

Conference Programme

Sufism for a New Age: Twenty-first Century Neo-Sufism, Cosmopolitan Piety and Traditionalist Responses

Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies

University of Western Sydney

Bankstown Campus

29th – 30th September 2011



CONFERENCE VENUE

The conference events will take place at The Bankstown campus which is situated in the suburb of Milperra in the Bankstown Local Government Area. The campus is located on the corner of Horsley Road and Bullecourt Avenue. The entrance is via Bullecourt Avenue. Conference proceedings will be take place in building 5 LG.14 and LG.15.

SMOKING is not permitted in any buildings or rooms of the University of Western Sydney.

REFRESHMENT & MEALS

Morning, afternoon tea and lunch are provided for all participants. All food will be halal.

CONFERENCE ENTERTAINMENT - THE HUZUR ENSEMBLE

The Huzur Ensemble was formed in 2010 to perform Tasawuf (Sufi) Music and Ottoman Classical Music, in a modern yet contemplative style. It was felt that this music has the power to touch the hearts of listeners, and as such had a valid, perhaps needed place in our culture.

Music is chosen for its beauty and integrity, and may be historical (for instance Uyan ey gözlerim, written in the 16th century by Turkish Sultan, Murad the 3rd) or modern (like the pieces composed for Yansimilar by contemporary composer Birol Yayla).

The players and singers of the ensemble have a creative approach to presenting beautiful melodies - their style may include improvisation, counter-melodies and harmonies.

The ensemble consists of

Anna McDonald - Violin
Erhan Boduk - Bendir (Frame Drum)
Yasar Can - Guitar
Tarik Huseyin – Kanun
Melek Sinmaz - Ney (Turkish Reed)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY 1

9:30 – 10:00	<i>Sign in and coffee: Building 5 LG.14</i>
10:00 – 10:20	<i>Opening by Julia Howell</i>
10:20 – 10:30	<i>Introduction to Conference and Day</i>
10:30 – 11:30	<p><i>'Peace Sufism': Sufis vs Salafis (Session 1)</i></p> <p>Safdar Ahmed Philosophical Sufism, Muslim Reform and the Reification of Islam</p> <p>Achmad Ubaedillah The Khalwatiah Sammān Tarekat in South Sulawesi (1820s-1998): Defending tradition in the era of change</p>
11:30 – 12:00	Morning Tea
12:00 – 13:00	<p><i>'Peace Sufism': Sufis vs Salafis (Session 2)</i></p> <p>Terri Drage Sufism in Pakistan: The effect of state policy both internally and externally and on Pakistan's perceived global integrity</p> <p>Moch Nur Ichwan Redebating Wahdatul Wujud in the Veranda of Shari'a: Abuya Syaikh Amran Waly, Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, and Politics of Orthodoxy in Aceh</p>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	<p><i>Structural innovation in Islamic Sufism: change in the Sufi orders (Session 1)</i></p> <p>Achmad Zainal Arifin Pesantren and the Development of Sufism (Study of Habib Luthfi and His Kanzus Shalawat Community)</p> <p>Arif Zamhari Social Structural Innovation in Indonesia Sufi Tradition: Urban Majlis Zikir and Shalwat</p>
15:00 – 15:30	First Afternoon Tea
15:30 – 16:00	<p><i>Structural innovation in Islamic Sufism: change in the Sufi orders (Session 2)</i></p> <p>Luthfi Makhasin Spirituality and Global E-Sufism in the Contemporary Era</p>
16:00 – 16:15	<i>Concluding comments for the day</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Second Afternoon Tea
17:00 – 19:00	<p>Keynote address (Building 5 Lecture Theatre 15)</p> <p>Paul Heelas <i>Third Force Sufism</i></p> <p>Opening address by Prof. John Ingleson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, UWS</p> <p>Performance by <i>The Huzur Ensemble</i></p>

DAY 2

9:30 – 9:45	<i>Introduction to Day 2</i>
9:45 – 10:45	<p><i>Islamic Sufism Without the Tariqa (Session 1)</i></p> <p>Arthur Beuhler A Reality Without a Name: Sufi Activity in Contemporary Turkey</p> <p>Jan Ali Tablīghīs as Neo-Sufis: Reconciling Spirituality with the Demands of Modernity</p>
10:45 – 11:15	<p>Morning Tea</p> <p><i>Islamic Sufism Without the Tariqa (Session 2)</i></p>
11:15 – 11:45	<p>Julia Howell ‘Neo-Sufism’ Rehabilitated for Today’s Cosmopolitan Indonesians</p>
11:45 – 12:00	Break for Jum’ah prayer
12:00 – 13:00	<p><i>Islamic Sufism Without the Tariqa (Session 3)</i></p> <p>Ahmad Muttaqin From Spiritual Piety to Spiritual Efficacy: A Transformation of Hybrid Sufism in Secular Landscape</p> <p>Omid Tofighian Rethinking Sufism in Iranian New Wave cinema</p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<p><i>Sufism Without Islam: Western, non-Muslim ‘Sufism’</i></p> <p>Celia Genn Inayati Universal Sufism - One hundred years on</p> <p>Samuel Burch The Fatimiya Sufi Order: An Australian Born Iranian Post-Islamic Neo-Sufism</p> <p>Adam Possamai and Milad Milani The Changing Face of Sufi Orders: The Neo-Sufi Aspects of Two Traditional Orders in Australia: Nimatullahiya and Naqshbandiya</p>
15:30: – 16:30	Plenary Discussion and Close

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Philosophical Sufism, Muslim Reform and the Reification of Islam

Dr. Safdar Ahmed

The University of Sydney

In this presentation, I will analyse the way some important Muslim reformers have negotiated the themes and ideas of Sufism in their intellectual projects—though we do not consider them to be Sufis in the conventional sense. I will not therefore examine Sufism in its current institutional practices or dimensions. Rather, I wish to discuss the relevance of Sufism's intellectual heritage to the modern world, and to show how the themes of philosophical Sufism (including the theme of love and the primacy that Sufism gives to the notions of religious experience) have spurred the revivification of Islam amongst some modern Muslim intellectuals. In this context, I am less interested in those reformers who repudiated Sufism in favour of a more austere, legalist interpretation of Islam than in those who sought to mobilise it within a broader project of intellectual reform. In particular, I will discuss the way Sufi themes have been used to counteract the tendency amongst modern Muslims to over-rationalise the content of Islam, by focussing on the example of the twentieth century poet and philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal. The presence of Sufi themes will also be noted in the work of such important recent reformers as Abdolkarim Soroush, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, and the feminist thinkers, Fatima Mernissi and Amina Wadud. I will conclude by stating that the work of Sufi masters and poets represents a significant intellectual reservoir that is just as valuable as the tradition of jurisprudence to modern projects of Islamic reform.

Tablighī as Neo-Sufis: Reconciling Spirituality with the Demands of Modernity

Dr. Jan Ali

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)

Tablighī are Islamic revivalists who seek remedy to the crisis of society in the return to Islam not so much through social transformation but spiritual elevation

and self-reformation based on a keen observation of the fundamentals of Islam. Working with Muslims on their faith and religious practices, Tablighīs strive to force a shift from nominality to practice in Muslims.

Central to Tablighī ritual is *dikr* (remembrance); a ritual quintessentially Sufistic. In an epoch characterised by modernity and in which mundane demands of everyday life barely leaves room for religious devotion and spiritual elevation, Tablighīs use, among other rituals and practice, *dikr* as an act of worship to infuse life with religiosity and piety.

This paper examines the Sufi concept of *dikr* in the context of Tabligh Jamā‘at (Convey [message of Islam] Group) and explores the way in which it permeates contemporary Tablighīs’ everyday life. The paper argues that contemporary Tablighīs are Neo-Sufis who are not restricted to “traditional” Sufi practices or are stuck in time but are able to easily reconcile their spirituality with the demands of modernity to lead a fulfilling life.

Pesantren and the Development of Sufism (Study of Habib Luthfi and His Kanzus Shalawat Community)

Mr. Achmad Zainal Arifin

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)

The contribution of Sufism to the spread of Islam in the archipelago is undeniable. Sufi domination that characterized the face of Islam in the early period showed how Islam brought by the *walisongo* (lit. nine saints) were able to show tolerance and the accommodative nature of Islam to the local culture. The rise of revivalist and purification movements in the Islamic world in the 17th century, and then followed by a wave of young scholars return to their homeland after spending several years studying in Mecca, steadily began to put the *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) as a commander to replace the dominance of Sufism. The shift in religious orientation towards *fiqh* also raised some significant changes in the Sufi world. The emergence of the various *tarekat* (order), which are more concerned with the application of *fiqh*, such as Qadiriyyah, Naqsyabandiyah, and Tijaniyyah orders, more or less has led Sufism to be something difficult to be

practiced by every Muslim. Complicated conditions, especially the fulfillment of religious obligations, have to be done before someone is allowed to learn and practice Sufism. Sufism was eventually developed into something more exclusive and out of reach of ordinary people.

Efforts to restore the function of Sufism as the early spread of Islam began have occurred within the last decades. The emergence of some *pengajian* (lit. studying Islamic knowledge) groups that teach simple *wirid* (sentences or formulas to be read repeatedly), but quite able to touch the feelings of those who read them, are one of the efforts to re-socialize Sufism. This paper proposes to show how the role of a Habib Lutfi Yahya, as *Rais Am* or leader of Jam'iyah Thariqat al-Muktabarah al-Nahdliyah, shortened to JATMAN, an association of various *tarekat* under the Nahdlatul Ulama, the biggest traditional Islamic organisation, in re-socializing of Sufism as an inseparable part of a Muslim identity. Through the Kanzus Shalawat, a congregation he leads, Habib Lutfi is able to show how a Sufi can play a significant role in society, such as actively involved in interfaith dialogue forums and other social activities. Finally, this paper reiterates that the social role of Sufism as shown in the early spread of Islam may re-present and able to offers alternative solutions for some current national issues.

A Reality Without a Name: Sufi Activity in Contemporary Turkey

Dr. Arthur F. Beuhler

Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand

In spite of the Kemalist government of the Turkish Republic closing down all sufi lodges and banning sufi activity in 1925, sufi activity is vibrantly alive in contemporary Turkey. Instead of *tekkes* (sufi lodges) much contemporary Naqshbandi sufi activity occurs in university dormitories and student apartments. One Naqshbandi lineage (out of dozens) has five thousand science graduates a year, many of whom come from Central Asian countries. A more well known group, although not a sufi group per se, is headed by Fetehullah Gülen, who has a vast network of thousands of top-notch schools, business enterprises, and media outlets throughout the Turkic world. The sufi ideals of this group, service (*hizmet*) and spiritual collectivity (*shaksi manevi*), have attracted over 6

million people. Gülen's schools are focused on engineering and science while the religious/character training is done informally outside of class in a manner similar to the aforementioned Naqshbandi group. This paper demonstrates that a lot of sufi practice in contemporary Turkey is not found under the banner of "sufism."

The Fatimiya Sufi Order: An Australian Born Iranian Post-Islamic Neo-Sufism

Mr. Samuel Burch

The University of Queensland

Founded in Australia in 2005 by the Order's Grand Shakyh, Nima Wahid Azal, the Fatimiya Sufi order represents the contemporary manifestation of a number of significant Sufi initiatic currents, i.e. Iranian Qadiri and N'imatullahi-Safialishahi, and especially the post-Islamic Shi'ite Babi/Bayani gnostic religion, founded in 19th century Iran. The Fatimiya Sufi Order should be considered as the genesis of a Neo-Bayani, Post-Islamic order, which venerates the daughter of the Prophet, Fatima Zahara, as representative of the instantiation of the Sophianic Divine Feminine Principle, and as the *qutub* or 'pole' of the order. The Order syncretically weds the central currents of High Shi'ite Islamicate gnosis/esotericism, Kabbalah, Shamanism (used in a broad sense), and holds as sacred the Zoroastrian sacrament known as *Haoma*. The Fatimiya Sufi Order likewise articulates a political program known as Theophanocracy, that is informed by the theophanology of Ibn 'Arabi, Anarchist political theory, Green depth ecology and Liberation Theology. This paper will introduce some of the key elements and practices of the first Iranian Sufi Order actually born in Australia and will locate it as among one of the important developments in Neo-Sufism. It will also define the locus of the Order's typological, post-Islamic perspective by demonstrating that its post-Islamic discourse is not necessarily a wholesale rupture from the Islamicate matrix, but rather a transmutation and universalisation of it, via an apotheosis of a past reclaimed anew.

**Sufism in Pakistan: The effect of state policy both internally and externally
and on Pakistan's perceived global integrity**

Ms. Terri Drage

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)

On the 1st June 2009 the Government of Pakistan, under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), announced the decision to reconstitute the National Sufi Council, formerly known as the Sufi Advisory Council, with immediate effect. The first two aims of the National Sufi Council were stated as follows: To bring forth the soft image of Islam through spreading the Sufi message of love, tolerance and universal brotherhood across the world and amongst the masses of the area [...]; and to propose steps to free religious thought from the rigidity imposed by some ulama. The aims of the National Sufi Council are crucial indicators for this research. They suggest that by promoting Sufism the Government of Pakistan seeks to highlight the peaceful, tolerant, and universal aspects of Sufi Islam in direct opposition to the more rigid scriptural interpretations of Islam that have underpinned domestic politics and international understandings of Pakistan over recent decades. Religion was an important element in the movement for, and creation of, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. And, since its inception as a nation in 1947, religion has also been an important element in the evolution of the state. Moreover, the Government of Pakistan has attempted to define the religious ideology of the state, and manage and control religious institutions, with varying results and degrees of success. A reading of seminal texts on the relationship between the state and Sufism indicates that, in its attempt to revive Sufi teachings, the government is once again attempting to co-opt religion in order to achieve particular political objectives. This research will question whether, by promoting Sufism as a peaceful and tolerant religion, the Government of Pakistan can unify its citizens, create a stable political, social, and economic arena for its citizens, and strengthen the state's global integrity by improving the nation's tarnished image both at home and abroad.

Inayati Universal Sufism - One hundred years on

Dr. Celia Genn

Griffith University, Brisbane

In 2010, the International Sufi Movement (ISM) celebrated 100 years of Hazrat Inayat Khan's 'Sufi Message of Love, Harmony and Beauty in the West.' This paper reflects on recent developments in Australia and internationally within the ISM and other groups practicing Inayati 'Universal Sufism.' Separating Sufism from the exoteric tradition of Islam was part of Inayat Khan's vision for future of spirituality and religion, though the Inayati orders honour their origins in, and retain significant strands of the Chishti Sufism of India. Exploring the groups' contemporary range of thought and practice reveals a changing mix of tradition and innovation, and a variety of stances in relation to Islam. While not without tensions, the Inayati orders collectively form an international Sufi community characterised by an inner core of disciplined ethical and inner work toward self and God realisation, combined with an ecumenical vision of universal brother and sisterhood, and accommodation for the eclectic participation of seekers generally in the Sufi teachings and practice.

Third Force Sufism

Prof. Paul Heelas

Erasmus University, Rotterdam

To argue that Sufism serves as a third force means showing that it differs from two other 'sources of force'. On the one hand Sufism in general *is not secular*. On the other hand, a great deal of Sufism *is not 'strongly' theistic-cum-traditionalized*. It diverges from the Islam of forceful dualistic, conservative, theistic tradition-cum-God-on-High. A great deal of Sufism, in other words, lies between, is an alternative to, the secular *and* conservative/radical Islamic tradition/s. Regarding the term 'neo-Sufism', although it arguably provides a useful interpretative perspective for helping understand what is happening to Sufism today I engage in critical reflection in connection with the interpretative perspective provided by the notion of 'third force' Sufism. What is the value, the utility of 'neo-Sufism' in face of the notion of 'third force? Regarding 'cosmopolitan piety', what is to be made of the term in connection with the

argument that a great deal of Sufism is arguably best characterized as a spiritual humanism of humanity? In this paper, I will use illustrative examples and focus on the Islamic country where I lived and researched for around one-and-a-half years, and which is thus the one which I know best – Pakistan.

“Destroy the mosque!
Destroy the temple!
Destroy whatever you please.
Do not break the human heart,
For God
Dwells therein!”
Bulleh Shah

‘Neo-Sufism’ Rehabilitated for Today’s Cosmopolitan Indonesians

Prof. Julia Day Howell

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)
This paper traces the introduction of the term ‘Neo-Sufism’ into public discourse in Indonesia in the late twentieth century to valorise constructions of the Sufi heritage shorn of certain values and practices considered incompatible with modern urban life. It identifies the late Nurcholish Madjid, leading Pembaruan (or Neo-Modernist) public intellectual, as the primary conduit for the introduction of the term, which he borrowed from University of Chicago professor Fazlur Rahman’s characterisation of eighteenth and nineteenth century reform movements in Sufi orders across the Muslim world, and adapted for modern Indonesia. What Madjid promotes as ‘Neo-Sufism’ for late twentieth and twenty-first century Indonesians is described and compared to other popular characterisations of a newly reformed Indonesian Sufism, like *tasawuf modern*, proposed by HAMKA, and *tasawuf positif* proposed by Haidar Bagir, Nasaruddin Umar, and others. Their advocacy of terms to distinguish new constructions of Sufism from disparaged older and supposedly degenerate folk Sufism reveal tensions associated with reconciling reason and emotion in the lives of modern Muslims.

**Redebating Wahdatul Wujud in the Veranda of Shari'a: Abuya Syaikh
Amran Waly, Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, and Politics of Orthodoxy in
Aceh**

Dr. Moch Nur Ichwan

Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University

Aceh has long history of contestation between tasawwuf and shari'a ulama, especially in the issue of Wahdat al-Wujud (unity of existence). In the 16th century, this was represented by Hamzah al-Fansuri and Shamsuddin al-Sumatrani on the one hand and Nuruddin ar-Raniri on the other hand, which end with the official ban of the former teaching and the burn of their books. In the post-conflict period, in which shari'a has been endorsed by the state, such contestation resurfaced, especially between Abuya Syaikh Amran Waly and his Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid Tashawuf (MPTT), a neo-sufi group, and the Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama (MPU), an official ulama institution. The study is based on Abuya Amran Wali's controversial commentary on al-Jilli's wahdat al-wujud views, and North Aceh MPU's fatwa of deviance charge against him. This case signifies the revival of the old debate on Wahdatul Wujud and, of course, the continuing conflict between tasawwuf and shari'a oriented ulama. This also reflects Sufi resistance towards the overwhelming Shari'atism in Aceh today. This paper will analyse this issue and try to reveal political dimension behind it.

Spirituality and Global E-Sufism in the Contemporary Era

Mr. Luthfi Makhasin

The Australian National University

Globalisation has had overarching transformational effect within Muslim society in which Islamic preaching messages are increasingly disseminated through mediation of information and communication technology. The new development of information technology has to some extent diminished direct or face-to-face transmission of religious knowledge. Bunt suggested that technological advancement generated unprecedented situation in which Islamic knowledge is increasingly being disseminated through cyberspace rather than direct or physical encounter (2003). This paper will elaborate further Ernst's analysis

(2003) on the influence of globalisation to the pattern of dissemination and transmission of Sufi knowledge focusing on Naqshbandi-Haqqani in Indonesia. As suggested by Ernst, globalisation has generated popular representation of Sufism and the 'publication of the secret' in various modern media. This paper argues that mediated-communication and modern technology (the internet) has practically generated e-Sufism which is historically unprecedented. The term of e-Sufism refers to any kind of Sufi figures, products, teachings, knowledge, materials, emotional expression, way of devotion, rituals, and activities mediated by or found on the internet and are deliberately used for disseminating, venerating, and preaching purposes. In this regard, the internet and its related-activities therefore become sacred sites and also expression for act of piety.

The Changing Face of Sufi Orders: The Neo-Sufi Aspects of Two Traditional Orders in Australia: Nimatullahiya and Naqshbandiya

Dr. Milad Milani and A/Prof Adam Possamai

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)

The specific focus of this presentation is a preliminary evaluation of the development of Nimatullahi and Naqshbandi Sufi orders in the West. One of the reasons for comparing and contrasting these two orders is that although they have originated in similar socio-political and religio-cultural climates within fourteenth century Iran, and that they have similar history, as they have both been affected by similar changes due to their extension, persecution and migration, their relations to the West and to the 'authenticity' of their tradition appears different in Australia. These two groups have been chosen to reflect how two similar Sufi groups, in a similar context, have shifted somewhat dramatically in their approach to adapting to a modern climate. These two groups are specifically, the Nimatullahi Khaniqahi order and the Khalidi branch of Naqshbandi order.

The Nimatullahis have undertaken many changes in their approach to Sufi praxis since the succession of Javad Nurbakhsh, and have modernised dramatically since 1999 (with significant modifications to their customs). The Naqshbandis, although adopting a business (and even corporate) front in

presenting a fully integrated community of Muslims, nevertheless, maintain a stricter sense of adherence to Islamic orthodoxy. Furthermore, the Naqshbandis are far more politically active than the Nimatullahis.

From Spiritual Piety to Spiritual Efficacy: A Transformation of Hybrid Sufism in Secular Landscape

Mr. Ahmad Muttaqin

The Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies (UWS)

Sufism, when it is brought to a modern and secular landscape as that happen in Western Sufis movement, tend to be modified and contextualized based on specific purposes. The promoters of Sufism in urban areas tried to create what might be called Hybrid Sufism in which traditional Sufis teachings are immix with the need of Urban's Sufis seekers. Western Sufism, as noted by Hermansen (2006), is modulated into various perspectives such as psychotherapeutic, scientific, perennials, and universalism. This paper discusses transformation of Indonesian Hybrid Sufis centre in secular landscape. Referring to one leading spiritual centre in Yogyakarta Indonesia, the Bioneregi, I will show that hybrid forms of Sufis group in Yogyakarta provide to the need of urban spiritual seekers and is to some extent equivalent to the development of Western Sufis movement. As such, in order to engage with secular mindset of modernizing people, the Yogyakarta Hybrid Sufis centre transforms spiritual piety into spiritual efficacies for this worldly success. Instead of offering Sufis recipes for personal-spiritual enrichment and self cleansing (*tazkiyatu an-nafs*) of well educated western urbanites, overwhelmed by modern life, the Yogyakarta hybrid Sufis centre, instead modulates Sufis teaching as a recipe for ordinary people in to engage with capitalism and to gain this worldly prosperity.

Rethinking Sufism in Iranian New Wave cinema

Dr. Omid Tofighian

The University of Western Sydney

The narratives, themes and symbolism in many prominent Iranian New Wave films have been interpreted as essentially mystic and a continuation of Iran's Sufi tradition. By implementing multi-signifying devices many Iranian films use one

story to represent multiple journeys each with significant meanings. Some important films by Abbas Kiarostami (*The Taste of Cherry*), Majid Majidi (*Baran*) and Bahram Beizai may be understood as realist allegories of traditional Sufi themes: a chivalrous quest; a philosophical allegory; a moral code; or a mystical ascension. However, the use of film technology, film techniques and modern literary approaches to storytelling has allowed Iranian filmmakers to express new ideas and interpretations of Iranian culture, heritage and society. This, in turn, has transformed traditional understandings of Sufism and created possibilities for a radical reinterpretation and rethinking of Sufism in a contemporary global context. For instance, in combination with the mystic tradition and heritage Iranian films concentrate on certain domestic issues such as refugees, ethnic identity and ethnic relations, gender, modern rites of passage, the consequences of war and liminality.

I will interpret the film techniques and the multi-dimensional nature of characters, objects and themes in a selection of Iranian New Wave films using a non-realist form of allegory. This will open up a richer horizon upon which to investigate the role of Sufism and its connection with new subject matter. This paper will analyze the manifold of 'chameleon' elements in a number of Iranian films and transcend traditional/conventional mystic interpretations in order to view the films as examples of a radical rewriting of past structures.

The Khalwatiah Sammān Tarekat in South Sulawesi (1820s-1998):

Defending tradition in the era of change

Dr. Ahmad Ubaedillah

University of Hawaii & UIN Syarif Hidaatullah, Jakarta

This paper, which is part of my dissertation research, focuses on how the Khalwatiah Samman order (*tarekat*) defended its tradition from religious encounters echoed by both traditionalist and modernist Muslim groups in the last century. Considering religious practices of the order as un-Islamic, those scripturalist Muslim groups demonstrated their hostility towards the order through their idea of dissolution of the *khalifah*, a spiritual leadership notion that is very central in the mystical world of Islam. In addition, they were also critical

to the major practices of mystical Islam held by the order such as visiting the graves of the saints and total obedience among its fellows toward their leaders (*shaikh* or *khalifah*). Using publication and collaborating with that of traditionalist Muslim leaders, oppositions of the puritan groups continued after the birth of the nation state of Indonesia. Among those movements was Darul Islam (DI) led by the local puritan Kahar Muzakkar (1950-1965). Employing an issue on Islam and anti-feudalism, Muzakkar was very critical of the mystical practices of the order. On the other hand, based on its solid tradition of mystical practices and spiritual connection to the founder of the order in the heart land of Islam, the Khalwatiah Samman seemed stood on its mystical heritage confidently during the era of social and political changes in Indonesia.

Social Structural Innovation in Indonesia Sufi Tradition: Urban Majlis Zikir and Shalwat

Dr. Arif Zamhari

The Australian National University and The University of Jakarta

One of remarkable features of Islamic revival in Indonesian Islam since the last two decades has been the emergence of Islamic ritual groups identified as *majlis zikr* and *majlis salawat*. The *majlis zikr* and *majlis salawat* have gained popularity not only among rural people but also among urban people. Without a doubt, the locus of the *majlis zikr* and *majlis salawat* activities especially in the rural areas has been *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). *Pesantren* have played a pivotal role not just in Islamic education generally, but in maintaining Islam's Sufi tradition in Indonesia. The *pesantren* through their leaders and alumni networks have been disseminating *majlis zikir* and *salawat* throughout Indonesia, especially among rural people (documented in my doctoral research). Recently they have spread to urban areas, which is the focus of my current research project.

In urban areas another institution has been important in facilitating the proliferation of *majlis zikr* and *salawat*, the *majlis taklim*. The *majlis taklim* also grew out of the *pesantren*, but have sprung up independently both in rural and urban areas. They now play an important role in preaching and teaching Islam to

urbanites. In the last ten years the *majlis taklim* in urban areas functioned not only as a centre for Islamic lectures (*pengajian umum*) but also as centres for activities known as *majlis zikir* and *salawat*. This study examines the emergence of *majlis taklim* as a locus for *zikr* and *salawat* activities as well as centres for Islamic preaching (*dakwah Islamiyah*) among urbanites. It will compare and contrast the social structure of the *majlis taklim* (the new locus of *zikir* and *salawat* practices) to the social structure of traditional *pesantren*.

DIRECTORY OF PARTICIPANTS

Safdar Ahmed	The University of Sydney, Australia	safdarnama@hotmail.com
Jan Ali	University of Western Sydney, Australia	jan.ali@uws.edu.au
Achmad Zainal Ariffin	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	zenipink@yahoo.com
Arthur Beuhler	Victoria University, New Zealand	banshan@gmail.com
Samuel Burch	The University of Queensland, Australia	samuel.burch@uqconnect.edu.au
Terri Drage	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	17097257@student.uws.edu.au
Celia Genn	Griffith University, Australia	c.genn@bigpond.com
Paul Heelas	Erasmus University, The Netherlands	p.heelas@googlemail.com
Julia Day Howell	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	j.howell@uws.edu.au
Moch Nur Ichwan	UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Indonesia	ichwanmoe@yahoo.com
Luthfi Makhasin	The Australian National University	luthfi.makhasin@anu.edu.au
Milad Milani	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	m.milani@uws.edu.au
Ahmad Muttaqin	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	muttaquinsejati@yahoo.com
Adam Possamai	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	a.possamai@uws.edu.au
Omid Tofighian	The University of Western Sydney, Australia	omid_tofighian@yahoo.com
Achmad Ubaedillah	The University of Hawaii and UIN Syarif Hidayaatullah, Jakarta	achmad@hawaii.edu
Arif Zamhari	The Australian National University and the University of Jakarta	arifzamhari@yahoo.com