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Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java

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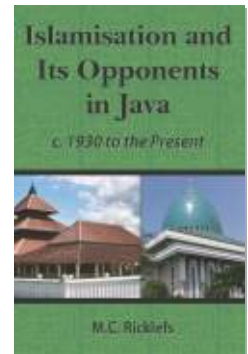
Published by NUS Press Pte Ltd

Ricklefs, M.C.

Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A Political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, c. 1930 to Present.

New ed. NUS Press Pte Ltd, 2012.

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CHAPTER 9

Efforts to impose conformity of Islamic belief

Javanese society has historically hosted a wide variety of ideas about the supernatural, and at certain times pious reformers sought to eliminate local idiosyncrasies. The first major wave of reform in modern times began in the mid-19th century and contributed to the polarisation of Javanese society. In the wave of deeper Islamisation in the later 20th and early 21st centuries, local varieties of Islam again constituted a challenge to Islamisers. But now, in a post-colonial age, harmonising reform efforts were backed by large-scale organisations and institutions, including governmental and semi-governmental structures. Among them, MUI was particularly significant.¹ Thus began a serious attempt to force local understandings of Islam to conform to what reformers believed the correct version of Islam to be. Needless to say, they frequently differed among themselves as to what that was.

At a national level, the greatest controversy concerned the Ahmadiyya movement, although its impact within Javanese communities was limited. As already noted, Ahmadiyya is to orthodox Islam rather as Mormonism is to orthodox Christianity, in that both claim to have received new divine

¹ MUI also had other concerns, such as whether Yogyakarta mosques correctly indicated the *kiblat* (Arabic *qibla*, the direction of Mecca, towards which prayers must be directed in order to be valid). On investigation, fully 77 per cent were found to be 5–10 degrees out. A Yogyakarta Department of Religious Affairs official pointed out that an error of only 1 degree would mean that ‘our prayers will veer 145.67 km from the *ka’ba*’. *KR*, 15 May 2008, 25 May 2008.

revelations and have suffered discrimination and violence at the hands of more conventional believers as a result. Ahmadiyya exists in two branches, both represented in Indonesia. The Lahore branch regards its Punjabi founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, as a renewer of Islam rather than a new prophet. The Qadian branch, however, sees him as a new prophet, a clearly heretical idea to orthodox Muslims. MUI issued a *fatwa* in 1980 that declared Ahmadiyya to be a deviant sect that was outside Islam.² Nothing of significance followed from this *fatwa*; MUI was still seen as a tool of government in those days of the New Order and the regime was not going to tolerate internecine social violence. In the post-Soeharto era, however, as government was coming to be a tool of the MUI, things changed.

In July 2005 MUI again issued a *fatwa* declaring Ahmadiyya to be deviant and its adherents to be apostates. This time around, under the leadership of Din Syamsuddin, MUI recommended to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the government more generally that both branches of Ahmadiyya be banned.³ The Ahmadiyya is particularly strong in predominantly Sundanese West Java, where — unfortunately for them — some extreme groups are also strong, notably the violent FPI. Violence soon followed, with the police being conspicuously reluctant to protect Ahmadis from attack or to arrest the perpetrators of violence. In Central and East Java and Yogyakarta, reactions were more restrained. Led by Ky. H. Idris Marzuqi (b. 1940), *kyais* gathered at Lirboyo *pesantren* in Kediri and denounced the Ahmadis in no uncertain terms. But the Ahmadis there were very few and they carried on their lives quietly as before.⁴ Similarly, in the major cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta (where there was an anti-Ahmadiyya demonstration of thousands of people in August 2008),⁵

² Iskandar Zulkarnain, *Gerakan Ahmadiyah di Indonesia*, p. 292.

³ There is a vast amount of press coverage of this issue from 2005 to 2010. A good overview down to the time of its publication is in *Gatra*, 1 Aug. 2005. The best single source on the Ahmadiyya issue is International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah decree*. While the conventional Islamic interpretation is that apostates may be murdered, there was no proposal to kill all Ahmadis in Indonesia.

⁴ *RK*, 22 July 2005, 25 July 2005, 2 Aug. 2005, 5 Aug. 2005; *Mengislamkan kembali Qadiyani dan Lahore* (Kediri: Lajnah Bahtsul Masa-il Pondok Pesantren Lirboyo, Madrasah Hidayatul Mubtadi-ien, n.d. [2005]); discussion with Miji Purwanto (head of the local Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia, i.e., from the Qadian branch, in Kediri), Kediri, 26 Oct. 2008.

⁵ *JktP* online, 4 Aug. 2008.

Ahmadis kept a low profile — in Yogyakarta taking the sign down from their headquarters — but they were not attacked.⁶ The Ahmadis had a rather large mosque and 200 members at Tawangmangu on the slopes of Mount Lawu southeast of Surakarta, but had never had trouble with others. The MUI branch with responsibility for Tawangmangu did not ask the police to shut down the Ahmadis there but rather sought to make them aware of the ‘error’ of their beliefs.⁷ In Kudus also there was no trouble for the 40 or so Ahmadis there.⁸ Some NU *kyais* and younger activists publicly supported the Ahmadis’ right to freedom of belief⁹ and NU’s Garda Bangsa militia even guarded an Ahmadiyya mosque in Surabaya lest it be attacked by MMI.¹⁰ Emha Ainun Najib commented that the MUI *fatwa* had no power to bind anyone.¹¹

Given the perception that government should — or at least could — act to enforce MUI *fatwas*, there were persistent calls from activists for Ahmadiyya to be made illegal.¹² A gathering of 37 NU *kyais* from across Java and Madura objected to the idea that the government should act solely on the basis of *fatwas* from MUI, ignoring the views of other organisations, but nonetheless concurred with the *fatwa* against Ahmadiyya.¹³ Human rights and freedom-of-religion activists criticised the MUI *fatwa* and opposed any suggestion of making Ahmadiyya illegal. The violence associated with this issue culminated in an attack by FPI and other extremists on a demonstration of Ahmadis and human rights activists at the national

⁶ *MIO*, 30 July 2005; *RS* online, 7 Aug. 2005, 8 Aug. 2005. The *Bupati* of Sleman regency reported no problems for the Ahmadis there; they did not have a mosque but did have educational activities; *KR*, 15 June 2008. Sultan Hamengkubuwana X and the government of Yogyakarta said that they were prepared to protect Ahmadi properties if they were threatened; *KR*, 11 June 2008.

⁷ *TempoI*, 6 Aug. 2005.

⁸ *TempoI*, 11 June 2008.

⁹ Discussion with Ky. H. Imam Ghazali Said (who defended the Ahmadis), *pesantren* An-Nur, Wonocolo, Surabaya, 23 Oct. 2008; *detikNews* online, 7 May 2008.

¹⁰ *DetikSurabaya*, 7 Aug. 2005.

¹¹ *RK*, 21 Aug. 2005.

¹² A list of the groups in the anti-Ahmadi ‘Forum Umat Islam’ is given in International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah decree*, p. 3. FPI and HTI were prominent, along with MMI, KISDI, DDII, ICMI, PKS, PPP and others, but Muhammadiyah and NU were also represented.

¹³ *MmK*, 5 Aug. 2005.

monument in Jakarta on 1 June 2008, where several prominent Liberal Muslim leaders were injured.

Under continuing pressure from hard-line groups and fearing widespread anarchic violence, on 9 June 2008 the government issued a joint decree by the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Minister of the Interior and the Attorney General. This decree ordered the Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia — which is to say, the local version of the Qadian branch — to cease all activities ‘inconsistent with interpretations of Islam in general, such as the recognition of a prophet after the Prophet Muhammad’. Anyone who failed to do this was subject to ‘sanctions according to law’. Every regional government was ordered to ‘carry out guidance with regard to this decision’.¹⁴ The decree did not apply to the local organisation of the Lahore branch — the Gerakan Ahmadiyah Indonesia — but this distinction made no difference to anti-Ahmadi activists. We should note that Ahmadiyya was not banned by this decree. Rather, Ahmadis were allowed to believe what they believed but were not to spread these beliefs.

The government decree of 2008 was not satisfactory to Ahmadiyya’s enemies, who still insisted that the government must act to make it illegal.¹⁵ Attacks on Ahmadis and their properties continued, particularly in West Java. By 2010 the national government was reviewing the 2008 decree in search of a more permanent solution, which could have only one meaning, since the government and its police forces remained reluctant to confront violent anti-Ahmadi groups like FPI. The Minister for Religious Affairs, the PPP politician Suryadharma Ali,¹⁶ simply said that Ahmadiyya had to be disbanded, since its followers continued to spread their beliefs in violation of the joint ministerial decree and were in fact not Muslims, as they claimed to be.¹⁷ In February 2011 the anti-Ahmadiyya campaign grew murderous, when a mob of 1,500 people attacked and destroyed an Ahmadi site in West Java, killing three Ahmadis in the course of the attack. The Minister for Justice and Human Rights, the PAN politician Patrialis Akbar, made it clear that

¹⁴ The text is available in multiple locations on the Web, including http://www.bbc.co.uk/indonesian/news/story/2008/06/080609_ahmadiyah.shtml. The decree was published in local newspapers, e.g., KR, 10 June 2008.

¹⁵ Such demands were made across the Javanese heartland as well. For example, see KR, 9 June 2008, 17 June 2008.

¹⁶ Suryadharma Ali is a graduate of IAIN Jakarta, and General Secretary of PPP for 2007–12.

¹⁷ *JktP* online, 31 Aug. 2010.

the government was close to making it illegal for the Ahmadiyya to exist in Indonesia if its followers continued to claim that they were Muslims.¹⁸ In East Java, where the Ahmadis were next-to-invisible and had experienced no significant difficulty, puritanical groups still pressed for action. In February 2011 the governor of East Java, Dr H. Soekarwo, gave in and declared that all Ahmadiyya activity was banned in East Java. Ahmadis could not even display the name Ahmadiyya on their mosques, but were allowed to carry on their rituals in private. As the governor announced this, he was flanked by the head of police, the Brawijaya Division commander, the head public prosecutor of East Java, the speaker of the East Java legislature and the head of the local MUI.¹⁹

Ahmadiyya was, however, a rather small sect and therefore relatively easy for its enemies to attack;²⁰ this was not so in the case of LDII. We saw above that the problem with LDII was that the claim of its founder, Nurhasan Ubaidah Lubis, to have the uniquely correct *manhaj* (way of knowing) Islam, so that all other Islamic movements were wrong, indeed not even true Muslims. Consequently, LDII followers should not even pray together with non-LDII people. MUI declared the organisation to be deviant on more than one occasion, the last *fatwa* being in 1994.²¹ The organisation had survived multiple attempts to have it declared illegal by attaching itself to Golkar in 1972, but in the post-Soeharto age widespread condemnation of LDII revived. By then, however, it was an organisation with branches across

¹⁸ *TempoI*, 7 Feb. 2011. Twelve people accused of the murders of the Ahmadis were given trivial sentences of three to six months in July 2011; *JktP* online, 29 July 2011. Patrialis Akbar has generally been thought to be a poor performer as a minister, and it was clear that his view of justice and human rights did not include the idea of the Ahmadiyya continuing to profess its version of Islam.

¹⁹ *TempoI*, 28 Feb. 2011. The governors of West Java and South Sulawesi similarly issued bans on Ahmadiyya.

²⁰ Another idiosyncratic faith to be condemned by MUI was called Salamullah, whose leader, Lia Aminuddin (b. 1947 in Surabaya) claimed to be the incarnation of the angel Gabriel. She was twice convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to prison, in 2006 (for two years) and 2009 (for 2.5 years). This faith is centred in the Jakarta area and is not of significance in the Javanese-speaking heartland.

²¹ The text may be found in Hartono Ahmad Jaiz (ed.), *Bahaya Islam Jama'ah-LEMKARI-LDII* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam, 1419H/1998M), pp. 247–8. A 1979 MUI *fatwa* in the same terms is in *ibid.*, pp. 94–5; another copy of that, but undated and with different signatures at the end, is at http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=84&limitstart=5 (under 'Islam Jama'ah').



Illustration 23 Sign for a rural branch of LDII, Karanganyar, 2008

the length and breadth of Java (and elsewhere in Indonesia) and at least claimed to have millions of adherents, although not everyone believed that this was so.²² In Kediri, where it was founded, LDII was a major presence, with its 99-metre-tall, gold-tipped minaret (the highest in all of East Java), called the *Menara Asmaul Husna* — the ‘minaret of the 99 beautiful names of God’. This was no easy target for its enemies to tackle.

²² The PKS leader and the then-speaker of the national MPR (People’s Consultative Assembly), Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid, said that he doubted that LDII followers were actually very large in number; discussion of 7 June 2007, Jakarta. In the previous chapter, I noted that I am unable to confirm LDII’s claim to have millions of adherents.

LDII was still growing in the post-1998 years, attracting new followers from other versions of Islam and generating conflict in some places. A *dakwah* activist in the Yogyakarta area intervened in a village where a conversion to LDII had taken place, provided anti-LDII literature and thereby stopped this process. After receiving his information, the villagers gathered and decided that there would be no more LDII *pengajian* in their village and, if the LDII convert did attempt this, he would have to leave.²³ Lirboyo's senior figure Ky. H. Idris Marzuqi declared LDII to be 'greatly in conflict with us'.²⁴

Among the foremost critics of LDII was Drs H. Hartono Ahmad Jaiz. He was from Central Java, born in Boyolali near Surakarta in 1953, educated in Surakarta and Yogyakarta in both Traditionalist style and at IAIN Yogyakarta, a writer on Islamic subjects and prominent in DDII circles. In 1998 he published an anti-LDII book on the 'dangers' of LDII, which contained 'confessions of former leaders of LDII'.²⁵ This presented a critical history of LDII, set out its ideological deviations and described the various decisions taken against it over time. Needless to say, LDII was angry at this. Hartono Ahmad Jaiz continued his criticisms of deviance and in 2002 published another book entitled *Deviant sects and concepts in Indonesia*.²⁶ In March 2006 he was a speaker at a mosque gathering near Surakarta organised by the 'Mosque Activists Communication Forum', a network established in Surakarta in 1998 and led by one of the city's foremost radicals, Mohammed Kalono.²⁷ The meeting was attacked by LDII supporters, who reportedly arrived in some 20 trucks and 50 other vehicles.

²³ Arif Maftuhin interview with Drs Moh. Abu Suhud, Yogyakarta, 29 March 2008.

²⁴ Discussion with Ky. H.A. Idris Marzuqi, Lirboyo, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.

²⁵ Hartono Ahmad Jaiz (ed.), *Bahaya Islam Jama'ah-LEMKARI-LDII*. The biographical information on Hartono is taken from one of his other polemical works, an attack on Sufism, entitled *Tasawuf belitan Iblis* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1422H/2001M), pp. 173–5.

²⁶ Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, *Aliran dan paham sesat di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2002).

²⁷ This is FKAM: Forum Komunikasi Aktivis Masjid. See International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Noordin Top's support base* (Update briefing, Asia briefing no. 95. Jakarta/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 27 Aug. 2009), p. 7. This report notes that 'Many radical discussion groups from Jakarta to Lombok take place in the name of FKAM. In Sragen, its website (<http://addakwah-fkamsragen.blogspot.com>) has links to a number of *jibadi* sites. ... It has sponsored book launches of JI books and protest actions against "deviant" groups and suspected places of vice.'

They entered the mosque and attempted to attack Hartono. He was protected by police who quickly arrived, but four others were injured. Stones were thrown at the vehicle taking Hartono to safety at the police station. There the stand-off continued, with the LDII side demanding a public apology from Hartono. Eventually both sides agreed to end the matter. LDII's actions were subsequently denounced by the head of MUI as criminal. Hartono was also pursued by LDII people when he addressed a gathering in Jakarta. Bambang Irawan Hafiluddin, one of the 'former leaders of LDII' whose 'confessions' were published in Hartono's *The danger of Islam Jama'ah-LEMKARI-LDII*, was also subject to LDII intimidation, as were other critics. Such, at least, was the detailed report in *Sabili*. On the other side, a senior LDII leader denounced Hartono and claimed that his rejections of LDII teachings referred to ideas that they had changed since the death of their founder Nurhasan Ubaidah Lubis. Further articles in this issue of *Sabili* nevertheless continued the denunciations of LDII.²⁸ It is important to note, however, that while LDII was denounced in terms similar to those applied to Ahmadiyya, and while MUI declared both to be deviant, at no level of government was anyone prepared to act against LDII, as they did against Ahmadiyya. This time the target was just too large, so that the cost in social violence would have been much greater.

Since 2006, there has been more evidence of LDII attempting to mend its fences — and they have indeed been formidable self-erected barriers — with other versions of Islam. They stopped calling other Muslims *kafirs*, reported Kediri Muhammadiyah figures, although they believed that LDII was not really changing its beliefs.²⁹ Ky. H. Idris Marzuqi thought that LDII was changing some of its ideas, but offered no examples of this.³⁰ Ky. H. Imam Ghazali Said — himself an activist in inter-religious relations — regarded LDII as more moderate than in the past, but still exclusive.³¹ In Yogyakarta, LDII met with the local MUI and Department of Religious Affairs. The MUI officer said that 'LDII should continue to spread information about itself to other mass organisations so that the wider society will know more about LDII's programs'.³² LDII held a seminar in a

²⁸ *Sabili* vol. 13, no. 21 (6 Rabi'ulakhir 1427/4 May 2006), pp. 17–31.

²⁹ Discussion with Abdul Haris, Triyono and Hari Widasmoro, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.

³⁰ Discussion with Ky. H.A. Idris Marzuqi, Lirboyo, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.

³¹ Discussion with Ky. H. Imam Ghazali Said, *pesantren* An-Nur, Wonocolo, Surabaya, 23 Oct. 2008.

³² *KR*, 12 March 2008.

mosque in Sleman to discuss violence and criminality among youths, which was blamed on inadequate religious instruction beyond the level of *Qur'an* kindergartens. So LDII set up a *dakwah* and religious education programmes for 5- to 9-year-olds and 10- to 15-year-olds. The secretary of the local MUI was one of the speakers at the seminar.³³ Meanwhile, on the slopes of Mount Kelud near Kediri, a group of some 45 LDII members live in the village of Manggis, which has a population of perhaps 800 people. Most of the village is Muslim, although there is a substantial Hindu community (perhaps 30 per cent of the village). The LDII people give priority to harmonious relations. They do not attend the twice-weekly NU *pengajian* or take part in Traditionalist *tablilan*. But if they are invited to attend when, for example, there has been a death among the NU community, they do so. They even attend the annual village cleansing (*bersih desa*) ceremony, regarding it as



Illustration 24 *Bersih desa* (village cleansing) at Manggis village, Kediri, 2006
(photo by Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi)



Illustration 25 Villagers gathered at the *bersih desa*, Manggis village, Kediri, 2006
(photo by Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi)

local custom and ignoring the belief in spiritual powers that other villagers still hold.³⁴

Wahidiyah — also based in Kediri — is another Islamic movement that is rather disliked by its critics but protected both by its size and by its proximity to Traditionalist practices.³⁵ It originated in a divine instruction that the head of the *pesantren* at Kedunglo, Kediri, named Ky. H. Abdoel Madjid Ma'roef, said he received in 1959. This consisted of a special form of *dhikr* — which was elaborated over time — known as *Sholawat Wahidiyah*, which could bring good fortune both in this life and in the hereafter. Indeed, it is claimed that if it is recited just once it can deliver 500 of the

³⁴ Discussion with Pak Sri Woko (the head of the local LDII group), Manggis, 3 March 2006.

³⁵ An important study of Wahidiyah and similar groups based in Kediri is to be found in Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic spirituality*. He covers Wahidiyah on pp. 76–7, 95–164.

dead from eternal torture.³⁶ The *dhikr* consisted both of recitation of specific phrases and much weeping.³⁷ Others dismiss this as ignorant nonsense. The senior *kyai* of Lirboyo, Ky. H. Indris Marzuqi, said of Wahidiyah that ‘their knowledge is insufficient’.³⁸ Although its practices are in the Sufi mode, NU does not regard Wahidiyah as a proper, respected (*muktabarah*) *tarekat*.³⁹ Muhammadiyah figures in Kediri said that, like LDII, Wahidiyah just takes advantage of ignorance.⁴⁰

Wahidiyah is now led by the founder’s son Ky. H. Abdul Latif Madjid (Gus Latif), whose teachings are idiosyncratic in a recognisably Javanese style.⁴¹ He says, for example, that all religions are the same: they proceed from scripture to intellectualisation to *rasa* — a deeply meaningful term in Javanese mysticism, conveying (amidst multiple complexities) a sense of the unmediated presence in humanity of the divine principle.⁴² In the end the objective is *makrifat* — gnosis — and, he says, Wahidiyah offers the most effective of all means to that end. Wahidiyah’s doctrines are like those of ‘no self’ in Buddhism, says Gus Latif. The central activity is what is called *mujahadah* — ‘striving’, a common Sufi term — which in Wahidiyah means above all a great effort to battle and subdue lust and physical desires so as to become aware of one’s return to God.⁴³ Gus Latif is not concerned that NU does not recognise Wahidiyah as a proper Sufi *tarekat* because it isn’t one, he

³⁶ See the organisation’s website at <http://sholawat-wahidiyah.com/id/>.

³⁷ Ritual weeping is also found in the version of Sufism promoted by the popular (until he took a second wife in 2006 and lost his devoted female following) TV evangelist Aa Gym (Abdullah Gymnastiar), but Howell is wrong to describe this as unique to his version, as the Wahidiyah case shows; Howell, ‘Sufism and the Indonesian Islamic revival’, p. 719.

³⁸ Discussion with Ky. H. Idris Marzuqi, Lirboyo, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007

³⁹ It is omitted from the list of accepted Sufi orders in Sri Mulyati *et al.*, *Mengenal dan memahami tarekat-tarekat muktabarah*.

⁴⁰ Discussion with Abdul Haris, Triyono and Hari Widasmoro, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.

⁴¹ The following discussion rests upon my talk with Ky. H. Abdul Latif Madjid, Kedunglo, Kediri, 2 March 2006.

⁴² For the most authoritative analysis available, see P.J. Zoetmulder, *Pantheism and monism in Javanese suluk literature: Islamic and Indian mysticism in an Indonesian setting* (ed. and transl. M.C. Ricklefs; KITLV Translation Series 24; Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995), esp. pp. 182–4; other references may be pursued via the index.

⁴³ A description from one of the many Wahidiyah publications given to me when I visited Kedunglo on 2 March 2006: *Didalam Wahidiyah yang dimaksud adalah bersungguh-sungguh memerangi dan menundukkan bahwa nafsu untuk diarahkan kepada kesadaran Fafirruu — Ilallah wa Rasulih Shallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*.

says, for there is no swearing of an oath (*bayat*, Arabic *bay'a*) to accept the authority of the *murshid*, as in a *tarekat*. Gus Latif is intimate with a world of spirits: the dead send him greetings from the grave and many nearby spirits (*jin*) communicate with him. He heals the sick by visiting them in their dreams. The long-recognised local spirit forces of Java — including Ratu Kidul and Sunan Lawu — are genuine creations of God, he says.

The scale of the Wahidiyah movement is considerable. Gus Latif has some 1,500 students at Kedunglo from kindergarten to tertiary level. Arabic, English and Chinese are taught, with Javanese taught in the primary school. The studies include practical business skills and students are expected to set up their own small businesses. The *pesantren* includes a College of Economic Sciences, including departments of accounting and management.⁴⁴ Wahidiyah has many other branches in Java, elsewhere in Indonesia and in some places abroad. It holds great *mujahadah* sessions with group *dhikr* and weeping over several days at its various branches and, twice a year, on a grand scale at Kedunglo itself. Then reportedly 75,000 to 150,000 devotees attend at Kedunglo, much to the profit of local food-stall owners.⁴⁵

Kediri is also the home base of Dhikr al-Ghafilin, another idiosyncratic *dhikr* movement. This *dhikr* was developed by three charismatic Traditionalist *kyais* who were thought to be particularly supernaturally endowed: the controversial Ky. H. Hamim Jazuli (Gus Mik) from Kediri, Ky. H. Ahmad Siddiq from Jember and Ky. H. 'Abd al-Hamid from Pasuruan. Dhikr al-Ghafilin is not institutionalised to the degree that Wahidiyah is. When it is about to meet, word travels by informal means and upwards of 20,000 followers gather to join its lengthy *dhikr* sessions at the *pesantren* Al Falah at Ploso, housed in tents erected along the road. Several sacred graves in the Kediri area are also used as locations for these *dhikr* sessions.⁴⁶ A similar group

⁴⁴ *MmK*, 29 Aug. 2005.

⁴⁵ For reports on such sessions, see e.g., *MmK*, 7 March 2005, 26 July 2005, 26 Aug. 2005, 29 Aug. 2005, 12 Aug. 2006; *RK*, 29 Aug. 2005, 18 Feb. 2006, 13 Aug. 2006. For a report on a Wahidiyah session in Yogyakarta, see *KR*, 9 June 2008.

⁴⁶ Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic spirituality*, pp. 207–44; *MmK*, 15 Oct. 2003, 19 Oct. 2003, 29 Sept. 2003, 16 Oct. 2004; *RK*, 15 Oct. 2003; email from Imam Subawi, 18 Dec. 2008. One of the sites routinely used by this group is the grave of Syech (Shaykh) Wasil, the reputed *wali* who brought Islam to Kediri, but the actual identity and history of this character is obscure; see *RK*, 10 Feb. 2009. The grave of Gus Mik (d. 1993) at Mojojoto, Kediri, is itself a major pilgrimage site; see the account of observances there in *MmK*, 11 Oct. 2005. On Gus Mik, see further Muhammad Nurul Ibad, *Perjalanan dan ajaran Gus Miek* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pesantren, 2007).

calling itself Dhikr ar-Rahmah meets at the grave of Sunan Geseng in Kediri on the eve of Fridays, when it recites the *Fatihah* one hundred times.⁴⁷

A group called Ihsaniyyat is another Kediri-based *dhikr* movement also covered in Arif Zamhari's fine study.⁴⁸ Its leader — also named Ky. H. Abdul Latif, not to be confused with the Wahidiyah leader — is open to local arts usually thought of as typically *abangan*. He works among *jaranan* performers, for example. When he does mass exorcisms (*ruwatan*) he does not use *wayang* but that is only because it has become so expensive. He believes that *krisses* have power — 'there is a creature (*makhluk*) there', he says — but has no fear of them. In Banyuwangi, he was criticised by NU *kyais* for opening a *jaranan* performance, but he retorted that this was in the style of the *dakwah* of the *wali sanga* who brought Islam to Java.⁴⁹

Arif Zamhari makes an important point about the contribution of these *dhikr* groups in bringing *abangan* to more pious Islam:

These groups have attracted followers from a wide social base to their practices, hence contributing significantly to the improvement of religious practice among Indonesian Muslims who were not strict in their daily observance of Islamic practice. Based on their understanding of the teachings of *tasawuf* [Sufism], instead of rejecting nominal Muslims, these *Majlis Dhikr* groups have shown respect for and accommodation to all kinds of cultural symbols used by these Muslim groups. In doing so, the presence of these *Majlis Dhikr* ... has contributed to narrowing the gap between *santri* Muslims and nominal Muslims, who have long been ideologically opposed to one another.⁵⁰

Because such groups are so close to Traditionalist practices — whatever their idiosyncrasies and however low the regard in which they are held by the more sophisticated — and because they can mobilise followings in the tens of thousands, they have escaped anathematisation by MUI or vigilante organisations, the latter being in any case still weak in Kediri. But one cannot be confident that that will always be so.

⁴⁷ *RK*, 5 Oct. 2006. There is also a grave of Sunan Geseng in Piyungan, Yogyakarta. It is not remarkable in Java to find holy figures reputedly buried in more than one place; devotees are likely to ascribe this to the supernatural powers of those persons or simply to the unknowable.

⁴⁸ Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic spirituality*, pp. 165–206.

⁴⁹ Discussion with Ky. H. Abdul Latif, *pesantren* al-Ihsan Jampes, Kediri, 16 March 2005. Arif Zamhari notes (*Rituals of Islamic spirituality*, p. 176) that when Ihsaniyyat spread to Banyuwangi, it became a threat to the standing of local *kyais* and thus generated rivalries within the Traditionalist side of Islam.

⁵⁰ Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of spirituality*, p. 3.

Other idiosyncratic and smaller Islamic movements and sects did not fare so well, as the suppression of 'deviant sects' (*aliran sesat*) became something of an obsession on the part of MUI, other major organisations, the police and public prosecutors, vigilantes and, in many cases, even local communities and individuals. In this respect, the social circumstances of Javanese villages in the early 21st century were not so different from those of 16th- and 17th-century England, as analysed in Keith Thomas's classic study of *Religion and the decline of magic* in that period:

Indeed if the records of Tudor and Stuart village life leave any single impression, it is that of the tyranny of local opinion and the lack of tolerance displayed towards nonconformity or social deviation. Rural society lacked much of the modern concept of privacy and private life. The customs of the countryside required joys and sorrows, weddings and funerals, to be shared with other members of the community Nor was there any challenge to the view that a man's most personal affairs were the legitimate concern of the whole community. On the contrary, everyone had a right to know what everyone else was doing.⁵¹

The chairman of the Yogyakarta Special District MUI said in January 2008 that, in order to prevent the emergence of deviant sects, the local MUI was going to coordinate the various Islamic mass organisations so as to guide the members of society in this regard, in order to maintain their faith and piety. MUI's coordination would also encompass the heads of local police and the provincial public prosecutor,⁵² again confirming MUI's view of itself as a body that could turn to the police and courts to implement its determinations, a view shared by government, as we have seen. The chairman of the Yogyakarta city branch of MUI expressed the hope that the police and public prosecutors would 'act resolutely' in this respect.⁵³ A member of Muhammadiyah's Majelis Tabligh dan Dakwah Khusus (Sermons and Special Proselytisation Council) said that the presence of such deviant sects was part of an international conspiracy to destroy the Islamic faith, which even threatened Muhammadiyah's educational institutions themselves.⁵⁴ The head of the Institute for the Study and Implementation of Islam at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta felt

⁵¹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 629.

⁵² *KR*, 8 Jan. 2008. *KR*, 3 Nov. 2007, published the national MUI's prohibition of nine 'deviant sects'; this included Ahmadiyya, already discussed here. Others were also represented in the Yogyakarta area and will be discussed below.

⁵³ *KR*, 17 March 2008.

⁵⁴ *KR*, 14 Feb. 2008.

that Muslim leaders, Islamic organisations and the government must stand firm against deviant groups, whose emergence was facilitated by 'the euphoria or intoxication with freedom in this age of reform'.⁵⁵

A movement called Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah had followers scattered in multiple places across Java and attracted much attention over 2006–8. Their leader was a retired Jakarta public servant living in Bogor (West Java) named Abussalam alias Ahmad Mushaddeq. After 40 days of ascetic practice, in July 2006 he claimed to have had a divine revelation that he was a new prophet. He called himself *Al-Masih Al-Marw'ud* — the messiah promised by Islam at the end of days (a claim also made by Ahmadiyya's founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in his time). Ahmad Mushaddeq's followers reportedly denied the Prophet's night journey to heaven (*isra'* and *mir'aj*) and did not pray five times a day or fast. MUI declared the group heretical and its followers apostates, and recommended that government declare it illegal to spread Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah teachings and ban its publications. The head of NU, Ky. H. Hasyim Muzadi, also called for the arrest and trial of Ahmad Mushaddeq.⁵⁶ The police reported that by late 2007 he had 41,000 followers across the whole of Indonesia, with 8,972 followers in Jakarta, 511 in Tegal, 5,114 in Yogyakarta, 2,610 in Surabaya, similar numbers in some places outside Java and many very small groups elsewhere. Some 60 per cent of these followers were reportedly university students.⁵⁷

The government suppressed Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah in late 2007. The Attorney General acted on the MUI's *fatwas*, with the advice of BAKORPAKEM (a body charged with oversight of *kebatinan* movements)⁵⁸ and the President's agreement. The Attorney General decreed the movement to be illegal and banned all its publications. The police were searching for Ahmad Mushaddeq in order to charge him with blasphemy, punishable with up to five years' imprisonment. He finally surrendered to the police in Jakarta, where they paraded him in handcuffs before journalists. His meditation site in Bogor was attacked and destroyed by hundreds of activists calling themselves Gerakan Umat Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic *Ummah*

⁵⁵ KR, 10 Nov. 2007, quoting Drs Muhsin Hariyanto, head of the Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pengamalan Islam at the university.

⁵⁶ KR, 4 Oct. 2007, 25 Oct. 2007, 31 Oct. 2007.

⁵⁷ KR, 31 Oct. 2007.

⁵⁸ Badan Koordinasi Penganut Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat, a successor to the PAKEM (Peninjauan Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat, Observation of People's Belief Streams) mentioned earlier in this book, under the Attorney General's department since 1960.

Movement). The Department of Religious Affairs announced that it would attempt through *dakwah* to bring followers of such deviant sects back to the true Islam but if they refused to repent, legal action would be taken against them.⁵⁹ At a meeting in Yogyakarta of the Special District's provincial public prosecutor, the intelligence branch of the police, head of military intelligence and the head of the District MUI, this ban was officially declared in Yogyakarta as well.⁶⁰ The same action was taken in other jurisdictions. Reflecting the standing of MUI *fatwas* in the eyes of the police, a senior policeman in Bantul (south of Yogyakarta) said that the legal basis for police acting in this matter was 'the decision of the Attorney General and the *fatwa* of MUI'.⁶¹

Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah quickly collapsed under the weight of MUI, police and activist pressure. In Yogyakarta, the local public prosecutors and police had begun interrogating sect members from at least September 2007. Adherents presented themselves to police stations and there both sought protection from assault and offered their repentance. It is worth noting that such acts of repentance were done in police stations, not in mosques, in almost all the cases known to me. Where this was done in a mosque or at the local Religious Affairs Office, local officials, police and frequently the military were present.⁶² In at least one case MMI members were in the office of the Yogyakarta Special District Attorney to witness two sect members reciting the *Shahadah*.⁶³ A group called Forum Masyarakat Islam (Islamic People's Forum) rounded up Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah members in Sleman and obliged them to repent publicly.⁶⁴ In Klaten, locals threatened a sect follower and his pregnant wife when they refused to recant and punched the husband. The police took them under protection and then escorted them to a meeting where they repented.⁶⁵

The police arrested the sect's leader in Kediri and then the local heads of police, public prosecutor's office, Department of Religious Affairs and

⁵⁹ *KR*, 26 Oct. 2007, 31 Oct. 2007.

⁶⁰ *KR*, 3 Nov. 2007.

⁶¹ *Bernas*, 16 Nov. 2007.

⁶² For example, *KR*, 10 Oct. 2007, 2 Nov. 2007, 7 Nov. 2007, 10 Nov. 2007; *Bernas*, 21 Sept. 2007, 9 Oct. 2007, 10 Oct. 2007, 3 Nov. 2007, 9 Nov. 2007, 10 Nov. 2007, 15 Nov. 2007; *RK*, 3 Nov. 2007; *MmK*, 6 Nov. 2007.

⁶³ *Bernas*, 2 Nov. 2007. I suspect that the MMI activists took the sect members there for this purpose, but the newspaper report does not confirm this.

⁶⁴ *KR*, 3 Nov. 2007.

⁶⁵ *KR*, 16 Nov. 2007; *Bernas*, 16 Nov. 2007.

MUI gave his followers a religious lecture. Several of them refused to repent, however, and some who repented in a mosque withdrew their repentance the following day and accused the police of having no authority to act. So legal action was taken against them.⁶⁶ In Bantul it was the deputy head of the anti-terrorism police squad Densus 88 who lectured sect followers on the error of their beliefs. Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah had not grown into a terrorist organisation, but had it not been banned that might have happened, he claimed.⁶⁷ A grand repentance session of around a thousand followers of Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah took place at the mosque within the Yogyakarta Special District police headquarters in late November 2007. It was led by the leader of the sect in Yogyakarta and witnessed by the heads of local police, public prosecutor's office and MUI, as well as senior officers of the navy and air force, religious leaders and other prominent figures. The sect leader praised the Yogyakarta police for not having arrested any sect followers, as had happened in other jurisdictions.⁶⁸

In Jakarta, the sect leader Ahmad Mushaddeq recanted, but the justices of the South Jakarta District Court (a civil, not a religious, court) did not believe him. He was convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to four years in prison. FPI members and others present shouted *Allahu akbar* (God is great) although they had wished for a death sentence — which cannot, however, be applied under the Indonesian blasphemy law.⁶⁹ This was among the cases that led to the petition to the Constitutional Court in October 2009 seeking that it overthrow the blasphemy law, which (as we have seen above) it refused to do.

A small sect arose in the mountains of Gunung Kidul calling itself Laku Dumadi Anggayuh Titi Tentrem (ways to strive towards peacefulness), but it brought little peace to its adherents. Among its 'deviant' teachings was that, if ablution water was not available for cleaning oneself before the evening prayer, then earth or sand could be used.⁷⁰ Followers should not eat pumpkin, which is called *waluh* in Javanese, for that was said to be an abbreviation of *wali Allah* (a saint of God). Other similar ideas were

⁶⁶ *DetikSurabaya* online, 6 Nov. 2007.

⁶⁷ *KR*, 16 Nov. 2007; *Bernas*, 16 Nov. 2007.

⁶⁸ *KR*, 24 Nov. 2007; *Bernas*, 24 Nov. 2007.

⁶⁹ *JktP* online, 24 Apr. 2008.

⁷⁰ This practice is known as *tayamum* (Arabic *tayammum*) but I am not clear why this was declared deviant, since it is allowed in certain circumstances; see A.J. Wensinck — [A.K. Reinhart], 'Tayammum (a.)', in P. Bearman *et al.* (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.), vol. 10, p. 399.

also taught. An unnamed person from Magelang is said to have been the originator of these ideas, but it was a group of 30 from Gunung Kidul who recanted and prayed in the conventional fashion, under the watchful eye of the head and deputy head of Gunung Kidul MUI, police officers and local government officers.⁷¹

Reports of locals taking action against religious activities thought to be deviant are not uncommon. Hundreds of villagers in Gurah (near Kediri) physically attacked the small hut used by a group whose guru was one Supriyono. He seemed odd: frequently wearing Indian-style clothing and an ear-stud and failing to report his presence to village officers. His followers — who numbered between three and something over ten — purified themselves with water holding seven kinds of flowers. On the grounds of such suspicious, presumed deviant, conduct not only was his hut destroyed but he was arrested and interrogated by the police.⁷² Villagers in Grogol (Kediri) objected to a small *dhikr* group that moved into their area. This so-called Dzikru Syahadatain consisted of both men and women who carried out their *dhikr* together in a closed room. Villagers claimed that this was a deviant sect that was not observed to fast during Ramadan and that failed to mix with locals. The practitioners of this *dhikr* denied these allegations. So the police stepped in and ordered the group to cease their activities in the name of keeping the peace.⁷³ One Miftahul Huda set up an Islamic school in Malang but was accused by local people of heretical teachings called Jamaah Safaatus Shalawat. These teachings were said to include praying without ritual purification with water beforehand and forbidding visits to graves. The local authorities ordered Miftahul Huda to cease his activities by 22 December 2007 but he ignored this. So local people attacked the school five days later and burned four buildings. The police stepped in to secure the area.⁷⁴ In Sidoarjo some 200 villagers broke up a group of up to 100 people who had been doing *dhikr* together for a year or so. It was claimed that they did not do ritual prayer, just the *dhikr* late in the night — an accusation that the leader of the group denied. Meetings with local religious leaders had been chaotic and nearly ended in conflict. So the villagers took the matter into their own hands.⁷⁵

⁷¹ *KR*, 31 Dec. 2007.

⁷² *RK*, 1 Dec. 2005.

⁷³ *RK*, 17 July 2007, 26 July 2007.

⁷⁴ *JktP* online, 28 Dec. 2007; *AntaraNews.com*, 27 Dec. 2007. I do not know what happened to this Miftahul Huda thereafter.

⁷⁵ *Tempo*, 11 Nov. 2009. The group called itself Yayasan Karisma Usada Mustika.

Sometimes just an individual acted. One Joko Sembung of Nganjuk, who claimed to be a devout orthodox Muslim, was accused of blasphemy on the evidence of a single neighbour. The accuser claimed that, while they were in a vehicle together, Joko Sembung had called the Prophet Muhammad a great deceiver. He was said also to have influenced his family with other deviant teachings. He was reported to the police, denied all accusations, but was nevertheless held by the police for three months pending trial and then sentenced to three years in jail.⁷⁶

It was not only the law against blasphemy that was used to pursue deviance. Yusman Roy was a convert to Islam from Christianity and a former boxer. At the *pesantren* he set up in Malang, he and his followers performed the daily prayers in Arabic, followed by Indonesian or Javanese translations, on the principle that people should understand what they were saying in their prayers. MUI promptly denounced this as heretical and many others agreed with this view, including NU's Said Agil Siradj, who said that among the non-negotiable things in Islam are the rituals of prayer. Unsurprisingly, the police acted on the MUI *fatwa* and arrested Yusman Roy. There was, however, public opposition to the police action. Ahmad Syafii Maarif of Muhammadiyah said that Yusman Roy may have been in error, but he had not committed a crime. The prominent *kyais* Ali Maschan Moesa and Imam Ghazali Said of NU also objected to the arrest. Ulil Abshar Abdalla of the Liberal Islamic Network (JIL, Jaringan Islam Liberal, about which more below) argued that MUI was in error to condemn Yusman Roy. He was tried but not found guilty on the charge of blasphemy. Rather, another law against distributing a leaflet expressing opposition to or humiliating another group was used to sentence him to two years in jail.⁷⁷

Continuing this pursuit of deviance in East Java, the local MUI in Probolinggo decreed that teachings being used in an alternative drug-addiction and cancer rehabilitation centre were heretical. This centre had been established in 1991 and had dealt with thousands of clients for 15 years. Now, however, MUI took notice of what was in a book of guidelines

⁷⁶ *Tempo*, 4 Sept. 2002.

⁷⁷ *JktP* online, 10 May 2005, 19 Aug. 2005; discussion with Ky. H. Imam Ghazali Said, *pesantren* An-Nur, Wonocolo, Surabaya, 23 Oct. 2008; Assyaukanie, *Islam and the secular state*, p. 211. An editorial in *Tempo*, 12 Sept. 2005, supported the conviction of Yusman Roy, but said that two years was too heavy a sentence. There are circumstances in which bilingual prayers are allowed; see Arskal Salim, *Challenging the secular state: The Islamization of law in modern Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), p. 111; Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic spirituality*, pp. 174, 185.

distributed among clients. This reputedly advocated free sex and the belief that Satan served God. A mob of hundreds of people attacked the clinic; the police stopped them and then charged the centre's seven counsellors with causing a disturbance. They were subsequently charged and convicted of blasphemy, and received sentences of three to five years' imprisonment.⁷⁸

Not all idiosyncratic versions of Islam have yet been denounced. Near Yogyakarta, a movement calling itself Islam Tauhid⁷⁹ grew, until today it can claim some 200 mosques, with its main strength in Kulonprogo. It was founded there in 1954 by one Widarso, who was reputed to have supernatural abilities and had a background in Muhammadiyah and the Masyumi party. Islam Tauhid is exclusivist: one must offer oaths of loyalty (*bayat*) to progress up its ladder of understanding, which has 72 levels. It interprets Islam through Javanese concepts, but nonetheless rejects most Javanese cultural traditions. For example, it teaches that God is to his creation as the puppeteer (*dalang*) is to the *wayang*, but its followers are not allowed to attend *wayang* performances. Followers sing songs in Javanese but do not employ *gamelan*. They reject many *abangan* and Traditionalist practices such as *slametans*, *tablilan* and visits to holy graves. They observe the five pillars of Islam (the confession of faith, five daily prayers, giving of alms, fasting in Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca for those who were able) but, most remarkably, Islam Tauhid teaches that in the end prayer is undesirable, for it implies that humans can give orders to God. Its opponents accuse it of practising black arts and hypnotism and say its people are 'Javanese who won't Javanise' (*wong Jawa kok ora njawani*). During Soeharto's time, Islam Tauhid was suspected of being behind some sort of Masyumi plot, yet it survived and now eschews party politics. It is notable that women play a prominent role in Islam Tauhid. When prayer takes place, men and women stand in the same line, rather than the women being behind the men.

⁷⁸ *JktP*, 23 Sept. 2005. Free sex is an accusation frequently leveled at deviant groups across the world in all religions, so it is hard to know when to take the claim seriously. I have not seen the evidence on which the MUI made these accusations. Given the police enthusiasm for seeking out heresy and the frequent association of heresy with sex, it is not surprising that when the well-known guru Anand Krishna was accused of sexual harassment, the Jakarta police interrogated him also about the contents of his many books; *JktP* online, 6 Apr. 2010.

⁷⁹ The following discussion rests upon Ahmad Salehudin, *Satu dusun tiga masjid: Anomali ideologisasi agama dalam agama* (Pengantar M.C. Ricklefs; Yogyakarta: Pilar Media, 2007); discussion with Ahmad Salehudin, Yogyakarta, 5 Aug. 2006; emails from Ahmad Salehudin, 1 Sept. 2007 and 4 Feb. 2011.

In 1987, after the death of Islam Tauhid's founder, a female successor named Ibu Maimunah introduced the sect into the village of Gunung Sari, in the mountains south of Prambanan. This brought conflict and polarisation to this hamlet of only some 840 people, who split along lines of religious identity. Before 1987, Gunung Sari had a prayer house but no mosque. Suddenly it found itself with three, becoming what Ahmad Salehudin describes as 'one hamlet with three mosques' — one each for Islam Tauhid (built in 1987), NU and Muhammadiyah, the latter two having been begun in 1988. One would think that a version of Islam such as Islam Tauhid would attract a *fatwa* from MUI, but that has not happened down to the time of this writing. In 2007 it was reported that Islamic leaders were aware of a rather strange sect in Kulonprogo (and we may guess that this was a reference to Islam Tauhid) which had its own *pengajian* and refused to join in the *pengajian* of other Muslims, but its teachings were judged not yet to be in conflict with Islam.⁸⁰

Leaflets distributed in Mojokerto as Ramadan drew to a close in 2010 also failed to produce MUI denunciation. These reportedly claimed that there was another prophet after Muhammad and criticised usual forms of *dhikr* and *Qur'an* reading. A PKB politician demanded police action and said that if they did not act, NU's 'mass organisations' would be mobilised. But, oddly — albeit consistent with the immense variety of what goes on in Java — the local MUI was inclined to dismiss the leaflets as insignificant sensation-chasing and to take no action unless some sinister organisation was found to be behind them.⁸¹

MUI and DDII leaders sometimes displayed tolerance towards indigenous, non- or semi-Islamic practices. The head of DDII's Education Bureau in Surakarta said that activists should not go about 'chousing here is *bid'a*, there is *bid'a*; here is *shirk*, there is *shirk*'. Islam exists in many cultural forms, he said, and to suggest that being Muslim and being Javanese involved a contradiction was an Orientalist idea. The *kratons* of Surakarta and Yogyakarta just 'want to maintain acculturation of their culture that is syncretic'.⁸² Reaching even further into the Javanese world of the occult, the head of Bantul MUI spoke at an arts festival taking place at Parangtritis

⁸⁰ *Bernas*, 21 Nov. 2007.

⁸¹ *Tempo*, 7 Sept. 2010.

⁸² Arif Wibowo, quoted in Solopos, 19 Dec. 2008. *Bid'a* means unlawful innovations in Islam and *shirk* is polytheism.

on the south coast, the area most exposed to the occult powers of Ratu Kidul, the Goddess of the Southern Ocean. Without mentioning that powerful spiritual being, he said that not all art forms were to be regarded as contaminated by *shirk*. 'Because of that,' he went on, 'all the activities performed at Parangtritis represent enlightenment for the populace of Bantul specifically, and for other members of the public.'⁸³

There were some voices raised against the targeting of 'deviant sects', but they were few and could not alter the tide of events. We noted above the criticisms of MUI's *fatwa* against the Ahmadiyya that came from religious freedom and human rights activists. A demonstration in 2008 of some fifty young activists in the 'Yogyakarta Alliance for a Peaceful Indonesia' protested MUI's judging of groups as deviant. They displayed slogans such as 'Indonesia is not a religious state' and '*fatwa* deviant: no — *fatwa* justice: yes'. The coordinator said that 'it is as if the police and prosecutors don't act on the basis of the constitution and law, but rather pressure from a particular group'.⁸⁴ At a seminar at UIN Yogyakarta, most speakers regretted the government's action against groups such as the Ahmadis and said that it was the task of government to protect its citizens, including minorities. The NU leader Masdar F. Mas'udi said that it was up to God to decide what was deviant.⁸⁵ But many NU figures were fully behind the campaign against deviance, as we have seen above. Speaking at a commemoration of the founding of NU 82 years before, Ky. H. Malik Madany said that there were threats to the faith of NU followers, notably fundamentalism, liberalism and deviant sects. NU people should develop the principle of the middle way, moderate in the style of NU,⁸⁶ but in his mind this moderation evidently did not extend to those three threats that he named.

There were many highly combative, uncompromising figures involved in sniffing out and denouncing 'deviance'. They were characters whom people of all stripes readily described as coarse, harsh, narrow-minded (*kasar, keras, sempit*) and suchlike, thinking of the young Adian Husaini (b. Bojonegoro,

⁸³ Ky. H. Zahid Ridwan, reported in *KR*, 28 Nov. 2007. A report on the 'religious arts' and 'spiritual dances' performed at this Festival is in *KR*, 22 Dec. 2007.

⁸⁴ *Bernas*, 9 Jan. 2008; *KR*, 11 Jan. 2008. This Aliansi Jogja untuk Indonesia Damai brought together both Islamic and Christian interfaith and student groups and NGOs.

⁸⁵ *KR*, 25 March 2008.

⁸⁶ *KR*, 11 Feb. 2008.

1965)⁸⁷ of DDII, the older-generation Ky. H. Kholil Ridwan (b. Jakarta 1947) of DDII and MUI and many another fervent reformer. We have noted above the anti-deviance fervor of Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, who also attacked Traditionalist Sufism as being ‘the tendrils of the Devil’.⁸⁸ The atmosphere, observed Ahmad Syafii Maarif, had become very nasty.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ For examples of his combative (to put it generously) style, here mobilised against Liberal thought, see the collection of his essays in Adian Husaini, *Membendung arus liberalism di Indonesia: Kumpulan catatan akhbir pekan* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2009). He graduated in veterinary science from the Bogor Agricultural Institute, followed by a doctorate from the International Islamic University Malaysia.

⁸⁸ In his book *Tasarwuf belitan Iblis* published in 2001, which (to quote p. 160) describes ‘the dangers of *bid’a* and ... the various rotten ulcers of Sufis or Sufi teachings’. See also Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic spirituality*, p. 29.

⁸⁹ Discussion with Prof. Ahmad Syafii Maarif, Yogyakarta, 14 Sept. 2008.