

**ETHNICITY AND ISLAMIC ACTIVISM  
IN DIASPORA**  
**A Study on the “*Urang Awak*” and Their Dakwah  
Activism in West Java, Indonesia**

**Abdul Wahid Hasyim**  
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia  
*abd.wahid@uinjkt.ac.id*

**Abstract**

*This article examines the “urang awak”, a term referring to the diasporic Minangnese who trace their origin to Minangkabau in West Sumatera, and their dakwah activism in diaspora. It problematises the relation of Islam and ethnic identity of a diasporic community in contemporary West-Java, Indonesia. It further argues that mosque has been central to the activities of dakwah activism of the urang awak in diaspora. As this article demonstrates, the Harakatul Jannah mosque and Al-Anwar mosque reserve as important bases for dakwah activism of urang awak in a dominant culture of Sundanese and Javanese. Through these mosques, the urang awak attempt to preserve their ethnic identity, mainly expressed through the mosques’ architecture, language, and religious activities that clearly symbolise the identity of urang awak.*

*[Artikel ini menelusuri kiprah dakwah orang Minangkabau di Bogor, Jawa Barat melalui Masjid Harakatul Jannah di Gadog, Ciawi, dan Masjid Al-Anwar di Dramaga. Kiprah dakwah yang mereka lakukan tercermin dalam beragam kegiatan sosial-keagamaan yang dikelola oleh orang Minang yang tinggal di sekitar wilayah Bogor. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan historiografi dengan berdasar pada literatur terdahulu dan observasi, artikel ini berkesimpulan bahwa dua masjid tersebut memang dijadikan sebagai*

*media dakwah yang bertujuan untuk melestarikan tradisi Minangkabau. Di salah satu masjid tersebut masih terdapat pesantren bernama Tahfiz Anwar Syarif yang masih eksis sampai sekarang dan menunjukkan kemiripan tradisi intelektual Islam di Minangkabau abad ke-19. Dengan demikian, para santri dan kelompok orang Minang di daerah tersebut membentuk jejaring tradisi intelektual Islam yang turut mempengaruhi perkembangan Islam di Indonesia.]*

**Keywords:** *Disapora, Urang Awak, Dakwah*

## Introduction

The Minangnese “*urang awak*” have been renowned for their strict adherents of Islam. Islam and local culture in the Minangkabau worldview, are two-side of the the same coin. The fundamental maxim of the Minangnese says that “*adat basandi sarak, sarak basandi kitabullah* (customs and local cultures root in the Islamic *sharia*, and the Islamic *sharia* bases on God’s revelation). This principle is fundamental to the Minangnese, including those who live in diaspora.

This paper contributes the discussion on the dislocation of ethnicised Islamic culture in contemporary Indonesia. It particularly addresses the roles of *urang awak*, a diasporic community of the Minangnese, in West Java, through a question of how the the *urang awak* maintain and expose their ethnic identity through Islamic activism outside the area of their origin in Minangkabau, West Sumatera. The article particularly examines the *dakwah* activism of the *urang awak* through two mosques, the Harakatul Jannah mosque and Al-Anwar mosque, both located in West Java.

As Stuart Hall argues, identity is not only based on archeological evidence but about the depiction of the past, where cultural and historical identity resort as as a unity of shared ownership.<sup>1</sup> This view is true as we look at the case of the *urang awak* and their attempts to maintain their

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), p. 222-237.

particular ethnic identities, values and norms.<sup>2</sup> In many cases, attempts to maintain identities transgress the boundaries of geographical space as travelling to other locations and experienced the dislocation of culture.<sup>3</sup> Mosque, as this article argues, is crucial among the *urang awak* as a space where ethnic boundaries and identities were exercised through Muslim sacred place.

There have been studies on the *urang awak*. Examining the dynamics of Minangnese identity in Semarang-Central Java, Zulkhifli Mustafid and Kuncoro Bayu Prasetyo argue that Minangnese translated the principle of being Minangnese into a Calvinist model of worldview through the call for hard work and the principle of honesty. As other regions where the *urang awak* form as a diasporic community, they dominate the economic affairs of home communities, mainly in trades.<sup>4</sup> A study by Nur Indah Ariyani focuses on the cultural adaptation of the Minangnese in diaspora. She argues that the *urang awak* are flexible to their culture as their diasporic culture shows a high degree of blending between the Minangnese and culture of home communities. This adaptation is particularly found through daily language, food and social norms.<sup>5</sup> Despite cultural flexibility, as Muhammad Alfi finds through his research on the Minangnese in Bandung, the Minangnese in diaspora also show a strong

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<sup>2</sup> Yasnur Asri, "The Sketches of Minangkabau Society in Nur St. Iskandar's and Hamka's Novels," *Humaniora*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Uma Narayan, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism* (Oxon: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Imam Zulkhifli Mustafid & Kuncoro Bayu Prasetyo, "Nilai Kearifan Lokal dan Etos Kerja Diaspora Minangkabau di Kota Semarang," *Solidarity*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2019, pp. 557–71; Hafiz Awlia Ramadhan, "Darek and Rantau: An Identity through Diglossia," *Antropologi Indonesia*, No. 1, 2016, pp. 17–28.

<sup>5</sup> Nur Indah Ariyani, 'Strategi Adaptasi Orang Minang terhadap Bahasa, Makanan, dan Norma Masyarakat Jawa', *Komunitas: International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2013, pp. 26–37; Novianti, Ranti Irsa, & Astuti Masdar, "Preserving Minangkabau Traditional Building in West Sumatera, Indonesia: Integration of Information Technology," *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, Vol. 17, 2013, pp. 749–56.

effort to maintain their distinct ethnic and cultural identity.<sup>6</sup>

This article on the other hand tries to portray the intermingled Islam and ethnicity and the attempts to maintain a distinct identity of the *urang awak* in the dominant culture of Sundanese and Javanese in West Java. Mainly important to the discussion is the crucial position of mosque for the project of drawing ethnic boundaries of a diasporic community. The discussion particularly relies on data collected through participant-observation and interviews with activists of two mosques in West Java: the Harakatul Jannah mosque and Al-Anwar mosque.

### **The Diasporic Minangnese, the *Urang Awak***

Oral story relates the *urang awak* to the Tambo Minangkabau region where Minangkabau culture has rooted their culture to this region. Important to the culture of *urang awak* is the call for young-adults of Minangnese to carry out “*kerantau*”. *Kerantau* is an important concept in the Minangnese culture calling Minangnese adults to wondering around and travelling outside their villages. As a popular elegy of the Minangnese says:

*Kerantau madang di bulu* (to wander rust in up-river)

*Berbuah berbunga belum* (fruit flowering yet)

*Merantau bujang dabulu* (wandering single first)

*Di rumah berguna belum* (at home is useful yet)

The classical understanding of *kerantau* is related closely to the geographical expansion of the Minangnese. As the story of Minangnese said, the earliest area of the Minangnese covered Luhak Nan Tigo, consisting of the three principle areas: Luhak Tanah Datar, Luhak Agam, and Luhak Lima Puluh Kota).<sup>7</sup> The Minangnese later expanded their

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<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Alfi, “The Male Culture Tradition Babali Among Pariaman Emigrants: Reinterpretation Study on Pariaman Emigrants in Bandung City,” *KnE Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 10, 2019, pp. 487.

<sup>7</sup> Mochtar Naim, *Merantau: Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau* (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 1984), p. 61.

territories to the western part of the Sumatera Island, such as Bengkulu, Muko-muko, up to the Mandailing border, and to eastern part of the island comprising of areas of Rokan, Siak, Kampar, Indragiri (Kuantan), and Batang Hari. This eastern part was developed rapidly as located along important rivers in Sumatera. Ships and boats were crucial as transporting natural sources, such as pepper, gold, camphor, and products produced in the inner Sumatera, mainly the Luhak Nan Tigo, to the river-ports.<sup>8</sup> The traffics of trade between the inner and centres of trade along the rivers later invited the migration of Minangnese living in Luhak Nan Tigo to trade centres.<sup>9</sup> The 16<sup>th</sup> century traveller Tome Pires wrote that the Minangkabau region was rich with natural resources, mainly gold and precious metals. The Minangnese, as Pires witnessed, were controlling the circulation of these natural sources and were powerful traders in Malacca.<sup>10</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Minangnese had dominated the traffics of trades in the Melacca Strait.<sup>11</sup> They were both producers and traders for precious metals, woods, pepper, candles, honey, and camphor and become one of crucial traders of global commerce.<sup>12</sup> This, in turn, made the Melacca as the biggest sea-port in Southeast Asia and facilitated the cultural expansion<sup>13</sup> and global migration of Minangnese.<sup>14</sup>

Particularly important to the global expansion of the Minangnese

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<sup>8</sup> Noel B. Salazar, "The (Im) Mobility of Merantau as a Sociocultural Practice in Indonesia," Natasa G. Bon (eds.), *Moving places: Relations, Return, and Belonging*, Vol. 29, 2019, pp. 21–42.

<sup>9</sup> Mochtar Naim, *Merantau: Pola Migrasi*..., p. 62.

<sup>10</sup> Armando Cortesao, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1944).

<sup>11</sup> Reza Fahmi, "The Paradox of Islam and Culture: Tradition and Belief about Gender Perspective in West Sumatera)," *Buletin Al-Turas*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2014, pp. 313–24.

<sup>12</sup> Mochtar Naim, *Merantau: Pola Migrasi*..., p. 66-67.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>14</sup> Flores Tanjung, "Awareness of History Nation Serumpun (Indonesia-Malaysia): Culture without Borders," *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, Vol. 208, 2019, pp. 63–67; Koentjaraningrat, *Manusia dan Kebudayaan di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1988), p. 249.

is their cultural bond with their place of origin in Minangkabau in Sumatera. Despite their cultural dislocation, the Minangnese maintain their affiliation to each *nagari* (village).<sup>15</sup> It is common to many the Minangnese migrants either to send their children having education at *surau* (traditional educational system based on mosque) or build *surau* in their new homeland. The cultural traffics and migration of Minangnese further accelerated as the Dutch occupied the Minangkabau territory in 1840,<sup>16</sup> particularly when the Dutch established the first rail-road in Sumatera in 1887 connecting Sawah Lunto and Teluk Bayur sea-port.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to commerce, the migration of Minangnese was also related to the increasing interest of Minangnese to study and jobs opportunities outside Minangkabau region. The introduction of Dutch East Indies schools in Minangkabau in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century has facilitated the birth of educated Minangnese who assigned important positions in the colonial government.<sup>18</sup> Some educated Minangnese also continued their educations to higher schools and universities which were mainly located in Java. A significant number of educated Minangnese further went abroad, particularly to the Netherlands and Japan, for their education.<sup>19</sup>

The *nagari* system played key roles in the migration of educated Minangnese as the system provided them with necessary funds needed for their studies. Nevertheless, the Dutch East Indies government also provided them with scholarship and in the 1930s, the Japan government followed the move. Importantly, since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the economics

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<sup>15</sup> Mochtar Naim, *Merantau: Pola Migrasi*..., p. 78.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78-79.

<sup>17</sup> Tom Cherrett and others, "Understanding Urban Freight Activity-Key Issues for Freight Planning," *Journal of Transport Geography*, Vol. 24, 2012, pp. 22-32.

<sup>18</sup> Nursyirwan Effendi, "A Contested Cultural Identity among Migrants in Three Sumatran Cities of Indonesia: Ethnic Entrepreneurs between Global Economy and Ethnic Identity," *Paper presented at 4th International Symposium of the Journal Antropologi Indonesia*, 2005, pp. 1-28.

<sup>19</sup> Suryadi, "The Recording Industry and "Regional" Culture in Indonesia: The Case of Minangkabau", *Wacana*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2015, pp. 479-509.

of Minangnese had been improving as the Dutch launched a number of important economic centres in Sumatera that connected the island and the outside world.<sup>20</sup>

Following the Indonesian independence in 1945, the Minangnese also expanded their presence to the neighboring countries, Malaysia and Singapore. Their travel was mainly for economic purpose and for education. Java is their main destination for the latter purpose. Also, as the failure of the attempt to establish the Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/PRRI (the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) in the 1950s with its headquarter in Padang, Sumatera, the Minangnese migration further escalated. The government's fear of the possible coup of the Minangnese has generated a close surveillance upon the Minangnese in Sumatera. As a response, the Minangnese migrated in a significant number to many big cities in Java.<sup>21</sup> In their new homeland, many Minangnese started their businesses as petty criminals, thugs and gangsters. Importantly, renowned for their Islamic observance, many Minangnese also served as religious leaders in their new homeland.

In 1970 for instance, eighty-percent of a total number of professional religious teacher registered by the Council of Mosques in Jakarta were Minangnese.<sup>22</sup> As a consequence of their significance role in religion, the Minangnese also transferred their cultural belongings into aspects of religion, such as the architecture of the mosque<sup>23</sup> and

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<sup>20</sup> Gusti Asnan, "*Tradisi Rantau dan Diaspora Kasus Minangkabau Melayu dan Bugis*," Taufik Abdullah & Endjat Djaenuderadjat (eds.), *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Indonesia: Tradisi Intelektual dan Sosial* (Jakarta: Kemendikbud, 2015), p. 398.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 399.

<sup>22</sup> Srimaharani Tanjung, Tengku Silvana Sinar, Ikhwanuddin Nasution, "The Tradition of Manjapuik Marapulai in Minangkabau Culture," *KnE Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 2018, pp. 878.

<sup>23</sup> A distinctive feature of the Minangkabau culture that can be observed physically is the Gonjong roof (oval), which has both sharp and left sides of the right and the bright like a buffalo horn, which is usually applied to traditional Minangkabau houses.

activities of the mosque. As for the architecture, the oval-shape of the mosque roof is indeed the translation of Minangnese house. To escalate the influence of Minangnese in their new homeland, the Minangnese established many organisation exclusively for the Minangnese origins.<sup>24</sup> Through these organisations, the Minangnese in diaspora maintain their kinship, cultural belongings and ties with their ancestors' homeland in Minangkabau, Sumatera.<sup>25</sup>

### **Mosque and *Dakwah* Activism**

In Indonesian context, a mosque is exclusively referring to a place of Muslim worship which is different from the *musholla*, a smaller form of Muslim worshipping place.<sup>26</sup> Beside religious function, a mosque is important in social sphere in general, mainly in education.<sup>27</sup> It takes roots to the early history of Islam, during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, that a mosque has been reserved as a social centre, in addition of religious function.<sup>28</sup> Particularly important to the function of a mosque is the centre of *dakwah* (Islamic proselytization activism) through which calling non-

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<sup>24</sup> Dwi Rini Sovia Firdaus, Djuara P. Lubis, Djoko Susanto, "Portrait of The Minangkabau Culture According to Hofstede's Six Cultural Dimensions," *Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Rahman Malik, "Ikatan Kekerabatan Etnis Minangkabau dalam Melestarikan Nilai Budaya Minangkabau di Perantauan sebagai Wujud Warga NKRI," *Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2016, pp. 17–27.

<sup>26</sup> Imam Mawardi, Akhmad Baihaqi, Kanthi Pamungkas Sari, "Typology and Characteristics of Community-Based School Mosques in Magelang Raya-Indonesia: A Study on *Dakwah* Curriculum Management Model of Rahmatan lil alamin," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2019, pp. 40–59; Syamsul Rijal, "Friday Prayer and an Indonesian Islamic Identity in Canberra, Australia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2009, pp. 148–67.

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Abzar, "Revitalisasi Peran Masjid sebagai Basis dan Media *Dakwah* Kontemporer," *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2012, pp. 109–121.

<sup>28</sup> J. Pedersen, et.al., "Masjid," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed. Vol. 6 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999), p. 644-77; Fahmi Prihantoro, "Masjid: Ekspresi Arsitektur Religi" Inajati Adrisijanti & Taufik Abdullah (eds.), *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Indonesia: Khasanah Budaya Bendawi* (Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Budaya, Kemendikbud, 2015), p.137.



Muslim to worship the Muslims' God,<sup>29</sup> and reserves as the educational centre.<sup>30</sup> Muslim still preserves this multi-functionality of mosque.

For the Minangnese, *surau*—a mosque based system of education and social activities—is crucial in the maintenance of tradition. This is particularly not limited to the Minangnese living in Minangkabau region, but also those who live in diaspora.<sup>31</sup> The history of Minangkabau society records the triumph of mosque-based Islamic activism and renowned Minangnese figures, such as Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (1908-1981)—known as *Buya* Hamka—and Moh. Natsir (1908-1993).<sup>32</sup> *Buya* Hamka is an important Islamic thinker in contemporary Indonesia. He started his Islamic activism through mosques-based activism, particularly when he was appointed as one of *imam* (leader) of the Al-Azhar mosque in Jakarta. Through this mosque, Hamka delivered his sermons and later wrote his *magnum opus* on Quranic exegesis, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*.<sup>33</sup>

Like Hamka, Moh. Natsir established his al-Furqan Mosque in Jakarta. This mosque also reserves as the headquarter of the Indonesian Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia/DDII (the Indonesian Council for *Dakwah* Activism). Also in different areas in Indonesia, some Minangnese importante figures were renowned for their Islamic activism through mosques, such as a *mufti* of Mecca, *Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi (1860-1916), Abdul Jawad or Khatib Bungsu (*Datuk* Ri Tiro), and *Datuk* Ri Bandang -known as Abdul Makmur or Khatib

<sup>29</sup> Nizaita Omar, Zulkifly Muda, Razi Yaakob, "Mosques as an Agent for Community Development in the History of Islam," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 9, No. 9, 2019, pp. 763–72.

<sup>30</sup> Sidi Gazalba, *Masjid Pusat Ibadah dan Kebudayaan Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Antara, 1983).

<sup>31</sup> Hilman Latief, "Islamic Charities and Dakwah Movements in a Muslim Minority Island: The Experience of Niasan Muslims," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2012, pp. 221-44.

<sup>32</sup> Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam, "The Society of Minangkabau in Tulis Sutan Sati's Sengsara Membawa Nikmat: Between Local Traditions and Islamic Teachings," *Journal of Social Science and Religion*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2016, pp. 59–74.

<sup>33</sup> Ramlan Mardjoned, K.H. Hasan Basri 70 Tahun: *Fungsi Ulama dan Peranan Masjid* (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1990), p. 192.

Tunggal. These later two were important Minangnese religious scholars who successfully converted kings of Luwu and Gowa in Sulawesi, and kings of Gantarang and Bima kingdoms. The following discussion is a close portrait of a diasporic Minangnese *dakwah* activism through mosque, focusing on their activism at Harakatul Jannah Mosque in Gadog-Ciawi and Al-Anwar Mosque in Sukawening-Dramaga; both in West Java.

### *Harakatul Jannah Mosque*

Harakatul Jannah Mosque was established in 2006. The initiator of the mosque was Datuk Syahrul Effendi, a former South Jakarta Mayor who served as Deputy Governor for Population and Settlement Control. The funding comes from independent sources (*wakaaf*): both from Syahrul Effendi and his wife, Hajjah Astati Syahrul, as well as from around 88 donors who are migrants from Minangkabau, including names such as Azyumardi Azra (a senior Professor of Islamic History and Culture at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta), and Anwar Abbas (Secretary-General of the Council of Indonesian Ulama). The name of the Harakatul Jannah mosque means “Heaven Movement” or the road to heaven.<sup>34</sup> The name “Harakatul Jannah” is indeed a translation of ‘Gebu Minang’ (Minangkabau Economic and Cultural Movement), an organization exclusively for Minangnese in diaspora founded on 24 December 1989 with a particular aim to gather and foster the potential of Minangnese in diaspora in the economic and cultural fields.<sup>35</sup>

The Harakatul Jannah mosque is located at the intersection of an important street and the mosque’s location mirrors as a strategy for *dakwah* activism. According to *Datuk* Syahrul, the fundamental aim of the establishment of Harakatul Jannah Mosque is related to the mission of preaching. The mosque’s building in the area is very strategic, in addition

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Azyumardi Azra, a senior Professor of Islamic History and Culture at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta, in Ciputat, May 19, 2020.

to being a means of worship as well as as an effort to present a friendly and tolerant face of Islam which is open to all groups. It is not surprising that tourists visited this mosque to see the architecture of buildings and the activities of the mosque.<sup>36</sup> Worthy to note that the mosque would revise the public image associated with Bogor as a city with huge a number of prostitution. The importance of this mosque leads to a joined-program of religious sermon between the manager of the mosque and a national television station, TVOne, through the program of “*Damai Indonesiaku*”. *Dakwah* activities by involving a national TV station make the mosque known to the broader community in Indonesia and abroad.<sup>37</sup>

In terms of the mosque’s architecture, Widyaningrum and Haji Abdullah, an architect of Moroccan descent, designed the Harakatul Jannah mosque. The mosque’s architecture is indeed cosmopolitan as assembling cultural elements of Turkish, Indian, Indonesian, and European cultures. The spatial division of the mosque is also interesting case. It compromises of the *shahn*—a flat field inside the mosque used for praying or meetings—the *mibrâb*, a room or a niche at the front of the direction of prayer (*qibla*), the *mimbar* (a place of preachers delivering sermons and is located on the right side of *mibrâb*), the *kubah* (one part of the construction of the mosque’s roof, which has a round or half-round shape in the middle of the mosque that covers the base building), and the *menara* (minaret). The last element is crucial as symbolising the glory of Islam.<sup>38</sup>

As for the dome of Harakatul Jannah mosque, it resembles the shape of Taj Mahal in India. Six small domes surround the central dome with copper material and are decorated with lotus flowers resembling the Turkish and Indian cultural symbols. Besides, the mosque was built

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<sup>36</sup> Interview with Agus Mulyana, Chairman of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, Founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>38</sup> Sukron Kamil & Zakiyah Darajat, “Mosques and Muslim Social Integration: Study of External Integration of the Muslims,” *Insaniyat*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2019, pp. 37–48.

by adopting Arabic architectural models, integrating the architectures of various continents, namely Asia, Europe, and Africa.<sup>39</sup> Mosque pillars are heavily influenced by gothic shaped of European architecture. With many components on the sides of the mosque—a style that was widely used in classical buildings of Ancient Rome, with the application of pillars that coincide between two tall pillars with two shorter pillars—the architects the mosque tried to symbolise the triumph of Islam through European meanings.<sup>40</sup> The roof of Harakatul Jannah mosque implements of traditional Minangnese house, the *gonjong*-shape. The main entrance also adopts the gate “Bundo Kanduang” model of the traditional Minangnese architecture. These architectural models of traditional Minangnese house recall the Minangnese principle of “*adat bersarak sarak, sarak bersanding Kitabullah*.”<sup>41</sup>

Besides, the Harakatul Jannah minaret—known as Hajjah Tower—is a mosque element that shows the Minangkabau cultural value. At the bottom of the Hajjah Tower, there is a room that serves as the office of the International Islamic Center. The mosque and the centre is open for all visitors and users. All communities both inside and outside the country, have the right to visit and even use the mosque building facilities, both for meetings and religious discussions.<sup>42</sup> In the context of *dakwah*, some parts of the Harakatul Jannah mosque are explicitly intended for the benefit of Islamic poetry. One of them is the Assembly of *Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi. Located right next to Hajjah Tower, this building is a sign of respect to *Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi, given the role of *Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, Founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Agus Mulyana, Chairman of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, Founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Agus Mulyana, Chairman of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadog, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

Minangkabawi in the process of Islamic renewal in Minangkabau.<sup>43</sup>

The activities carried out in the *Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi assembly are activities that involve students and administrators of the Harakatul Jannah mosque. Recitation activities, memorization of the Qur'an are main activities of the mosque. It consists of daily Quranic learning and weekly gathering named *Majelis Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi. Besides the *Majelis Sheikh* Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi, there is also an educational institution, known as the house of *Tahfiz* Harakatul Jannah. Until now, there are six students prepared to memorize the whole verses of Qur'an. The mosque provides scholarships and accommodation -called *Dangau Sarasab*. There they will conduct daily activities such as the deepening of the Qur'an, which is guided by senior teachers (*ustaz*) who have memorized the Qur'an and are fluent in Arabic. The activities of the students in the mosque showed similarities to Islamic intellectual traditions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Minangkabau. All educational and religious activities in the mosque resorts as an attempt to strengthen the Minangnese cultural identity in diaspora.

### *Al-Anwar Mosque*

Al-Anwar mosque falls under the management of Anwar Syarif Musnar Foundation. The mosque was built by a Minangnese Amreyza Anwar Datuk Sati Marajo who once served as district head of South Lampung Regent and a military leader of Aji Surya Natakesuma, East Kalimantan.<sup>44</sup> Al-Anwar mosque was established in 2017 and has 900m<sup>2</sup> mosque accommodating up to 600 worshippers.<sup>45</sup> At managerial level, Emnis Anwar runs the mosque's management. He invited residents

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, Founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadag, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Moh. Emnis Anwar, Chairman of the Al-Anwar mosque, Dramaga, In Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Zafrullah, Titian Rumah Putih Foundation, Parung, in Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

around the mosque to manage worship activities. By carrying out a variety of religious, social movements in the mosque, it is expected that the ideals of prosperity for the mosque will be achieved, providing maximum benefits to the Muslim community, both those who live there and who just stop by the mosque to worship. In addition to being the chairperson of the Amaliyah Indonesia Islamic Development Center Foundation, Emnis Anwar has also served as a lecturer at Djuanda University, Bogor (1994-2017), and since 2013 has served as a Deputy of the Al-Ittihadiyah and since 2017 served as Head Yawaru Islamic Boarding School, Tegal Bintang.

Aside from being the Al-Anwar Mosque and Prosperity Council (Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid/DKM), since 2019 Emnis Anwar has been focusing on caring for the *tahfiẓ* Anwar Syarif Islamic Boarding School located next to the Al-Anwar mosque building. In May 2020, the *pesantren* had educated around 53 prospective students, both male and female. Most of them are orphans and the poor (*dhū'afa*). The curriculum of the school emphasizes on *tahfiẓ* (memoring the verses of al-Qur'an by heart), languages learning (Arabic and English), and other subjects such as martial arts, agriculture, fisheries and farming.<sup>46</sup> Through the mosque and the school that he manages, Emnis Anwar hopes that the Minangnese religious scholars (*dai*) still continue their preaching activities while in diaspora.<sup>47</sup> As also mentioned by Syahrul Effendi, the founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, the fundamental reason of building a mosque in diaspora is a mandate (*wasiat*) from his mother who advised him to make a mosque somewhere outside Minangkabau region. Besides being a center of worship, the mosque is also a center for education, a social center, and even an economic center for the community.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with Zafrullah, Titian Rumah Putih Foundation, Parung, in Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Moh. Emnis Anwar, Chairman of the Al-Anwar mosque, Dramaga, In Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Syahrul Effendi, Founder of the Harakatul Jannah mosque, Gadag, in Bogor, West Java, May 18, 2020.

In terms of architecture, Al-Anwar mosque's building is minimalist, in contrast to the Harakatul Jannah mosque, which shows many Minang elements. In this context, the function of the mosque is adjusted to local conditions.<sup>49</sup> In contrast to the Harakatul Jannah mosque, which is located in a strategic area with a target of urban community in Bogor, the Al-Anwar mosque is intended for the people of Sukawening village, Dramaga. The mosque is intended as facilitating the need of worshipping places for the villagers who still have limited access to houses of worship. However, the spirit of Islamic symbols is dominant in the process of building and managing a mosque. A variety of activities are carried out with a primary focus on *dakwah* activities.

Commenting on *dakwah* in rural communities, Emnis Anwar refers to religious teachings related to the importance of preaching. Some verses of the Qur'an become a reference, including QS Âli 'Imrân (3) verse 110, "You are the best people who are born to humans, tell the ma'ruf, and prevent from evil, and believe in Allah. If the People of the Book of Faith is surely better for them; some of them believe, and most of them are wicked people." Another reference is QS An-Nahl (16) verse 125, "Call (all human beings) on the path of your Lord with good wisdom and teaching, and refute them in the best way, truly it is your Lord who knows better who is lost from the path- Him and who gets the instructions. " And Q.S Fushshilat (41) verse 33, "Who is better said than those who call to Allah, do good deeds and say:" Verily, I am among those who surrender."<sup>50</sup> Emnis Anwar attempted to translate all these verses through the religious activities he carried out, both through the Al-Anwar mosque and the *tahfiz* Anwar Syarif Islamic Boarding School. He believes Islam is indeed a religion of *dakwah*.

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Zafrullah, Titian Rumah Putih Foundation, Parung, in Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Moh. Emnis Anwar, Chairman of the Al-Anwar mosque, Dramaga, in Bogor, West Java, May 19, 2020.

## Conclusion

The above discussion on the Harakatul Jannah mosque and the Al-Anwar mosque shows that the expansion of Minangnese's *dakwah* activism in diaspora. The '*urang awak*', a popular term referring to the Minangnese in diaspora, is keeping their religious tradition through mosque-based *dakwah* activism. The active participation in *dakwah* activism expressed through the erection of mosques and actively participated in mosques' activities. Through these mosques, they introduced their ethnic identity and belongings which are adapted to cosmopolitan elements. The Harakatul Jannah mosque and the Al-Anwar mosque are two examples of the cross-cutting ethnic identity and religious belongings in contemporary Indonesia. In other areas, such as Pamanukan, Taksimalaya, Magelang, the *urang awak* used mosques as a mean of consolidating Minangnese identity in diaspora and publicly exposed their religious identity in their new homelands.



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