism in Indonesia was evident in the *Padri* movement in West Sumatra

influenced Islamist movements around the world, including *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Indonesian Justice and Prosperity Party or PKS). For focused discussion about PKS, see Yon Machmudi. 2008. *Islamising Indonesia: The rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*. Canberra: ANU E Press, 133-163.

¹⁴² Founded in Jerusalem by Taqiuddin al-Nabhani in 1953 as Sunni Islam organization, Hizb al-Tahrir (Islamic Party of Liberation) is a transnational Islamic political organisation whose main aim is to establish Islamic caliphate and unify the Muslim community in the world. For more discussions about its establishment, see Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman. 2010. "The Transnational Network of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia." *South East Asia Research* 18 (4): 736-743.

¹⁴³ Al-Qaeda (Ar. Al-Qāida or the Foundation) is a militant Sunni Islamist organization led by Osama bin Laden. It was founded by him and other Arab volunteers who fought against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. It operates as a network consisting of Salafist Jihadists and Islamic extremists around the world to plan terrorist attacks on civilian and military forces. Of the attacks were the September 11 and Bali bombings in Indonesia. For detailed explanations about Al-Qaeda, see Karen J. Greenberg. 2005. *Al-Qaeda Now: Understanding today's terrorists*. Cambridge (etc.): Cambridge University Press.

¹⁴⁴ JI is part of al-Qaeda network operating in Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines. For its operations in Indonesia, see International Crisis Group. December 2002. "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates." <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/indonesia-backgrounder-how-jemaah-islamiyah-terrorist-network-operates>. Last accessed, November 30, 2016.

¹⁴⁵ In Indonesia, some terrorists are the followers of Al-Qaeda or JI. For example, Imam Samudra, who played an important role in carrying out the 2002 Bali Bombing is a follower of the two organisations. See Noorhaidi Hassan. 2007. "Imam Samudra's Justification for Bali Bombing." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30 (12): 1033-1056.

¹⁴⁶ For a detailed discussion of the transmission of ideas of Wahhabism to Indonesia in politics including the network of terrorist organisations, see Greg Fealy and Anthony Bubalo. 2005. *Joining the Caravan? The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia*, New South Wales: Lowy Institute for International Policy.

¹⁴⁷ For detailed discussion on the role of Muslim scholars from abroad to spread Islam in Indonesia, see Azyumardy Azra. 2002. *Islam Nusantara Jaringan Global dan Lokal* [Indonesian Islam in Global and Local Perspectives]. Bandung: Mizan.

in the early eighteenth century. This movement called for Muslims to purify their practices from local traditions, which resulted in civil war for years until the Dutch invasion in the region (Wahid 2014: 56). The leader of the *Padri* war, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, was a Salafi follower (Hadler 2008: 1002). In the early twentieth century, the same call for Muslims to purify their beliefs from local customs came from reformist movement including Muhammadiyah in 1912, Al-Irsyad in 1914, and Persatuan Islam (Persis) in 1923. In response to this, traditional Muslim leaders formed NU in 1926 to protect and maintain the local traditions. These organisations were discussed in Chapter 1.

Second, the contemporary Salafi *dakwah* movement in Indonesia was introduced by Indonesian students, who studied in Saudi Arabia and then return to their home country in the late 1980s. The oil boom in 1970s encouraged the Saudi government to export its Wahhabi Islam to Muslim countries to fight against the influence of its rivals: Nasser's Arab socialism and Shi'ism (Wahid 2014: 57). Through the Rabitat al-'Alam al-Islami (the Muslim World League/RAI) Saudi government provided large amount of money to Muslim countries for various purposes including scholarship, building mosques and supporting preachers (Wahid 2014: 57). It was within this scheme Saudi government offered opportunity to Indonesian students to study in Saudi universities. In Indonesia, these scholarships were connected through Saudi-linked institutions such as *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia* or *Dewan Dakwah* (Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation/DDII) and *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab* (Institute for Islamic and Arabic Sciences/LIPIA). As will be described later, the Salafi TV preachers were awarded scholarships by these institutions. These students have contributed significantly to spread of the branches of Salafism in Indonesia since the late nineteenth century (Fealy & Bubalo, 2005, p. viii). After their return to Indonesia, they disseminated their *dawkah* through Islamic learning groups, gatherings, *pesantren*, printings, and radio (Jamhari and Jahroni 2004: 129–160 and Hasan 2010: 310).

The emergence of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TransTV and Trans7 channels cannot be separated Rodja, a Salafi community TV station based in Bogor. Before becoming a TV station, Rodja was a Salafi radio, which was established in 2005 based on the broadcasting act number 32, 2003 in the frequency of 756 kHz (AM). Its establishment was initiated by Fawaz, Ihsan, and Badrussalam. Fawaz and Ihsan saw the opportunity to extend the *dakwah* led by Badrussalam through radio to reach broader audiences. His *dakwah*

which is conducted in mosque Al-Barkah has lasted since 1980s, in the early period of Saudi government's Wahhabi expansion. It was Badrussalam's father and family who continued it for generations including his brothers Agus Hasanuddin and Yazid Jawas. Abu Yahya Badrussalam or Badrussalam graduated from Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia with the scholarship from Saudi government. Before pursuing his study in Saudi Arabia, Badrussalam studied Islam in *pesantren* Al-Irsyad Tenganan, Semarang.¹⁴⁸ It is within *pesantren* Al-Irsyad's network that other Salafi *pesantrens* started to spread across the country (Wahid 2014: 62). Fawaz and Ihsan never studied in Saudi Arabia but they studied Islam in Salafi *pesantren* Imam Bukhori in Solo, where they learn to operate a community radio to disseminate the teachings of their *pesantren*. According to Fawaz and Ihsan, the idea to establish a community radio in their *pesantren* was inspired by the success of Laskar Jihad's community radio in Maluku before the conflict in Poso, Ambon between Muslims and Christians.¹⁴⁹ Laskar Jihad is an Islamist and anti-Christian Indonesian militia led by Jafar Umar Tholib during religious conflict in Maluku in 2000. They are considered radical Salafi group which was later banned by Indonesian government.¹⁵⁰ After finishing their education in Solo, Ihsan returned and joined Badrussalam in Bogor. Fawaz continued his study to LIPIA but did not graduate. He met Badrussalam for the first time in a Salafi learning circle (*dauroh*) in Bogor and later joined Badrussalam.¹⁵¹

As we can see here, Badrussalam, Fawaz, and Ihsan are connected through a Salafi *pesantren* network (Al-Irsyad and Imam Bukhori) and learning group. Salafi networks are known to strong in maintaining their ideology and agendas. This network contributes significantly to the distribution of Salafi preachers on commercial TV channels. Rodja radio maintains their networks with other Salafi radios and *pesantrens*. Some Salafi *pesantrens* have radio stations to spread their teaching to a broader audience. For example, Assunnah radio station belongs to *pesantren* Asunnah and radio Dhiya'ussunnah is owned by *pesantren* Dhiya'ussunnah in Cirebon. Rodja radio station is considered to be the leading Salafi radio station in the country. In addition to *Al-Irsyad* and *Imam Bukhori*, Salafi *pesantren* networks include

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.

¹⁵⁰ For comprehensive study on Laskar Jihad, see Noorhaidi Hasan. 2006. *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in the Post-New Order Indonesia*. Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Fawaz, Bogor, August 2, 2015.

Ma'had Al-Ghufron Gresik, East Java, *Ma'had Riyadhul Jannah* Bogor, *Ma'had Takhassus 'Ulum Syar'iyah* Bogor, and *Ma'had Ibnu Abbas As Salafy* Sragen (Wahid 2014).

As a Salafi radio station, Rodja focuses on the agendas of purification of beliefs from local customs, implementation of Islamic law and the establishment of Islamic caliphate. These agendas are delivered by Badrussalam to *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV. In terms of the concept of the implementation of Islamic law and establishment of Islamic caliphate, Rodja refers to that of *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (the Indonesian Party of Liberation/HTI), one of the radical Salafi organisations in Indonesia (Jamhari and Jahroni, 2004: 169–174). It is a branch of the transnational radical Muslim organisation, Hizbut Tahrir (HT) in Indonesia as discussed in Chapter 1.

HT was introduced to Indonesia by Abdul Rahman al-Baghdadi, a preacher of Jordanian-Lebanese descent in 1983. Since 2004, HTI has been led by Muhammad Ismail Yusanto. The political system of HTI proposes the unity of Muslim communities around the world under one system of an Islamic state, which reinforces Islamic law as a guidance to rule and live on earth.¹⁵² The outspoken agendas of Indonesian state ideology from HTI have strengthened public debates in the society, which led to its banning by the government in 19 July 2017. With the amendment of regulation of mass organisation, the government under Joko Widodo's administration considered HTI agendas against state ideology.¹⁵³

In operating its programmes, Rodja radio is financed with donations from its audiences as they do not accept advertisement revenue. There are two kinds of donors: regular and irregular. The audiences can register as a regular donor with the amount ranging from the lowest of fifty thousand of Indonesian rupiah to an unlimited amount, paid monthly. To be a regular donor Muslims can register via SMS to the available phone number in the

¹⁵² For detailed biography of HTI, see Ken Ward. 2009. "Non-violent Extremist? Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63 (2): 149-164.

¹⁵³ Ihsanuddin. May 2018. "Jalan Panjang Pemerintah Bubarkan FPI [Long Journey of the Government to Ban HTI Organisation]." <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/05/08/10463051/jalan-panjang-pemerintah-bubarkan-hti>. Last accessed, November 4, 2018. For the document of the regulation amendment of mass organization in Indonesia, see Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia. 2017. "Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 17 Tahun 2013 tentang Organisasi Kemasyarakatan [Amendment of Regulation Number 17, 2013 concerning Mass Organisation]." http://setkab.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Perpu_Nomor_2_Tahun_2017.pdf. Last accessed, November 4, 2018.

website of Rodja and after receiving confirmation message of registration they can transfer the amount to the account of *Yayasan Cahaya Sunnah* (Foundation of the Light of Prophetic Tradition) in Cibubur Bogor.¹⁵⁴

In 2009, Rodja radio launched their streaming Rodja TV after its success with the radio. In 2011, Rodja TV expanded their broadcasting through a parabolic satellite so that people could access them all over the country. The streaming of Rodja TV can be reached through their website at <http://rodja.tv/live>. The radio and TV usually broadcast the same programmes at the same time. Therefore, the audiences of Rodja could decide which media they want to follow. The available streaming in the websites of Rodja TV makes it reachable through smartphones and has enabled the formation of borderless audiences.

The success in expanding Salafi propagation of Islam from a radio community to a community TV channel seems to encourage their scholars to seek more frequent coverage on commercial television sphere. This expectation can be achieved either by upgrading Rodja TV to a commercial television or bringing the programmes of Rodja TV to commercial TV channels. Therefore, the broadcast of Salafi *dakwah* on commercial TV channels is part of the agendas to expand their *dakwah*.

The emergence of Salafi *dakwah* on TV

Trans7 is a private commercial television station based in Jakarta under the corporations of *Kelompok Kompas Gramedia* (Gramedia Kompas Group) and CT. Corporation. It was launched on December 15, 2006. Like other private television channels, the programmes on Trans7 consist of news, entertainment, talk shows and others. The term ‘mainstreaming’ here means the efforts of the Salafi leaders to render Rodja TV from a community television channel into a programme in private television. Based on the regulation of KPI, television broadcasting can be distinguished into three categories: public, private and community-based. Public and private television stations have larger coverage than community-based stations. Public television is owned by the government of Indonesia, while private channels are owned by an individual or a conglomerate. Community

¹⁵⁴ For more details of Rodja media funding, see Radio Rodja. “Program Muhsinin Tetap Radio Rodja dan RodjaTV [Muhsinin Program of Rodja Radio and RodjaTV].” <http://www.radiorodja.com/infaq-sedekah-dan-zakat-online-infaq-online-sedekah-online-dan-zakat-online-via-radio-rodja-dan-rodjatv/program-muhsinin-tetap-radio-rodja-dan-rodjatv/>. Last accessed, April 13, 2017.

television stations usually belong to a particular organisation and their coverage is limited to a particular area and accessible to people who have a parabolic satellite. There is no control from the government after the liberation of press regulation by Habibie in 1999. Instead, there is an independent institution, KPI, which watch television and radio industries as discussed in Chapter 1.¹⁵⁵

There are three kinds of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7: (1) *Rahasia Sunnah* (the Secret of Prophetic Traditions), (2) *Khazanah Islam* (the Treasury of Islam) and *Khalifah* (the Caliph). *Dakwah* programmes in Trans7 differ from other private television stations in terms of setup, contents and preachers. If other programmes of propagation of Islam on other private televisions arrange a stage on which the preachers and a presenter sit facing the cameras, all *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 begin with a short documentary movie concerning the topic the preacher will discuss after the introductory movie has finished. During the screening of the short documentary a man or woman explains what is shown and occasionally quotes several verses of the Quran or Hadiths. This type of *dakwah* has appeared since 2010 in Trans7.

Another distinction concerns the contents. While *dakwah* programmes in other channels tend to avoid controversial topics, the programmes in Trans7 select such topics. For example, in the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 the preachers discuss the prohibition of grave visiting and some kinds of prayers. These are debatable issues in Islamic jurisprudence. Unlike other channels, which usually choose famous television preachers such as Mamah Dedeh, Yusuf Mansur, and others as discussed in the previous chapter, *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 choose Salafi preachers of Rodja TV, who are not necessarily well-known. Thus, it is important to know how they can enter the domain of television preachers. Who are the agents and what the roles do they play to mainstream Salafism in *dakwah* programmes in a private television station?

During my fieldwork in Jakarta in 2014, I found that the deputy chief producer of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 is a Salafi. I was able to meet him through a friend who works for Google in Indonesia. When I met him for the first time in a small restaurant near Trans7 studio, he appeared friendly, had a long beard and a dark spot on his forehead. He stated that he began to be a

¹⁵⁵ For more information about broadcasting regulation in Indonesia, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. "Regulasi [Regulation]." <https://www.kpi.go.id/download/regulasi/>. Last accessed, December 22, 2016.

Salafi follower after he watched and listened to the *dakwah* programmes on Rodja TV in 2009. His motivation became stronger as he planned to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. He argued that as a journalist, he had to be critical, liberal and open-minded. Before going to Mecca, he tried to improve his religiosity. He attended several gatherings of Islamic learning groups, yet he could not find the teachings of Islam that he was seeking until he watched and listened to Rodja TV. This bearded man had continued watching and listening to this TV channel for two years and after that attended its learning communities. Through his routine attendance in the gatherings, he has developed good relations with Rodja TV preachers. After he returned from pilgrimage, in the beginning of 2010, he began his initiation to invite the preachers, who are affiliated with Rodja TV like Syafiq Reza Basalamah, Badrussalam, and Budi Ashari to deliver their sermons on Trans7. He also changed the previous programmes of propagation of Islam on Trans7 to the above-mentioned programmes.¹⁵⁶

There are other Salafis at Trans7 apart from this deputy chief, Ruwandanu. He is the entertainment producer of Trans7, who is also a Salafi. His motivation to be a Salafi follower began after he met the deputy producer, Wiryoutomo and the preacher of Rodja TV, Badrussalam. He followed their suggestion to watch and listen to Rodja TV and then decided to be a Salafi. Afterwards, he requested the management of Trans7 to move him to the *dakwah* division. During the interview, he explained that:

I get guidance in Mecca that I have to produce programmes not only for the sake of money, but also for hereafter. I was successful to produce entertainment programmes in terms of audiences and ratings. Islamic programmes are not bad in ratings. The enthusiasm of audiences grows significantly. It just needs more creativity and passion. So, I move to Islamic programmes not because of my boss but I propose myself to produce these programmes to benefit for both money and hereafter.¹⁵⁷

The producer of the division of entertainment programme of Trans7 considers the success in producing programmes, which give benefits economically and religiously a dream of every Muslim to be successful on earth and in the hereafter. Muslims believe that the measurement of success on earth is to earn a lot of money and that that in hereafter by improving piety. Beside his achievement as the producer of entertainment programmes, the producer of

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Wiryoutomo, Jakarta, September 12, 2014.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

the division of entertainment programme of Trans7 asserts that the vice chief producer of programmes on Trans7 played an important role in the approval of his proposal to move to *dakwah* programmes by the management.¹⁵⁸ Afterwards, he joins the vice chief producer's team in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.

Rodja TV has played a pivotal role in mainstreaming Salafism on commercial television stations, especially on Trans7. Its central role can be viewed in two elements of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7. Firstly, Trans7 has become the only channel, in which all the preachers of its programmes of propagation of Islam are Salafis from the Rodja TV network. The preachers in Trans7 like Badrussalam, Budi Ashari, and Syafiq Reza Basalamah are preachers from Rodja TV. Badrussalam is one of the founders of Rodja media and the others joined later. Some of them, such as Badrussalam and Ashari, are involved in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 as supervisors. This privilege allows them to invite members of their network to deliver sermons in Trans7 and even on other private television channels. Like on Rodja TV, Badrussalam states that he prioritises the alumni of Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia because of their Islamic knowledge and experience to live in a place where Islam was born. Badrussalam, Ashari and Syafiq Reza Basalamah are graduates from Islamic University of Medina. This makes them more legitimate and authoritative for particular audience than the preachers who never study Islam in the Middle East.¹⁵⁹

Besides, the producers of the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 find the role of Rodja TV preachers in Trans7 helpful because the materials have already been available from that of Rodja TV. The producers just need a little adaptation and improvement to broadcast them in Trans7. Moreover, the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 - like Khazanah and Khalifah - are occasionally broadcast live from some Islamic historical sites in the Middle East such as during the fasting month of Ramadan when they need the experiences of those preachers during their stay in the Middle East.¹⁶⁰

Secondly, most of the content of the *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 ranging from topic selection to short documentary movies are derived from Rodja TV because the preachers are from Rodja networking. The selected topics are based on the negotiation and discussion between the preachers and producers. The producers usually agree with the suggestion of the preachers

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

about a particular topic. Ruwandanu states that the producers almost never reject the offer of topics from the preachers because they have more Islamic knowledge and experience about of propagation of Islam. On the other hand, he also asserts that it makes the producers' work much easier to the extent that they have to cast for five minutes only because documentary movies and the topics have been prepared by the preachers. Rodja TV has provided all the materials for the casting and the producers follow the preachers' suggestion and adapt some screens and narration for their programmes of propagation of Islam.¹⁶¹

Given the fact that Trans7 is a private commercial television station under the umbrella of corporations owned by the Jacob Utomo (d. 2020), who was a Catholic, and is directed by Chairul Tanjung, who is not Salafi, the presence of Salafi propagation on Trans7 raises a question why the owner and director of Trans7 allow the programmes of Salafi propagation through their television channel? I found that the reason behind is for the sake of commercial purposes. As discussed in the previous chapter, programmes of propagation of Islam have been on the rise since the beginning of the twentieth first century in Indonesia. The emergence of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 provides new models of commodification of programmes of propagation of Islam, which differ those of other television channels as mentioned above. Ruwandanu explains that the management of Trans7 usually approves the proposed programmes as long as they have a clear market.¹⁶² The Salafi-oriented propagation of Islam on Rodja TV has existed since 2009, which was expanded from radio. It means that they have regular audiences and their followers are increasing significantly. Beside listening and watching Salafi media, some Muslims in urban areas around Jakarta are attending Salafi learning communities in universities, mosques, and other places. This fact is an opportunity of Trans7 to bring Salafi propagation of Islam to their programmes for audiences and benefit from this trend.

The agendas of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on TV

As mentioned above, Salafi propagation of Islam has three main agendas: (1) purification of the creed of Islam, (2) the implementation of Sharia by law, and (3) the establishment of an Islamic state. Their agenda has become the central topic in the *dakwah* programmes Trans7. In several episodes, the

¹⁶¹ Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

¹⁶² Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

programmes of Salafi propagation display and criticise many kinds of practices and customs that are practised by many Muslims in Indonesia to correct them in order to be in line with Salafi teachings. Likewise, in the cases of Islamic law and establishment of caliphate, they discuss them in one episode because it is impossible to implement the former without the later. According to Salafi preachers, Islamic law can be implemented fully all over the archipelago if Islamic state is established.

An episode of *Khazanah* entitled *Kupas Tuntas Syirik Besar* (Total Uncovering of the Unforgiveable Sin)¹⁶³ displays several local practices and customs that *Khazanah* categorises as being a grave sin. For example, the programme states that making pilgrimages to tombs of saints is forbidden and categorised being sinful. Many Muslims in Indonesia, especially on Java, often visit the graves saints of Islam in Indonesia and other graves to recite several verses of the Quran and prayers around these graves (see Figure 4.1.). They visit the graves throughout the year, while for families usually conducted in Idul Fitri (the Festive Day of Islam after the fasting month Ramadan). Muslims, who visit the graves, believe that God will answer their prayers because they pray at the tombs of the saints, or at the graves of the trusted people or friends of God, who are well known for their historical role in the spread of Islam in Indonesia. Salafis have considered all the practices (the visit to the graves and the recitation of prayers on them) misleading and categorised them as sinful because all the practices were not practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. They believe that the spirit of the saints can give them blessing and power to fulfil their requests, while according to Salafi teaching, only God, who can provide blessing and fulfil Muslims' requests.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ *Shirk* means to associate things with God or believe that there are other divine things than God including animism. Muslims are forbidden to believe that there are others as powerful as or more powerful than God.

¹⁶⁴ Recorded and uploaded to Youtube in *Khazanah Islam* Trans7. January 2014. "Kupas Tuntas Syirik Besar [Uncover Big Shirk]." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZLHoaJ8OPI>. Last accessed, November 13, 2015.



Figure 4.1.: Programme of propagation of Islam, *Khazanah*, displays a number of Muslims praying around the graves in their short documentary movie about big sin.
Source: the author

Another example of a great sin is the ritual of *Malam Satu Suro* (the Eve of Suro); named after a month in the Javanese calendar. It is a celebration of the New Year on Javanese Calendar held by the Palace of Surakarta every year. The month of Suro always corresponds to, or is equated with Muharram, the first month on Islamic calendar. This ritual consists of several processions. The one shown in *Khazanah* of Trans7 is *Kirab Mubeng Beteng* (the Procession surrounding the Palace Walls). This procession includes a long line of the heirlooms of the Palace and its members witnessed by local villagers and domestic and international tourists. Other processions of *Malam Satu Suro* are *Tahlilan*, ‘recitation of several verses from the Holy Qur’an [...] and *selawatan al-berzanzi* (recitation of the stories of the prophet Muhammad), traditional Javanese chanting of praises to Allah and Prophet Muhammad, and *Qasidahan*,¹⁶⁵ traditional religious singing accompanied by hand drums, were performed during the heart of the ceremonies’ (Daniels 2009: 22).¹⁶⁶ Salafi scholars categorise this ritual misleading for several reasons. One of those reasons is that Muslims who join and support it believe that the heirlooms of the Palace of Surakarta have power equal to God. In the display, *Khazanah* quoted several verses from the Quran describing the

¹⁶⁵ See the explanation about Qasidah in chapter 2.

¹⁶⁶ For detailed discussion on the rituals of *Malam Satu Suro* in the island of Java, see Daniels Timothy. 2009. *Islamic Spectrum*. Surrey: Ashgate, pp. 20-30.

prohibition of believing in divine powers other than God. For example, in Q.S.10: 106-107:

And do not invoke besides Allah that which neither benefits you nor harms you, for if you did, then indeed you would be of the wrongdoers. And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him, and if He intends for you good, then there is no repeller of His bounty. He causes it to reach whom He wills of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.¹⁶⁷

In respect of the quotations of the Quran and Hadith, Badrussalam stipulates that quotation of the Quranic verses and Hadiths is very important to legitimise their opinion about the rituals. He continues his argument that what makes Salafi more authentic than other schools in Islam is that it always refers to the Quran and Hadiths to determine whether or not particular practices, rituals and customs are lawful. The celebration of *Malam Satu Suro* is not lawful in Islam according to them. Some scholars, who are proponents of this celebration, employ their own reasoning beyond what is stated in the Quran and Hadiths such as Qiyas.¹⁶⁸ Qiyas, which constitutes ‘reasoning by analogy’,¹⁶⁹ is one of the methods in formulating Islamic law in Sunni Islam tradition.

Badrussalam is asked how this episode triggers a reaction from the proponents of the above-mentioned practices. He answers that he has predicted the consequences of the broadcast of *Khazanah* episode of a grave sin and that ‘the truth’ must be revealed even though it is bitter to accept and it is an obligation for Muslims to advise their fellow Muslims when they do something incorrect. He is not afraid of the reaction because he has strong reasons to deliver it for the sake of propagation of Islam.¹⁷⁰ His statement reflects how he has considered and anticipated the consequences of the broadcast, and his strong intention to spread Salafism to the national audiences.

Other episodes of Salafi purification agenda are about Muslim groups which *Khazanah* consider to be misleading. The topic of misleading Muslim

¹⁶⁷ The English translation of the verses of the Quran quoted in this chapter 1 from “The Qur’ān: English Meanings” Jeddah: Saheeh International Professional and typesetting.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.

¹⁶⁹ For more details, see Bernand, M. and Troupeau, G., “Kiyās”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0527. Last Accessed, March 14, 2021.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Badrussalam, Jakarta, May 12, 2014.

groups in *Khazanah* is divided into several episodes. The first one introduces the history of the emergence of heretical groups after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, beginning with the declaration of false prophets and later the emergence of heretical Muslim groups, and how the Islamic caliphates dealt with them. The false prophets were defeated by the caliphates and forced to plead for forgiveness to God.

Afterwards, the second episode of *Khazanah* focuses on Ahmadiyah. Ahmadiyah is an Islamic religious movement, established by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India in the late nineteenth century. For some of his followers, he is considered as a new prophet after the Prophet Muhammad. The Ahmadiyah movement came to Indonesia in the beginning of 20th century through the invitation of Indonesian students, who studied Islam in Lahore and Qadian, India. In this episode, the preacher explains how Ahmadiyah has been banned in several Muslim majority countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh. Ahmadiyah is considered to be misleading based on its teachings especially concerning the belief of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet.¹⁷¹ The Ahmadiyah has been banned in Indonesia through a fatwa of MUI in 2005. As explained above, MUI is a semi-official institution, established on July 26, 1975. Its establishment was initiated by president Suharto. He invited some prominent Muslim scholars to form a council whose main duty at that time was to provide advice for the government regarding religious matters. This council is under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Most of the members of the council are affiliated to Muslim organisations including NU, Muhammadiyah, and some Salafi organisations in the country.¹⁷² The fatwa of MUI was justified by *Surat Keputusan Bersama* (the Joint Ministerial Decree) in 2008,¹⁷³ signed by the minister of religious affairs, home affairs, and the attorney general.¹⁷⁴

In the third episode of heretical Muslim groups, the preacher of *Khazanah* discusses about Shia, an Islamic school, which is associated with

¹⁷¹ For more detailed discussions on Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, see Ahmad Najib Burhani. 2013. *When Muslims are not Muslims: The Ahmadiyah Community and the Discourse on Heresy in Indonesia*. Michigan: ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Publisher.

¹⁷² For detailed discussion on MUI, see Mochammad Nor Ichwan. 2005. "Ulama, State and Politics: Majelis Ulama Indonesia after Suharto." *Islamic Law and Society* 12 (1): 45-72.

¹⁷³ Ahmadiyah. "SKB 3 Menteri tentang Ahmadiyah [Joint Decree of 3 Ministers about Ahmadiyah]." <http://Ahmadiyah.org/skb-3-menteri-tentang-Ahmadiyah/>. Last accessed, December 7, 2016.

¹⁷⁴ For detailed discussion of the banning of Ahmadiyah, see Syahril Siddik. 2011. *Cursing the Sacred: recent debates on blasphemy in Indonesia*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Leiden: Leiden University, pp. 39-57.

one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Ali bin Abu Tholib. In contrast to Shia followers, the adherents of Sunni Islam believe that Muhammad did not appoint any successor before his death. Similar to the Ahmadiyah, Shia came to Indonesia before Indonesian independence and has long lived together with other Muslim organisations in Indonesia. Their presence has only become problematised after 1998. The preacher of this episode further describes Shia rituals, which are considered heretical. These include the celebration of Idul Ghadir,¹⁷⁵ which is one of the Shia feast days, celebrated every year in 18th of Dzulhijah in the Islamic calendar. It is believed that in this day the Prophet Muhammad appointed Ali bin Abu Tholib as his successor to be a caliphate and leader of Muslims. This appointment was conducted in the last pilgrimage of the Prophet Muhammad before he died.

On the contrary, according to Sunni schools, there are only two feast days in Islam, *Idul Fitri* and *Idul Adha*. Bachtiar Nasir, a preacher in this episode states that there is no other feast day other than the two feast days. He argues that Idul Ghadir can threaten the unity of Muslims in Indonesia because it is celebrated by a misguided school. In this episode, the preacher states that heretical sects are obviously categorised as ‘terrorist’, to be a serious threat, which requires an immediate action of the government, in case it destroys the unity of the country. Unlike their response to demand of banning of Ahmadiyah, the central board of MUI in Jakarta seems reluctant to issue a fatwa banning Shia in Indonesia, even though its headquarters in Surabaya has issued it.¹⁷⁶

The last episode of *Khazanah* discusses the heresy of *Jaringan Islam Liberal* or JIL (the Liberal Islam Network). JIL is a forum of discussion and dissemination of the concept of Islamic liberalism in Indonesia. The first discussion, considered as the date of its establishment, was held on February 21, 2001 by one of its leaders, Luthfi Assyaukanie. Most members of JIL have western education background and some of them have studied Islam in the Middle East. The key reason for its establishment was to counter the

¹⁷⁵ For a detailed history and development of Shia in Indonesia, see Zulkifli. 2009. *The Struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Leiden: Leiden University and Moh Hasyim. 2012. “Shia: its history and development in Indonesia.” *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion* 19 (2): 147-158.

¹⁷⁶ See Erik Purnama Putra. November 2015. “Fatwa MUI Jatim: Ajaran Syiah Sesat [East Java MUI Fatwa: Shia Teachings are Misleading].” <http://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/15/11/29/nykugi334-fatwa-mui-jatim-ajaran-syiah-sesat>. Last accessed, December 7, 2016.

growth of Islamic radical and militant groups in Indonesia.¹⁷⁷ In relation to JIL, the preacher of *Khazanah* asserts that JIL is misleading because they disseminate the ideas of pluralism, liberalism, and secularism. These ideas have been banned by MUI through their fatwa in 2005. As the fatwa on Ahmadiyah, MUI explain that the spread of the ideas of pluralism, liberalism, and secularism had created public confusion and therefore MUI considered that it was important to issue a religious opinion about it. This fatwa was issued by the same committee in the same year as that for Ahmadiyah. Referring to the fatwa of MUI, *Khazanah* explains that pluralism teaches people that all religions are similar to one another and all the adherents of religions in the world will live side by side in heaven and liberalism is dangerous because it prioritises free thinking in interpreting the text of the Quran and select the teachings of Islam only for their benefits. In respect of secularism, *Khazanah* explains that it attempts to separate religion from human matters on earth that human matters on earth nothing to do with religion, but are to decide based on consensus amongst people.¹⁷⁸

In these episodes of heretical Muslim groups, the preachers criticise the government, who do not ban Shia and JIL, as they have done with banning Ahmadiyah. The followers of the above-mentioned heretical Muslim groups still exist in Indonesia but they have faced difficulties to perform their beliefs. The followers of Ahmadiyah in several districts in Indonesia left their homes because they reject to follow the mainstream beliefs of Sunni Islam in Indonesia. The adherents of Shia are forbidden by the majority of Muslims to perform their rituals publicly, while JIL is frequently subject to threats and violence.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ See Ahmad Ali Nurdin. 2010. "Islam and State: A Study on the Liberal Islamic Network in Indonesia, 1999-2004." In *Islam in Southeast Asia*, eds. Joseph Chinyong Liow and Nadirsyah Hosen, 191-210. London (etc.): Routledge.

¹⁷⁸ For original document of fatwa, see Majelis Ulama Indonesia. May 2014. "Fatwa tentang Pluralisme, Liberalisme, dan Sekularisme dalam Agama [Fatwa on Pluralism, Liberalism, and Secularism]." <http://mui.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/12.-Pluralisme-Liberalisme-dan-Sekularisme-Agama.pdf>. Last accessed, December 7, 2016. For a detailed discussion on it, see Piers Gillespie. 2007. "Current Issues in Indonesian Islam: Analysing the 2005 Council of Indonesian Ulama Fatwa no. 7 opposing pluralism, liberalism and secularism" *The Journal of Islamic Studies* 18 (2): 202-240.

¹⁷⁹ For information about this bomb, see Feri Fernandes. 2016. "Tak Merasa Disingkirkan, Begini Perjalanan Karier AKBP Dodi Usai Bom Buku [Do not Think Neglected, this is How Career Journey of AKBP Dodi after Book Bombing]." <http://news.detik.com/berita/3137699/tak-merasa-disingkirkan-begini-perjalanan-karier-akbp-dodi-usai-bom-buku>. Last accessed, December 21, 2016.

Another agenda of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 is to disseminate the idea of the re-establishment of Islamic caliphate and the implementation of Islamic law. According to Salafi preachers on Trans7, the former will never be realised without the latter because the enforcement of Islamic law for the whole Muslims requires the establishment of a new Islamic caliphate, which govern all Muslims' affairs in the world. In *Khazanah* episode, *Wadah Politik Umat Muslim* (The Organisation of Muslim Politics), it is obviously stated that the concept of Islamic caliphate and enforcement of Islamic law they propose refers to that of HTI. In this episode, the preacher states that:

HTI is an Islamic organisation with huge supporters, which aims to establish the system of Islamic caliphate. In this system, the aspirations of Muslim community all over the world to be under one government without territorial borders [will be realised], [it is] a country led by a system of Islamic caliphate, which re-enforce Islamic law system as a guidance to rule and live in the world. The implementation of Islamic law based on the principles of HTI will bring Muslims in Indonesia and all over the world to prosperity and welfare without violating non-Muslims' rights. The big mission of HTI is to re-establish Islamic caliphate that is exemplified by the prophet Muhammad.¹⁸⁰

The statement of the preacher in the episode of *Khazanah* explicitly invites Muslims in Indonesia to support HTI to establish an Islamic caliphate. On the other hand, it implies a campaign to fight against democracy, which is regarded as causing problems and disadvantaging Muslims throughout the world. They blame leaders, who were elected through a democratic system, for economic crisis, moral degradation, and natural disasters. In this episode, they offer the re-establishment of Islamic caliphate as a problem solving as they argue that this caliphate is supported by God and employs a system based on the Prophet's guidance. In response to the implementation of Sharia bylaws in several provinces and districts in Indonesia,¹⁸¹ the preachers argue that it is not what is ordered in the Quran, in which according to their interpretation Islamic law must be enforced for the whole Muslim community

¹⁸⁰ Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khazanah* about Muslim Political Organisation on May 11, 2015.

¹⁸¹ For more discussions on Shari'a by-laws, see Nicolas Parsons and Marcus Mietzner. 2009. "Sharia By-laws in Indonesia: A Legal and Political Analysis." *Australian Journal of Asian Law* 11 (2): 190-217.

in the world, not limited to several provinces or country. This is what is taught by the prophet Muhammad concerning a government system.

The idea and concept of Islamic caliphate in the programme *Khazanah* are reinforced by that of *Khalifah*. The topics of *Khalifah* are dominated by the success stories of Muslim caliphs and soldiers in the battles against infidels in the early years of Islam. For example, in its episode about Khalid bin Walid, a military commander in the service of the prophet Muhammad, the preacher told Khalid's success to lead Muslim armies in several wars under the first Muslim caliph of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. In this episode, the preacher explains the bravery of Khalid in fighting the enemies of Islam including those, who do not obey the regulation like paying taxes under the Islamic caliphate, the infidels, who attempt to conquer several Islamic territories, and several Muslims, who declared themselves as new prophets after the Prophet Muhammad. Further, the preacher stipulates that Israel and the U.S. are among the enemies of Islam because they conquer Palestine, one of the Islamic territories but Muslims cannot fight because of the absence of an Islamic caliphate.¹⁸² Another example that strengthens the dissemination of Islamic caliphate is the episode of the Umayyad caliphate. In this episode, the preacher preaches a sermon on the background of the fall of the Umayyad caliphate for the audiences to take lessons that the segregation of Muslim community at the time resulted in the fall of the caliphate.¹⁸³

The case of Salafi *dakwah* in Trans7 indicates the successful effort of Salafi leaders to mainstream the ideas of Salafism from a community to commercial television. The agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam, which have been a subordinate discourse of programmes of propagation of Islam through private television channels, now have appeared on a mainstream one. Their religious agenda of purification and the political aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate and law is central in Islamic discourses on television in Indonesia today.

Contested religious authority in *dakwah* broadcasting

The emergence of Salafi propagation of Islam on Trans7 and others has triggered several debates on some issues in the society. The leaders and members of NU play a key role in leading this debate as their reactions to the criticism of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 because Salafi agendas in the

¹⁸² Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khalifah* Trans7 on June 14, 2014.

¹⁸³ Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Khalifah* Trans7 on June 10, 2015.

programmes in Trans7 have challenged those of NU, the largest Muslim organisation, in the country. NU has three main agendas of *dakwah*: reconciliation with Indonesian tradition, accepting and guarding the national ideology, and adopting local culture in Islamic law (Burhani 2013: 27–34). All the agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 oppose those of NU. As a result, a competition between the two opposing parties to convince Indonesian Muslims is unavoidable.

Yahya Zainul Ma'arif, better known as Buya Yahya, a NU preacher reacted against the episode of *Khazanah* about *Kupas Tuntas Shirk Besar*. In the programme of propagation of Islam, *Siraman Qalbu* (Drenching of Heart) on MNCTV, he criticises *Khazanah* that the programme did not respect the diversity of opinions in Islamic jurisprudence because they claimed several practices of Muslims in Indonesia misleading. He further argues that there is a group of Muslims who are always correcting the practices of their fellow Muslims. Although he does not mention directly who is that group, what he means is the Salafis either in television or in the society.¹⁸⁴

Moreover, the same episode of *Khazanah* was reported by several Muslim scholars from NU in Jakarta and Surabaya to KPI. In this episode, the reporters consider *Khazanah* to provoke hatred towards a particular school of Islamic jurisprudence and create intolerance towards diverse practices within Muslim communities because they categorise the practices of NU such as recitation of *Tahlilan*, visit of graves, and so forth as misleading. In response to this report, KPI held mediation on April 17, 2013 in the central office in Jakarta. KPI invited the reporters, who consisted of Habib Musthafa al Jufri, Habib Fachri Jamalullail, K.H. Thabary Syadzily, the chair of the central board of *Lembaga Dakwah NU* or LDNU (*Dakwah Council of NU*) H. Nuril Huda, MUI, and the producers of *Khazanah* to meet and discuss the issues (see Figure 4.2.).¹⁸⁵

In this mediation, Idy Muzayyad from KPI suggested that *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 should have avoided sensitive and controversial topics that might stimulate public polemic in the society as mentioned in the article 7 of the regulation of *Standar Program Siaran* or SPS (the Standard

¹⁸⁴ Quoted from the recoding of the episode of *Siraman Qalbu* MNCTV on October 1, 2015.

¹⁸⁵ For the report of the mediation, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. April 2013. "Trans7 Penuhi Undangan Dialog KPI Pusat Soal Tayangan Khazanah [Trans7 Fulfil KPI's Invitation for Dialogue regarding Khazanah Broadcasting]." <https://www.kpi.go.id/index.php/lihat-terkini/38-dalam-negeri/31294-trans-7-penuhi-undangan-dialog-kpi-pusat-soal-tayangan-khazanah>. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.

Programme of Broadcasting). After this mediation, he further states that KPI will monitor *dakwah* programmes in Trans7 closely to ensure that they obeyed the regulation. If they do not, KPI will conduct a meeting to decide a punishment, which can be an advice or ban for the programmes. KPI and MUI at the time recommended that *Khazanah* should involve a representative from MUI to supervise the production of the programmes. In response to this recommendation, the production of *Khazanah* promised to involve Muslim scholars in their production. In response, the chief of the Redaction of Trans7, Titin Rosmasari accepted the suggestion of KPI and admitted that the contents of *Khazanah* have sensitive and controversial issues, which might offend particular Muslim organisations. She states that Trans7 will select topics for the contents of their programmes of propagation of Islam more carefully.¹⁸⁶ Although having promised to involve Muslim scholars from MUI in the mediation, the producers of *Khazanah* have not accomplished the promise. Ruwandanu argues that Trans7 have a number of Muslim scholars, involving in the production, and therefore they do not need to bring other Muslim scholars to supervise *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.¹⁸⁷



Figure 4.2.: Mediation between members of NU and the producers of *Khazanah* Trans7 held by the KPI on April 17, 2013 at the Central Office of KPI in Jakarta.
Source: www.kpi.go.id.

¹⁸⁶ Zaky Al Hamzah. April 2013. "KPI Peringatkan 'Khazanah Trans7' [KPI Warn Khazanah Trans7]." <http://www.republika.co.id/berita/koran/news-update/13/04/18/mleuqe-kpi-peringatan-khazanah-trans7>. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Ruwandanu, Jakarta, April 5, 2016.

Another episode of *Khazanah* on Trans7, which had triggered a protest, was the program about Shi'ism and the Shiite in Indonesia. A Syiah Organisation, *Ikatan Jemaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia* or IJABI (the Association of the Followers of Ali bin Abu Tholib and his Family), reported the episode of *Khazanah* about Shia to KPI and demanded them to conduct mediation. KPI mediated between Trans7 and IJABI and invited MUI on November 7, 2013 in the central office of KPI. The secretary general of IJABI, Adi Bunardi, complained that the episode of *Khazanah* about Shia was unfair as it provided a one-sided and prejudicial opinion. Besides, it was full of inaccuracies and false stories, which might provoke hostility towards Shiites in Indonesia. After listening to the explanation of Titin Rosmasari, the chief editor of Trans7, the secretary general of IJABI urged Trans7 to apologise and arrange similar episode special for IJABI as clarification for the previous one. Trans7 responded that they needed a month to consider the requests. Adi Burnadi stated that if after a month he did not have the answer of the promises of Trans7, he would have brought the case to the court. On January 17, 2014, the producers of *Khazanah* on Trans7 broadcasted an episode entitled *Mencintai Rasulullah* (the Loving the Prophet of God) to fulfil the request of IJABI. In this episode, they invited the prominent scholar of Syiah, Jalaluddin Rahmat. He delivered a sermon about the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad and explains the birth of Syiah and its position to the Prophet.¹⁸⁸

For Salafi followers, following the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslim men and women living in his period is very important including physical appearance. Identifying themselves as Salafis, men grow long beards, wear headscarves, turbans, and trousers right to their ankles, and women wear a form of enveloping black veil in public places (Hasan 2010: 301). The conflict concerning one of these physical appearances begins when one of the Salafi programmes of propagation of Islam stated that the Prophet Muhammad suggested Muslim men to grow their beards. Besides showing their masculinity, it is part of the Prophet Muhammad's tradition because the Prophet also had grown his beards during his lifetime. It is the way that Muslims perform their religion completely as written in the Quran that Muslim must convert to Islam perfectly.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ For the report of this mediation, see Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia. January 2014. "KPI Mediasi Ijabi dengan Trans7 soal Khazanah [KPI Mediate the Meeting between Ijabi and Trans7 about Khazanah programme]". <http://kpi.go.id/index.php/lihat-terkini/38-dalam-negeri/31689-kpi-mediasi-ijabi-dengan-trans7-soal-khazanah>. Last accessed, December 8, 2016.

¹⁸⁹ Mozaik Islam, *Serba-serbi menumbuhkan Jenggot* (various motivations to grow beard)

Some Muslims found this statement about growing beard is a sign of performing Islam perfectly is unreasonable since it is, in fact, a suggestion, not an obligation for Muslims from the prophet. The chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siradj, responded in one of his sermons that Muslims do not have to grow their beards because it is part of Arab culture. He mentioned several Indonesian Muslims scholars like Abdurrahman Wahid (d. 2009) and Nurcholis Madjid (d. 2005) as examples to support his statement that they did not grow their beards. He further asserts that what is suggested by Salafi preachers is part of Arabisation, not Islamisation and therefore Muslims in Indonesia must have their own characteristics different from those in the Arab world.¹⁹⁰ Khalid Basalamah, One of the Salafi preachers on Trans7, reacts to Said's statement that it is not about Arabisation. Instead, he further confirms that it is about following the prophet tradition; refusing to grow beard means refusing the Prophet.¹⁹¹ In fact, it is clear in Islamic jurisprudence that suggestion or recommendation of the prophet Muhammad provides options for Muslims to obey or leave it. Those who obey it will be rewarded and those who do not are not sinful.

All the media captured this debate and exacerbated the reaction of Muslims resulting in some disagreement between different Muslim communities. Several talk shows on television invited actors, who have followed Salafism and grown their beards to deliver their opinions and feelings to be a loyal Salafi follower. Progressive Muslim scholars were also invited to discuss different interpretation of the related prophetic traditions.

The availability of Internet has enabled the debate regarding beards was discussed in Islamic learning groups, community radio and television, and mosques. This turned into a national discourse. Both parties attempt to convince Muslim congregation of their interpretations to occupy public discourses. In addition to these parties, there are several television preachers trying to redeem the conflict by explaining that the status of the prophetic traditions is merely suggestion. It is different from obligation. A suggestion can be neglected and those doing so are not sinful. Therefore, some Muslims may disagree to grow beards, while those, who decide to grow them, are rewarded by God.¹⁹²

episode, May 17, 2016.

¹⁹⁰ From a recorded video of the programme of *Satu Jam Lebih Dekat* (One Hour Closer) with Said Aqil Siradj on tvOne, December 1, 2015.

¹⁹¹ For recorded document of Khalid Basalamah's reaction, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKIaeQy20DM>, accessed on December 22, 2016.

¹⁹² For the recorded document of News Islam Channels, see

In both regional and national election, television preachers have roles to influence Muslim attitudes in politics. Their involvement is unavoidable since they are one of the religious authorities in democratisation era. It can be intentionally for the preachers to discuss a particular topic concerning the coming election or unintentionally for them because they have to respond the questions from their audiences asking about the election. The debate of the election is mostly dominated by the issue of piety, gender, and non-Muslim leadership in the Muslim majority country.

Television preachers also had divided opinions concerning the presidential candidacy of Megawati in 2004. Some preachers on television urged Muslims not to elect her because of her gender. According to them, it is prohibited for Muslims to elect a woman as a leader in Islam based on the Quran and Hadiths.¹⁹³ Other television preachers countered their opinions while explaining to the audiences that the verses the Quran and Hadith concerning the prohibition of women to be leaders are not relevant to the presidential candidacy. All the verses and sayings of the Prophet refer to the prohibition to choose a woman as an imam in prayers. The debates on women leadership have continued since the presidential election in 2004 until now in regard with the women candidacy ranging from the election of regent to president in the country. For example, in 2011, the branch of MUI in Riau province had issued a fatwa prohibiting a woman taking a position of leadership. However, the central board of MUI in Jakarta have different opinion and have rejected the fatwa of MUI branch in Riau. Din Syamsuddin, the secretary general of MUI and the former chairman of Muhammadiyah, states that women leadership in Islam is debatable because Muslim scholars have different opinions about it. The central board of MUI are against the fatwa of MUI branch in Riau and has ordered them to withdraw it.¹⁹⁴

The most recent political debates of the election involving television preachers are concerned with whether it is lawful to elect non-Muslim as a leader. Since 2012, the debates on non-Muslim candidacy have lasted when Jokowi and Basuki T. Purnama or Ahok were nominated as the candidate for the governor and the vice-governor of Jakarta. Beside the fact that Ahok is a Christian and Chinese descent, a rumour spread is that Jokowi is also not a

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYVDUGnaYn4>, accessed in July 10, 2016.

¹⁹³ For example, in Q.S. 4:34 “Men are in charge of women ...”.

¹⁹⁴ For more information, see DetikNews. June 2004. “MUI: Fatwa Haram Presiden Perempuan Tak Perlu Ditanggapi [MUI: Fatwa Prohibiting Women Becoming Presiden should not be Discussed].” <http://news.detik.com/berita/160786/mui-fatwa-haram-presiden-perempuan-tak-perlu-ditanggapi>. Last accessed, December 23, 2016.

Muslim. Therefore, it is forbidden in Islam to vote for him. They asked Muslims to vote for his rival, Fauzi Bowo, who was considered a pious and humble Muslim. The result of the election, however, sent Jokowi to be the governor of Jakarta and as the vice-governor. The same situation occurred when Jokowi decided to run the presidential election in 2014. Afterwards, the fierce debates of the election amongst television preachers are the candidacy of Ahok for governor election of Jakarta in 2017. These debates have begun earlier before the election after Ahok, the former vice-governor of Jokowi, announced his plan to run the governor election in 2017. His candidacy is controversial to Muslims because he is not a Muslim and is of Chinese descent. Anti-Chinese sentiment increased significantly from 1996 to 1999. People of Chinese descent in Jakarta often experienced harassment and violence in the riot of 1998 and the follow up until 1999. This sentiment has remained in the aftermath of reformation.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, his religion exacerbated the debates because as mentioned above Muslims are forbidden to vote for non-Muslim to be a leader.

In regard with this candidacy of Ahok, television preachers' opinions have varied. The majority of television preachers are in favour of Salafis that electing non-Muslims as leaders is forbidden in Islam. They refer to several verses of the Quran to justify their opinions. Amongst these preachers are Aa Gym, Yusuf Mansur, and Buya Yahya. The only television preacher who supported Muslims to elect non-Muslim as a leader is Maulana. He usually preaches in the *dakwah* programme of *Islam itu Indah* (Islam is Beautiful) on TransTV. In one of the episodes on November 9, 2015, he stated that it is lawful to elect women and non-Muslims as leaders because the election of leadership is nothing to do with religion (Islam). What is relevant to it is to choose a leader who can uphold justice and welfare for the people. His statement triggered reactions from other television preachers and Muslim organisations including MUI. A number of Muslims in Jakarta held a protest against him and urged him to apologise due to his statement, which was considered to hurt Muslims. Due to these reactions and protests, Maulana delivered his apology publicly in the central office of MUI and asks for guidance from them in his propagation of Islam.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ For more detailed discussion about the sentiment of anti-Chinese, see Jemma Purdey. 2005. *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

¹⁹⁶ Amri Amrullah. November 2015. "Ustadz Maulana: Maaf Bila Ceramah Saya ada yang Salah [Preacher Maulana, I apologise if my preaching is wrong]." <http://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/15/11/19/ny178c334-ustaz-maulana-maaf-bila-ceramah-saya-ada-yang-salah>. Last accessed, December 22, 2016.

On the contrary, the chairman of NU, Said Aqil Siradj, Muslims are allowed to choose a non-Muslim as their leader if the leader is fair and honest. In an interview session in his office in Jakarta, he stated that his statement about the possibility of Muslims to choose non-Muslims as leaders was nothing to do with Ahok's candidacy. He was merely eager to deliver what Ibnu Taymiyya, one of the prominent Muslim scholars, said that electing a fair non-Muslim is better than an unfair Muslim to be a leader. When further asked about the verses of the Quran prohibiting Muslims to choose non-Muslims as leaders, he stated that the context of the verses is if there are two candidates of leaders (one Muslim and the other is a non-Muslim), who are fair and honest, Muslims are forbidden to choose the non-Muslim candidate as a leader.¹⁹⁷

Based on the above discussions, it is obvious that *dakwah* programmes through commercial television have become an arena for the preachers to define Muslim attitudes in contemporary Indonesia. They respond quickly to the trends in the society. Television media benefit from the reaction in terms of the ratings and audiences. The update topics of *dakwah* programmes through television concerning the debates in the society stimulate the audiences to watch and follow the programmes.

Conclusion

The appearance of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on private TV stations is novel to the extent that Salafism generally avoids commercial media platforms. Salafi followers prefer to arrange their own media for their *dakwah* like printed media, radio, and community TV channels. They consider commercial media tend to corrupt *dakwah* and mix it with material puposes. Rodja TV as one of Salafi community TV station in Indonesia sees it differently. National private TV stations are viewed by Rodja TV founders as opportunity for their *dakwah* and to eradicate misleading Islamic practices. They bring their programmes to national private TV stations, Trans7 and TransTV in which they correct the majority of Muslims' rituals. These rituals are practiced by the followers of NU. They also propagate on TV against the beliefs and practices by Shia followers. As a result, the conflict between the producers or preachers of Salafi *dakwah* programmes on Trans7 and TransTV and NU as well as Shia leaders cannot be avoided. This conflict proves the contestation of religious authority among them to obtain legitimacy and

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Said Aqil Siradj, Jakarta, May 6, 2016.

represent true Islam. NU and MUI see the presence of Salafism on Trans7 unacceptable because its ideology and agendas contradict theirs and the Indonesian state ideology. Salafi *dakwah* on TV render their agendas to become a mainstream discourse on private television is in line with the rise of their propagation in the society. It is evident that Rodja TV has attracted the attention of the programme producers in Trans7, who later become an entrance for Salafi preachers to dominate in the production of *dakwah* programmes in Trans7.

In defining Muslims' attitudes, the agendas of Salafi propagation of Islam in Trans7 oppose several Muslim organisations. As a result, their members have reacted and created debates in the society. The clash between Salafism and Muslim organisations like NU and IJABI in defining Muslim attitudes in *dakwah* programmes through television delineates three central points of Islam in contemporary Indonesia. Firstly, the reaction of NU towards the emergence of Salafism in *dakwah* programmes through television stations reminds us to the background of its establishment in 1926, which was a reaction to the rise of Wahhabism in the Middle East and its influence in the country. The current reaction of NU is also a response to the rise of Salafism through television. The clash between NU and Salafism depicts the contestation between Salafism promoting the concept of the globalised Islam. This means that Muslims in Indonesia are struggling to define themselves amongst their fellow Muslims in the world. Secondly, although its ideology is against that of the state and democracy, Salafi propagation of Islam of Rodja TV has benefited from the democratic system of the state, especially the freedom of expression. It makes the Salafi leaders possible to propagate their agendas including re-establishment of Islamic state in Indonesia. Finally, the rise of tension between two opposing parties in *dakwah* programmes on television stations has forced the government through KPI to reinforce its role as the monitoring institution of the broadcasting.