

Appendix E: Moral Workshop Daarut Tauhid: a New Trend among the Youth

Daarut Tauhid was established in September 1990 in Bandung by Haji Abdullah Gymnastiar, a young *ustadz* (religious teacher) who always wears a white shirt, a sarong and a white turban. It is not really an Islamic movement, in terms of distribution networks and ideological views, but it is similar to an ordinary pesantren in Indonesia. However, in term of its influence on young Muslim activists in Bandung it is quite significant. In December 1993, about four thousand people were attending weekly sermon at the pesantren, most of whom were university students and school students, who came from various places throughout West Java.

The main activity of this pesantren, like other pesantren, is daily study of Islamic subjects, especially *Tawhid* (Unity of God) and *Dzikir* (recitation). *Dzikir* here does not refer to any classic book of *dzikir*, like *Al-Adzkar* of Imam Nawawi (one of the great Indonesian *ulama*, whose books became a text book in many pesantren throughout Indonesia). Abdullah Gymnastiar tries to develop a type of *dzikir* based on a book written by Hasan al-Banna, a leader of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin*. Once a week there is always a public sermon which is attended by approximately four thousand people. At the end of this weekly sermon, Agim, as he is affectionately known, usually asks the audience to reflect on their previous deeds, and gradually the audience becomes more self-reflective. Finally, the thousand-strong audience breaks down and cries (Risnawati 1993).

The full name of Abdullah Gimnastiar's pesantren is *Bengkel Akhlak* (Moral Workshop) *Daarut Tauhid*. With this pesantren, Abdullah Gymnastiar wanted to create Muslims who were "intellectual, devout, and entrepreneurial" (*ahli pikir, ahli dzikir, and ahli ikhtiar*) (*Tempo* 3.4.1993). Furthermore, he wanted to develop a new strategy and pattern of *dakwah* in order to make *dakwah* more effective (Risnawati 1993). This pesantren organises not only ritual activities, but also economic and social activities. By 1994, it had 14 businesses including printing, public transportation, retailing and computer rental. Its assets were more than Rp. 175 million and each month it earns about Rp. 40 million. From its name, *Bengkel Akhlak* it can be understood that this pesantren has become a place to rehabilitate the morality of its students. According to Gymnastiar, youngsters who come to the pesantren, generally become better citizens (*Tempo* 3.4.1993).