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Islamic Locality and the Failure of the Caliphate Idea: The Role of the *Da'wa* Movement in Indonesian Islam History

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Abstract

This article argues that the *da'wa* movements initiated by Islamic mass organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) through the concept of Islamic locality constitute one of the key factors contributing to the failure of the caliphate idea in Indonesia. This locality is characterized by the synthesis of Islamic theology, law, and practice with the sociocultural, political, and historical realities of the Archipelago. Employing a historical–sociological method and document analysis, this article traces how these *da'wa* movements have embedded a distinctly Indonesian notion of Islamic locality. The findings reveal that through the establishment of socio-educational institutions (schools, hospitals, *pesantren*), cultural adaptation, and participation in the nation-building project, these Islamic *da'wa* movements have addressed the social and spiritual needs of Indonesian Muslims within the framework of the nation state. Therefore, the failure of the caliphate idea is not due to a lack of religiosity of Indonesian Muslims, but rather because localized Islamic understanding has rendered the caliphate not only irrelevant but also theologically incongruent with the perspectives of the majority of Indonesian Muslims.

Keywords: Islamic locality; *da'wa* organization; caliphate idea; *da'wa* movement; Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)

1. Introduction

In 2017, the Indonesian government officially disbanded Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) due to its increasingly active promotion of the caliphate, a transnational governance system based on Islamic teachings. Major Islamic mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah openly supported this dissolution, reaffirming their stance that the Pancasila-based Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, NKRI) is the final and irrevocable form of the state of the Indonesian nation (Faiq 2021; Farih 2016).

The failure of the caliphate as an ideological proposition in Indonesia may be seen as a paradox. Indonesia is home to the world's largest Muslim population, with a highly dynamic and politically active Islamic landscape. However, throughout Indonesian history, movements promoting the idea of a transnational Islamic caliphate have consistently failed to gain public acceptance. This is a stark contrast to the profound influence of *da'wa* (Islamic propagation) that has shaped Indonesian society and its political imagination.

The historical disconnect between persistent caliphate activism and its rejection by mainstream Indonesian Muslims becomes particularly clear when examining contemporary



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Islamist movements. Organizations such as the *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI, Indonesian Mujahidin Council) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) explicitly aim to establish an Islamic state (*darwa Islamiyah*) or caliphate (*khilafah islamiyah*) as the necessary means to fully implement Islamic law (Jamhari and Jahroni 2004). Despite their ideological persistence, caliphate movements have remained peripheral to Indonesian Muslim political life—a failure stemming not only from Indonesia’s pluralistic fabric but from the model’s own internal contradictions.

The classical caliphate model, whose idealization is rooted in the era of the *Khulafa’ urrasyidin* (the Rightly Guided Caliphs), has long been subject to critical scrutiny within Islamic political thought. Scholars have identified inherent structural and theoretical flaws that render the system susceptible to conflict and instability. Notably, the Moroccan philosopher Muhammad Abed Al-Jabiri argues that the very concept of the caliphate contains a fundamental “legal vacuum” (Al-Jabiri 2001). He bases this critique on an analysis of the *al-fitnah al-kubra* (great chaos) that erupted at the end of Caliph Uthman ibn Affan’s rule, a crisis that exposed the model’s lack of clear, institutionalized mechanisms for succession, legitimacy, and legal authority. This classical analysis points to a foundational vulnerability that continues to undermine the coherence and stability of modern caliphatist movements.

The theoretical instability inherent in the caliphate model underscores a broader sociological perspective, namely the relationship between religious doctrine and political authority is not predetermined. Classical social theory, as noted by Durkheim (1965), often saw a differentiation between the sacred and profane realms of religion and the state. However, since religion possesses a powerful ideological force capable of mobilizing collective action (Ferjani 2005), the aspiration to integrate it with political sovereignty as envisioned by the caliphate persists. However, this ambiguity in classical Islamic political thought makes the caliphate idea extremely difficult to be implemented in a modern and multicultural society like Indonesia.

Therefore, it is in this contested space that the concept of “*pribumisasi Islam*” (indigenization of Islam) becomes essential (Wahid 2001). Rather than attempting to impose a universal religious-political idea, the concept of indigenization of Islam refers to the expression and embodiment of particularistic Islam that is closely intertwined with local historical narratives, cultural symbols, customs, and national political aspirations. This concept proposes a dynamic synthesis in which Islamic principles are translated into local contexts in a way that legitimizes and strengthens indigenous socio-political structures. Thus, Islamic locality provides a sociological order that rejects abstract political projects and doctrines such as the caliphate (Wahid 2001).

The *da’wa* movement, particularly those initiated by Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, has been a crucial agent in the negotiation and sustainable development of this Islamic locality. In the Indonesian context, *da’wa* encompasses a much broader and more institutionally grounded mission (Mulkhan 1996). This includes the establishment of educational and social service institutions as well as active involvement in the nation’s political discourse (Burhani 2016). Although these movements have competed, collaborated, and evolved over time, their impact has been deeply rooted in Indonesian society.

It is through this adaptive and multifaceted work that *da’wa* movements have historically forged an authentic and national Indonesian Islamic identity (Wahid 2001). Therefore, this article argues that *da’wa* organizations have comprehensively met the spiritual, educational, and social needs of the population and provided a functional and rational perspective rather than abstract and socio-culturally decontextualized transnational ideas.

2. Literature Review

In Muslim-majority countries, the relationship between Islam and government varies widely. Some, such as Saudi Arabia, formally derive legislation directly from the Quran and equate it with a constitution, fully implementing Islamic law (Ferjani 2005). This contrasts with democratic countries like Turkey and Indonesia, where the separation of religion and state has actually encouraged political movements to “return to Islam” (Ferjani 2005). This political dimension has made Islam a primary focus of scholarly study, both in the Muslim world and in the West (Kirmanj 2008).

Ufen (2009) observed that in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia, the interaction between Islam and politics is manifested through various forms of Islamic mobilization in three domains: the state, political society, and civil society. In Indonesia, Islamization and the *da'wa* movement are driven by various actors in civil society, leading to a moderate political Islamization. In contrast, Malaysia experiences a more top-down, state-led Islamization, strategically directed and promoted by the federal bureaucracy.

The study of Islam and politics in Southeast Asia is an academic field with deep historical roots. As Saravanamuttu (2010) argues, the character of Muslim politics is fundamentally shaped by the specific historical and political context of each nation state. This focus on national specificities has sparked considerable scholarly debate. Extending the critique beyond the region, scholars such as Tayob (2008) argue that the concept of “political Islam” is often entangled in a tangle of identities and utopian ideals, thus posing a challenge to Islamic political thought globally.

According to Madinier (2015), this debate has attracted the interest of Muslim academics, policymakers, and activists, particularly in discussing the definitions of terms such as “radicalism,” “fundamentalism,” and “Salafi,” in order to understand the real problem. Terrorism in the name of religion and other acts of violence are examples of religion that endanger the stability of the state. On the other hand, Madinier states that the study of Islam and politics in Indonesia avoids this polemics or oversimplifications (Madinier 2015; Santoso 1995). Furthermore, Indonesian Islamic thinkers such as Abdurrahman Wahid, also known as Gus Dur, have highlighted the concept of Islamic “universalism” and “cosmopolitanism” through the concept of “*pribumisasi Islam*” (indigenization of Islam), which is more moderate and differs from the doctrinal beliefs found in various schools of thought (Mujiburrahman 1999).

Gus Dur, was one of the founders of the concept, illustrating how cosmopolitan Islam is. In the Indonesian context, Islamic cosmopolitanism is embodied in the concept of “Islamic locality,” namely by translating Islamic values and teachings without abandoning distinctive local cultures. More broadly, this idea is perhaps similar to Kwame Anthony Appiah’s ‘rooted cosmopolitanism,’ which suggests that a deep commitment to local traditions need not hinder—and can even actively enable—a genuine acceptance of global pluralism (Waghid et al. 2020). However, in the context of “Islamic locality,” Islam is not something rigid, but can coexist with local cultures, even enriching each other, because Islam itself is understood as a cosmopolitan teaching.

In the academic realm in Indonesia, studies on the caliphate and government have emerged in various forms. One important study, as seen in Effendy’s (1995, 1999), analyzes the construction of Islamic politics by mapping ideological currents—especially from fundamentalist groups—that advocate a caliphate based on a combination of religion and state power. This differs from historical-institutional research, such as that of Sukardja (2002), which examines the political system during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. This study highlights the mechanism of *bay'at* (pledge of allegiance) as a fundamental act that legitimizes leadership.

The concept of *bay'at* is central to classical Islamic political theory and is often viewed by scholars as a prototype for establishing a legitimate Islamic government (Sjadzali 1990). This concept constitutes a binding agreement between the leader and the people. The classical scholar Taimiyyah (2005) emphasized its consensual nature by noting that Umar ibn Khattab's authority as caliph derived not only from prior appointment but also from the people's mandate expressed through *bay'at*. Thus, rather than mere succession, popular consent is presented as the core principle of legitimacy for Islamic government. This allegiance, ideally given in an environment that allows for freedom of expression and deliberation within a comprehensive legal framework, is binding on both ruler and society.

More importantly, the early Islamic government in Medina, established after the Hijrah, was not a monolithic theocracy, but rather existed within a pluralistic social reality. As Sjadzali (1990) observes, the Muslim community (*ummah*) of the Ansar and Muhajirin lived side by side with Jewish tribes and other Arab groups who did not embrace Islam. This historical context demonstrates that the fundamental Islamic state model recognized and embraced religious and socio-cultural diversity, complicating contemporary claims that the caliphate required a homogeneous society ruled exclusively by and for Muslims.

According to Sjadzali (1990), the political views of current Muslim thinkers can be classified into three groups. Firstly, the belief that Islam is a comprehensive religion, meaning it contains all kinds of guidelines for all aspects of human life, including governance using the *khulafaur rasyidin* model. This concept is expanded by stating that Islam is "a complete unity that offers solutions to all life's problems" (Effendy 1995), so that this understanding can be integrated into the integralist paradigm (Effendy 1995, 1999; Wahid and Rumadi 2001).

Second, the symbiotic paradigm, which views the relationship between religion and the state as reciprocal and mutually dependent (Sjadzali 1990). On the one hand, religion needs the state to thrive, and on the other hand, the state needs religion because it can thrive within ethical and moral-spiritual guidance. In this view, upholding governance is a sacred duty mandated by religion as a method for bringing humans closer to God. In this paradigm, *sharia* (Islamic law) plays a crucial role as a source of legitimacy for political reality. Likewise, the state plays a crucial role in upholding Islamic law in accordance with its legal components.

Third, the secularist paradigm, which opposes the two previous paradigms (Sjadzali 1990). On the other hand, this paradigm proposes the separation of religion from the state, just as the state itself does from religion. This paradigm does not recognize Islam as the foundation of the state, or at least denies the applicability of Islamic teachings for some forms of state. In short, according to this paradigm, *sharia* (Islamic law) cannot simply be implemented and enforced in certain political spheres. Furthermore, Islamic law cannot be made positive law unless it has been approved as national law.

The idea of the caliphate as an ideal in real-world Indonesian politics demonstrates fundamental complexity. Its failure cannot be explained by a lack of ideological effort, but also by how a successful political system requires deep integration with the socio-cultural and historical fabric of a nation. Therefore, the failure of the caliphate idea lies not only at the level of policy proposals but also at the level of the socio-cultural system of Indonesian society. This is because proponents of the caliphate often focus on revolutionary changes in government structures while ignoring the constitutive role of the socio-cultural environment. Efforts to trace the interaction of Indonesian society with the idea of the caliphate and its counterparts have been studied in various dynamic and multidimensional academic discourses.

The discussion can begin with historical works that attempt to understand the ideological roots of political Islam and how it was received by society. Formichi (2012), in

his in-depth study of Kartosuwiryo, offers a revisionist perspective. He argues that Darul Islam (DI/TII) was not merely a peripheral rebellion, but rather a competitive and serious ideological project in the formation of the post-colonial Indonesian nation state. This narrative seems to be in critical dialog with national historiography, which often depicts DI/TII as an anomaly or mere disruptor. Formichi shows that this movement had its own internal logic and social base, drawing support from those disillusioned with the secular national consensus (Formichi 2012).

However, Formichi's narrative has been criticized by van Bruinessen (2002). Through a genealogy of post-Suharto Islamic radicalism, van Bruinessen even traces the ideological transmission network from DI/TII to contemporary movements such as Jemaah Islamiyah. For him, although DI/TII had its own project, its greatest legacy was not the establishment of an Islamic state, but rather an ideology of resistance and an underground network that was able to survive and mutate. The similar point between Formichi and van Bruinessen's ideas is that both acknowledge that the political failure of a movement does not necessarily mean the disappearance of its ideology from the collective consciousness.

On the other hand, Hefner (2000) believes that the failure of the caliphate idea is evidence of the victory of civil power within Indonesian Islam. He emphasizes this view through the concept of "*civil Islam*." Hefner argues that the cultural and theological resources within the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah traditions have fostered a variant of Islam compatible with democracy and pluralism in Indonesia. For Hefner, NU and Muhammadiyah have successfully translated Islam into a pluralistic national life.

However, Hefner's thesis on *civil Islam* is also questioned by van Bruinessen (2011), who observed the phenomenon of the "conservative turn" within Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, demonstrated by theological and social shifts toward a more conservative, puritanical, and literalist direction. The conservative turn is illustrated by the phenomenon of some Muslims moving closer to stricter Islamic discourses, although not necessarily toward the idea of a caliphate. This dialog between Hefner and van Bruinessen reveals an unfinished battleground within Indonesian Islam, where the failure of the caliphate should not be interpreted as a permanent victory.

Meanwhile, the study of the *da'wa* movement as a force protecting locality has also become a current in more specific academic discussions. In an ethnographic study of Muhammadiyah, Nakamura (2012) shows how the modernist *da'wa* pattern of building schools and hospitals is essentially a civilization-building project and can therefore be seen as a form of acceptance of the nation state framework with a local spirit. Thus, this can be interpreted as a manifestation of an attitude that is at odds with the transnational concept of the caliphate.

The theological response to the idea of the caliphate culminated in the discourse of "*Islam Nusantara*" (Nusantara Islam) promoted by NU scholars. In Azra's (2016) view, this represents evidence of the historical and theological crystallization of an inclusive and moderate local Islam in countering radicalism. However, van Bruinessen (2011) questioned whether the "*Islam Nusantara*" promoted by NU's intellectual elite truly represented these practices and beliefs of NU members at the grassroots level, who may be being pushed toward a more global conservatism. Madinier and Feillard (2011) reinforced this doubt by highlighting the internal tension within NU, namely between its inclusive tradition and puritanism.

Meanwhile, Machmudi (2008) analyzed that the Islamic-based tarbiyah movement also plays a strategic role. The Tarbiyah Movement and Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, the Prosperous Justice Party) introduced an ideological *da'wa* model inspired by *Ikhwanul Muslimin* (the Muslim Brotherhood) as a transnational Islamic movement focused on cadre development. However, this ideological *da'wa* movement was again interpreted locally

within the Indonesian context, thus emerging as a *da'wa* movement and not aiming to replace the government system.

Interestingly, the cultural *da'wa* movements of the NU and Muhammadiyah versions, versus the ideological *da'wa* movements of Tarbiyah and PKS, run side by side and even compete constructively. Although the Tarbiyah and PKS movements are ideological, they are different from the model developed by HTI with the idea of the caliphate (Osman 2018). HTI rejects both models of *da'wa*. They reject cultural *da'wa* because they are considered to accept the secular status quo, while also rejecting *da'wa* through democracy as it considered to acknowledge the infidel system. Studies on HTI show that precisely because of its total rejection of the political reality of Indonesia, the HTI movement has become isolated (Hanif 2012; Muhtadi 2009; Osman 2010, 2018).

In other words, the existence of the cultural *da'wa* movement of the NU-Muhammadiyah and the ideological *da'wa* movement of the Tarbiyah Movement and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) ultimately strengthen the democratic system in Indonesia. This situation makes the HTI caliphate idea increasingly lose its strategic position and is seen as irrelevant to the majority of Muslims in Indonesia. Therefore, this article positions the *da'wa* movement of Islamic organizations, especially NU and Muhammadiyah, as a key variable in building Islamic locality and one of the factors contributing to the failure of the caliphate idea in Indonesia. However, we also acknowledge Bruinessen's idea of a "conservative turn" as a challenge facing NU and Muhammadiyah, but this actually shows that even within the conservative stream, attachment to local institutions has a dominant force.

3. Method

This study uses a historical–sociological method combined with documentary analysis to trace the causal role of the ideas, institutions, and socio-religious movements of two Islamic missionary organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah, and their relationship to their role as contributing factors to the failure of the caliphate idea in Indonesia. This study is based on an analysis of secondary sources, including historical texts, scientific monographs, articles, and primary source documents such as fatwas, organizational constitutions, and speech manuscripts, all of which are complementary and interconnected.

The analysis process involves three interrelated levels: first, the construction of a historical narrative to establish the chronology of the *da'wa* movement and the challenges to the caliphate in Indonesia, from the end of the colonial era to the banning of HTI in 2017; second, discourse analysis, examining published materials, educational curricula, and public statements of NU and Muhammadiyah as the main *da'wa* organizations; and third, functional–institutional analysis, examining the social and political functions of the *da'wa* movement by analyzing how their activities build institutional loyalty, meet material needs, and create a sense of Islamic progress within a national framework.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. *Da'wa* Organization and the Formation of Islamic Locality

Since the colonial era, Indonesian Muslims have developed in a cultural rather than a political context, leaving them with little desire for a religious-based state (Atjeh 1985). Islamization in the archipelago itself was a subtle process, driven by traders, Sufis, and then by Islamic scholars (Hefner 2000). Sufis practiced an Islam that was accommodating to local culture, using local art forms, and embedding Islamic teachings within pre-existing spiritual frameworks. This constructive *da'wa* endeavors in Indonesia are believed to contribute to the resilience of the nation (Solahudin, 2023). *The Wali Songo* (Nine Saints) in Java are one manifestation of how early Islam was portrayed as a peaceful religion that

deeply respected local culture (Wahid 2001). This narrative has influenced the character of the subsequent *da'wa* movements.

In 1912, Muhammadiyah was born, marking the rise of Islamic modernism and reform in Indonesia (Burhani 2016; Nashir 2010). Fueled by the increasing interaction of Muslims with the Middle East through the Hajj pilgrimage and the spread of the printing revolution, Islamic scholars began calling for a purification of the teachings of syncretic local traditions and a return to the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, it is important to note that its primary goal was not the seizure of political power from Dutch colonialism, but rather the moral and intellectual strengthening of the Muslim community to counter colonialism and the stagnation of traditionalism.

Not long after, in 1926, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was born, a response to the movement to purify Islamic teachings while emphasizing the importance of local traditions. This is due to NU's *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), which pays close attention to the elements of "*urf*" (good traditions) that have been practiced by the community even before they adopted Islam. At this point, although Muhammadiyah and NU differed in their respective *da'wa* movements, both organizations were founded with socio-cultural goals, not to promote a state ideology. Overall, these *da'wa* movements proved to be catalysts for social movements in the fight against colonialism and, in some cases, were instrumental in the formation of nationalist consciousness.

The birth of Muhammadiyah in 1912 and Nahdlatul Ulama in 1926 marked a new chapter in the larger-scale Islamic missionary movement. Muhammadiyah was a modernist Islamic missionary movement with a mission to spread pure Islam through modern means, including the construction of schools, hospitals, orphanages, and publishing houses. By creating a parallel social infrastructure, Muhammadiyah demonstrated that Muslims could thrive, modernize, and maintain their faith in the complex Indonesian context. This undoubtedly paved the way for the realization of a spirit of nationalism among Indonesian Muslims.

Meanwhile, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) represents the traditionalist *da'wa* movement. True to its name, which literally means "revival of the ulama," NU is supported by traditional ulama and a network of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), which later expanded throughout Indonesia (Barton 2002; Ni'am 2015). Unlike Muhammadiyah, NU's *da'wa* movement focuses on preserving culture and transmitting classical Islamic knowledge (*kitab kuning*) within the framework of the *Ahlussunnah wal-Jama'ah* (Aswaja) doctrine, which has long been assimilated into the Indonesian context. Therefore, for NU, locality is theological (Barton 2002). They defend Indonesian Islamic tradition as a legitimate school of thought. They also see the authority of the *kyai* as local, charismatic, and rooted in specific communities.

Although these organizations' movements have different patterns, both have played a crucial role in building local Islamic communities in Indonesia. Therefore, when the idea and movement for a caliphate emerged in Indonesia, both organizations firmly rejected it. Although some early figures expressed sympathy for pan-Islamism as a spirit of anti-colonial struggle (Fealy, 2004), in subsequent developments, both organizations mobilized their entire *da'wa* apparatus to achieve Indonesian independence, not to establish a global caliphate.

4.2. The Caliphate as Counter-Da'wa: The Failure of 'Darul Islam'

The Darul Islam (DI/TII) rebellion (1949–1962) led by S.M. Kartosuwiryo was the first and most significant systematic attempt to replace the Indonesian state ideology with Islam. Formichi (2012) observes that this movement was not merely a military rebellion, but can fundamentally be understood as a violent and revolutionary counter-*da'wa*

movement against the socio-religious foundations laid by mainstream Indonesian Islam. Kartosuwiryo's ideology framed the republican government as a pagan entity (*thaghut*) and therefore religiously illegitimate (Formichi 2012). Therefore, armed struggle was necessary to establish a divinely ordained Islamic state.

It is important to note that although Darul Islam (DI/TII) was not born as an idea entirely linked to the global concept of the caliphate, its aspiration to establish an Islamic state was a specific goal that clashed with Indonesia's diverse context. In several regions, this movement faced direct resistance from within the Muslim community itself. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, as established Islamic missionary movements, played a significant role in countering this rebellion.

Therefore, the factors behind the DI/TII's failure can be identified in several ways. First, DI/TII's violent preaching methods were counterproductive, alienating them. Intimidation, military conscription, and other strategies were considered completely at odds with cultural-persuasive preaching within Indonesian Muslim society. DI/TII's brutality disgusted the majority of Muslims, especially in Java, whose Islamic identity had been shaped by the social ethics propagated by local NU *kyai* and Muhammadiyah preachers (van Bruinessen 1999).

Second, the purely political ideology of DI/TII does not offer a functional alternative to the social infrastructure implemented by NU and Muhammadiyah. When Kartosuwiryo, the leader of DI/TII, spoke of an Islamic state, NU already had a network of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) that served as centers of education, welfare, and socio-cultural stability, thus creating a vibrant Islamic society (Bush 2009). Similarly, Muhammadiyah had built an Islamic society through the establishment of schools, hospitals, orphanages, and modern clinics (Hefner 2000). In other words, DI/TII, which focused on military control and political dogma, lacked the comparable capacity to meet the spiritual, educational, and material needs of Indonesian Muslim society (Fealy 2004).

Third, and most importantly, the theological and social authority of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) clerics mobilized the resistance. Since the Dutch colonial era, key NU leaders, particularly its founder, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, issued fatwas declaring the defense of the Republic of Indonesia as an obligatory "jihad" for Muslims (Fealy 2004). These fatwas framed the state not as a *thaghut* (infidels), but as the legitimate Islamic authority (*wali al-amr*) that must be obeyed. This view is a manifestation of their Sunni-Asy'ariah theology, which distinguishes between religious authority (*diniyah*) and worldly political authority (*siyasiyah*) (Nahdlatul Ulama 2019).

This view later became known as the doctrine of *sulthah* or *de facto* authority, which is derived from classical Islamic jurisprudence, which states that any established authority that maintains order, justice, and enables Muslims to practice their religion must be obeyed (Nahdlatul Ulama 2019). This is based on the principle of "*as-sulthatul uli al-amri minal muslimin*" (authority is recognized as part of the Muslim community) and the Indonesian state has fulfilled these requirements. All of these views are recorded in the *Risalah Ahlissunnah Wal Jamaah*, which forms the basis of NU's commitment to Sunni political theology emphasizing social harmony and obedience to legitimate authority (Nahdlatul Ulama 2019).

Therefore, it is not surprising that NU clerics were key nodes in their respective regions, using their social capital to denounce DI/TII as a divisive, heretical view (Bush 2009). Their preaching emphasized the obligation to obey legitimate rulers, the prioritization of social unity based on nationalism (*ukhrawah wathaniyah*), and the religious validity of Indonesian nationalism (*hubbul wathan minal iman*—love of the homeland is part of faith). This theological counter-narrative gave the Republic an Islamic legitimacy that DI/TII could not disrupt (Bush 2009).

Therefore, according to Bush (2009), the failure of the Darul Islam (DI/TII) was ultimately not only a testament to the state's ideological and military strength, but also made possible by 'socio-religious delegitimization.' In other words, the vision of Islam that had been instilled by NU and Muhammadiyah had succeeded in integrating Islamic identity with Indonesian citizenship. The failure of the DI/TII rebellion showed that in the Indonesian context, cultural *da'wa* that serves and builds the nation is much more appreciated than political *da'wa* with violence.

4.3. Consolidation of Locality: The Da'wa Movement in New Order and Reformation Era

The rise of the New Order, led by Suharto, marked a radical transformation of the Islamic landscape in Indonesia. The political instability of the preceding years had heightened the state's vigilance against counter-ideological forces, prompting the New Order to embark on a project of ideological homogenization. Pancasila was transformed from a fundamental philosophy into a "hegemonic state doctrine" (Bourchier 2019). Through the 1985 "Asas Tunggal," all social and political organizations were forced to adopt Pancasila as their sole principle (Bourchier 2019). For major Islamic *da'wa* movements like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, this posed an existential dilemma, but both were later able to strategically adapt and structure their movements as "cultural *da'wa*" for community empowerment.

Facing the state's depoliticization of Islam, both organizations redefined their missions. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), led by Abdurrahman Wahid a.k.a Gus Dur, underwent a significant transformation, officially adopting the concept of "*pribumisasi Islam*" (Wahid 2001). This intellectual framework argued that Islam should be deeply rooted in local culture and serve as a moral and ethical force in society, rather than a political ideology. At the *Musyawarah Nasional* (National Conference) in Situbondo, NU made the historic decision to withdraw from practical politics, known as "*Kembali ke Khittah 1926*," refocusing on socio-religious activities (PBBNU 1983). This effort was realized through strengthening its network of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and acting as a moral critic of state overreach from within the confines of cultural discourse.

Meanwhile, the modernist Muhammadiyah intensified its focus on "*dakwah bil hal*" (*da'wa* as concrete actions) by expanding its network of "social enterprises" by building thousands of schools, universities, hospitals, and orphanages (Nashir 2010). This was a concrete step demonstrating that Islamic values could drive national development and create modern and ethical citizens within the framework of the state, thus reinforcing the development goals of the New Order (Hefner 2000).

On the other hand, this period gave rise to new forms and approaches to urban *da'wa*: the rise of charismatic preachers, televised *da'wa*, and urban religious study groups (Hefner 2000). They developed a dynamic and distinctively Indonesian Islamic public sphere, using the national language, addressing local issues, and operating comfortably within the economic and political systems. *Da'wa* in this era socially instilled the pluralist framework of Pancasila, making it an undeniable concept for Islamic life. Similarly, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) explicitly asserted that Islam's role was to impart moral and ethical values to enrich national culture, rather than to seize state power (Wahid 2001).

Furthermore, NU scholars and intellectuals also assert that Pancasila constitutes the final social contract (*salim al-wasl*). This is a theological term that means "final result" or "perfected." The document states: "*Bentuk final Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (NKRI) telah menjadi kesepakatan bangsa (darurat syar'iyah)... upaya perubahan terhadap dasar negara... merupakan perbuatan makar dan bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam*" (The final form of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) has become a national agreement...

“Any attempt to change the foundation of the state. . . constitutes treason and contradicts Islamic teachings”) (Nahdlatul Ulama 2019).

After the fall of the New Order in 1998, Indonesia underwent reformasi and entered a new phase in socio-political life. Consequently, the paradigm of the *da'wa* movement adopted by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah emerged with a renewed spirit, one of which was democratic-participatory Islamic missionary movement through active participation in practical politics. This was not new for NU, as in the 1950s, NU was a political party participating in elections. However, instead of using the name NU as a political party, they adopted the name Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), similarly to Muhammadiyah, which established the Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN). This indicates that through practical political participation, these two Islamic missionary organizations have once again demonstrated their loyalty to the constitution of a country that adheres to a constitutional democratic political system.

At the same time, however, the wave of reform has also opened the freedom that have allowed for the development of a number of transnational movements, including those within the context of *da'wa* and Islamic perspectives. This is represented by the Salafi movement, which focuses on purifying Islamic teachings, and the Tarbiyah movement, inspired by *Ikhwanul Muslimin* (the Muslim Brotherhood), which later led to the establishing of Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, Prosperous Justice Party) (Sholeh 2015). However, as with NU and Muhammadiyah, the transnational idea within the PKS context is only used as motivation to improve the quality of education and Islamic awareness.

In this context, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) is also a transnational movement that explicitly emerged as an intellectual-political movement. Unlike the PKS, which, while similarly inspired by transnational Islam, HTI focuses more on ideological indoctrination while emphasizing the importance of the caliphate ideology in Indonesia (Osman 2018). They regularly distribute bulletins containing calls for a return to the perfect teachings of Islam within a political framework. They also hold seminar forums that present a number of structured arguments and have received a response from educated urban Muslims frustrated with the corrupt democratic system (Osman 2018). The political narrative of Islam constructed by HTI has been significant in filling the space for freedom of expression in the reform era. Therefore, this era demonstrates how the intellectual movement emerged as a counter-narrative to the caliphate idea, which has regained the strength of “Islamic locality.”

This intellectual movement emerged and was systematically promoted by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. NU championed the concept of “*Islam Nusantara*” (Nusantara Islam) while Muhammadiyah promoted the concept of “*Islam Berkemajuan*” (Progressive Islam). Both concepts reflect their respective authentic ideas in a more elegant framework to address the challenges of modernity, globalization, and nation-building. Both aim to affirm the relevance of Islam in the contemporary era. Although these two concepts are built on different theological foundations, methods, and emphases, both narratives play a significant role in marginalizing the political narrative of the caliphate.

In general, *Islam Nusantara* emerged as a concept emphasizing the contextualization and indigenization of Islam within the cultural, historical, and social realities of Indonesia, as expressed in various works and intellectual ideas of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) scholars (Ni'am 2015; Wahid 2001). This concept is rooted in the NU tradition of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* (Aswaja), with its moderation, balance, and tolerance (Ibrahim et al. 2019). This idea has made a significant political contribution in countering transnational radical ideologies such as the caliphate, which are considered out of context for Indonesia (Azra 2016). In the contemporary era, this has even become a mainstream in religious development in Indonesia through the concept of “*moderasi beragama*” (religious moderation) which is promoted nationally (Akhmadi 2008; Kementerian Agama RI 2019; Musawar et al. 2019).

Likewise, the concept of Islam Berkemajuan has been the hallmark of Muhammadiyah's modern and progressive *da'wa* movement since its inception. Islam Berkemajuan has a theological foundation in the spirit of *tajdid*, aimed at creating a rational and modern Islamic understanding so that purification is not a retreat to the past, but rather a foundation for progress (Nashir 2010). Methodologically, the concept of Islam Berkemajuan uses an institutional-rational approach that is realized through the development of concrete civilization by establishing modern schools, universities, hospitals, orphanages, and charitable institutions that are managed professionally with the aim of freeing Muslims from ignorance, poverty, and backwardness (Burhani 2016).

Although methodologically different, these two concepts can be understood as forms of resistance to transnational Islamism, including the idea of a caliphate, because they recognize and affirm the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) and Pancasila as final concepts and focus on the development of civil society. Thus, both the concepts of *Islam Nusantara* and Progressive Islam are two main pillars of the formation of "Islamic locality" as a moral and social force that has become integrated with the pulse of Indonesian Muslims.

It is this deeply rooted locality of Islam that the caliphate idea promoted by HTI has practically faced, leading to its failure. This failure can be attributed to several reasons. First, the caliphate idea is functionally irrelevant. While HTI offers political solutions to the social, economic, and moral problems faced by the majority of Indonesian Muslims, local *da'wa* movements, represented by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, have long provided concrete solutions in everyday life.

Second, there was resistance from the theological-practical *da'wa* movement. This was demonstrated, in particular, by NU scholars through fatwas and the publication of works that reaffirmed the validity of Islam regarding the concept of the nation state (*dawlah*). These NU scholars and intellectuals put forward the doctrine of *hubbul wahtan minal iman* as a fatwa on the importance of obedience to the state, which is considered a religious virtue (Baso et al. 2019). This fatwa by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari has existed since the independence struggle, when he declared the struggle to defend the Republic of Indonesia as "*Jihad Wathani*" (Patriotic Jihad), which is obligatory for all Muslims. As recorded in history, this fatwa successfully mobilized the NU grassroots to fight against Dutch colonialism and was later echoed to counter any threat, including transnational movements seeking to destroy the Republic.

Therefore, the failure of the caliphate idea is not only demonstrated by the government's official dissolution of HTI, but also by various similar movements in the previous era, such as the Darul Islam (DI/TII) rebellion. Various facts show that this failure was not solely due to the transnational nature of the idea, as the local Darul Islam (DI/TII) also experienced similar failures. Similarly, the failure of the caliphate idea is not solely due to the strong foundation of Pancasila, but also due to the long-standing role and contribution of *da'wa* movements such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, which have consistently translated Islam into the Indonesian context. Mainstream *da'wa* movements have acted as guardians of the locality of Islam and have been able to undermine the caliphate idea and similar movements.

5. Conclusions

In the Indonesian reality, the *da'wa* movement does not exist as a neutral ideological practice, but is always bound and framed by its socio-political context. Movements such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah have consistently strengthened a vision of Islamic life integrated within the framework of the Indonesian nation state since the colonial era. Thus, while theoretically religious movements can be fertile ground for the growth of political Islamism, in Indonesia, the opposite has occurred. Through a cultural *da'wa*

approach, both organizations have fostered an independent Islamic ecosystem with a local character. The concepts of *Islam Nusantara* (NU) and *Islam Berkemajuan* (Muhammadiyah) serve to reinforce the idea of the locality of Indonesian Islam.

Therefore, the failure of the caliphate idea is not only a victory for Pancasila as a state ideology, but also evidence of the strong character of local Islam championed by a number of Islamic missionary movements. Numerous fatwas and intellectual works from each Islamic organization reinforce the importance of state ideology as a final outcome that does not conflict with Islamic teachings. This not only strengthens the local identity of Islam but also serves as a counter-discourse to transnational religious ideologies that are inconsistent with Indonesia's diverse socio-cultural context.

Throughout various periods of Indonesian history, *da'wa* movements, particularly Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, have consistently emphasized the importance of Islam as a foundation for socio-cultural life, not necessarily as a political one. Through cultural *da'wa*, these two organizations and *da'wa* movements reinforce the importance of local culture and the development of the quality of the community as part of the local Islamic agenda, which has had implications for how they have effectively delegitimized the idea of the caliphate among Indonesian Muslims. However, any movements like the caliphate have certainly evolved and have the potential to undergo remodeling in the contemporary era. Therefore, a specific study of these would address this concern.

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