5. Education

At a very fundamental level, the growth of Shi’ism in Indonesia can be attributed to the key role of Shi‘i religious scholars, teachers and intellectuals who have established yayasan, or foundations and other bodies active in the fields of da‘wa, education and socio-cultural programmes. While the previous chapter described the nature and characteristics of most of the Shi‘i da‘wa institutions, this chapter focuses on a relatively small number of entities established specifically to serve Shi‘i educational aims. Education is generally understood to be the transfer of knowledge and values from one generation to another. In Indonesia, education can be divided into modern institutions of education, that is, the school system and traditional institutions of Islamic learning, commonly known as pesantren. In this chapter I will describe examples of both types of institutions established and run by prominent Indonesian Shi‘i personalities.

A. Pesantren

Traditionally, the pesantren have become “the best means of creating unity of the ahl al-sunna wa al-jama’ah” in the hands of learned Sunni men in Indonesia. The same institutions have become vehicles to teach and propagate Shi‘ism. There are at least five pesantren imparting Shi‘i teachings to the Indonesian Muslim community: YAPI in Bangil, Al-Hadi in Pekalongan, Dar al-Taqrib in Bangsri Jepara, Al-Mukarramah in Bandung and Nurul Tsaqalain in Leihitu, Central Maluku. The two most famous of these, YAPI and Al-Hadi will be examined in the first section of this chapter. It is of interest to describe and analyse YAPI and to compare it with Pesantren Al-Hadi, as well as to examine both institutions from the perspective of the pesantren tradition. Elements of both of these institutions will be revealed, not only in terms of the general characteristics of the pesantren tradition, but also as characteristics unique to Shi‘i institutions of learning in Indonesia. In turn this will shed light on the dynamics of institutions of Islamic learning in Indonesia as a whole.

YAPI, an abbreviation of Yayasan Pesantren Islam, and formally in Arabic, Muassasat al-Ma‘had al-Islami is located in Bangil, a small town in the district of Pasuruan, East Java. Bangil’s Muslims adhere to different denominations. Scholars of Islam in Indonesia are familiar with the strict reformist organisation, Persis (Persatuan Islam, Islamic Union) and with its chief figure, Ahmad Hasan, who spent most of his life in Bangil, even though the majority of the town’s population follow the traditionalist Sunni Nahdatul Ulama (NU) or the

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moderate modernist organisation Muhammadiyah. The existence YAPI, as a Shi’i institution of learning contributes to the religious complexity of Bangil. It was established in 1971 in Bondowoso, another district in East Java, by Husein Al-Habsyi (1921-1994), who also taught at and led a branch of the Al-Khairiyya school in the town. Five years later, on 18 June 1976, YAPI moved to its current location where it has grown and developed rapidly\(^2\) to become an important centre of learning for the Shi’is in Indonesia, although its head and its teachers frequently publicly deny its association with Shi’ism.

Its name resembles the previously mentioned Yayasan Penyiaran Islam (Islamic Propagation Foundation) - also abbreviated as YAPI - which was established in Surabaya in 1961. Husein Al-Habsyi, one of the sponsors of YAPI in Bangil, says that the ‘original’ YAPI, which is devoted to organising social, religious and intellectual activities, inspired him to use the same abbreviation, even though the two institutions have different aims and focus. The Islamic Propagation Foundation moved to Lampung, in South Sumatra and then later to Jakarta, where its primary programme has been to publish translated and original Shi’i writings. Bangil’s YAPI became Al-Habsyi’s primary concern and was a serious attempt to realise his ideals in Islamic education and missionary activity. He believes that the only way that Islamic educational concepts will be implemented is through pesantren like YAPI, in which students can be educated in Islamic teachings, practice them in their daily life and be free from the influences of Westernisation.\(^3\)

Thanks to Al-Habsyi’s efforts, experience and considerable social capital (refer to Chapter Two) YAPI has become the most important teaching centre for Shi’is in Indonesia. Al-Habsyi used his Middle Eastern connections to raise financial assistance. Endowed with a sum of money and a plot of land in Bangil, Husein Al-Habsyi was able to construct a relatively large building, which served as both a dormitory and a classroom. With this first adequate facility, YAPI of Bangil housed students from all over Indonesia and provided them with a good quality of Islamic education. Al-Habsyi also maintained contact with eminent kyai inside the country in order to garner moral support for his project; for instance, a well-known learned man from Langitan entrusted several of his disciples to assist with the teaching in the pesantren.

As a scholar himself, with a comprehensive grasp of various branches of Islamic knowledge, Husein Al-Habsyi was well qualified to formulate the educational programme of his institution. The approaches and principles in YAPI follow the Egyptian Ikhwan al-Muslimin model, which emphasises strict discipline and a strongly anti-Western attitude. This Al-Habsyi considered to be the best model

\(^2\) Bukhori (n.d:17).
\(^3\) Zamzami (n.d:102-103).
for achieving his educational ideals. He agreed that an Islamic institution of learning should be free from Western worldviews and secularism. All students are required to obey the rules of the institution as outlined by its head. As the leader responsible for its development and progress, Al-Habsyi not only managed the institution but also taught in several fields of Islamic knowledge, including Arabic, *tafsir* (Qur’anic exegesis) and *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence). In addition, he took on the specific role of forming cadres and consciousness among his students in order to revive their spirit for the struggle for Islam and the Muslim Community. Today, YAPI and its founder are well known among the learned, of not only Indonesia but also in the Middle East.

Husein Al-Habsyi’s struggle in religious education was relatively successful, as is evidenced by the fact that a number of YAPI alumni were able to pursue their education in countries such as India, Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Qatar. After the Iranian revolution, many pursued their religious learning in Qum, Iran, possible due to their high levels of competence in Arabic and Islamic knowledge, as well as to the fact that Iranian scholars were willing to accept students recommended by Al-Habsyi. After several years of study in Qum they went on to become teachers in Islamic schools and foundations in various parts of Indonesia, some even returning to teach in YAPI itself.

YAPI aims to produce students who are capable of becoming pioneering human resources, able to face with wisdom a variety of challenges and problems arising in Indonesia. With this goal in mind, the institution organises its programmes, formulates appropriate curriculum contents, provides the necessary facilities and equipment and implements various teaching strategies, methods and techniques. Today, YAPI has three separate complexes. The biggest is for male students and is situated in the village of Kenep, Beji Sub-District, about three kilometres South of Bangil. The second centre is for female students and is located in Jl. Lumba-lumba, Kersikan, close to the town centre of Bangil. (Like the majority of pesantren in Java, YAPI separates its male and female students.) The third complex, also on the Jl. Lumba-lumba site, is the *Al-Abrar* kindergarten. Each complex has its own facilities, such as a pondok, or hostel, a mosque or place for prayer, classrooms, library, laboratories and sports centre. With their own facilities, the three centres can organise educational programmes to meet their specific goals.

YAPI attempts “to participate in producing intelligent persons, having a correct and firm faith, a wise and critical attitude in order to face a future full of

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4 Panitia (n.d:2).
5 Muhsin Husein (1997:5).
6 *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417).
7 *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417).
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challenge.” It shares the same basic elements as other pesantren: pondok, mosque, santris (student body), instruction in Islamic texts and a kyai, or leader. The pondok, where students live together, protects them from unwanted external influences. Both the Kenep and Jl. Lumba-lumba complexes have a pondok with adequate rooms and facilities in which all the students, with the exception of those at the kindergarten, are expected to live. In the academic year 2002/2003 there were about 300 students. The santri at YAPI come from all over the country: from Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi to Nusa Tenggara and Maluku, reflecting the diverse ethnic groups of Indonesian society. However, in my personal observation, the majority of students at YAPI are Indonesian Arabs and most students and teachers wear a white jubah (Arab robe). In line with the principles outlined by its founder, all students at YAPI are obliged to obey strict rules and regulations; for instance, students may not leave the pesantren complex without permission; all electronic and printed media deemed to be pornographic are forbidden; students may not watch Western films or listen to Western songs and they are not allowed to smoke. These rules are believed to keep the students focused on their study and protected from the harmful influences of Western culture.

YAPI has a large mosque in its male complex and a prayer room, called a musalla, in its female complex. As integral elements of the institution, these two sites function as centres for training students in such things as the practice of daily prayers, recitation of the Qur’an, recitation of the ratib, tawassul, kumayl and other prayers and also for public preaching. The mosque serves a number of other functions: first, it is a place for the performance of the obligatory daily prayers - communal as well as individual - for the students, teachers and staff of the pesantren and for Friday prayers for the pesantren and the wider community. Second, it is a centre for the conducting of recommended rituals, such as the recitation of the Qur’an, ratib, tawassul, and other prayers. Third, it is a place for the students to join in extra-curriculum programmes, such as public preaching and qasidah, which are Arabic songs performed by female singers. Fourth, it is the centre for the practice of rituals and ceremonies relating to Muslim holy days, such as the birthday of the Prophet, of Fatima, his daughter and of the twelve Imams, ’Ashura and others, including the Haul, or the commemoration of the death of the pesantren’s founder, Husein Al-Habsyi. In another ritual

10 Dhofier mentions two types of students in the pesantren tradition: the santri mukim, who live in the dormitory complex and the santri kalong, non-resident students coming from the surrounding villages (1999:31).
13 Ratib covers certain formulae of dhikr (remembrance) and prayers composed by Sufi teachers. YAPI, since many teachers and students are Indonesian Arabs, practices that formulated by a famous Hadrami Sufi, Abdullah al-Haddad, commonly called Ratib Haddad.
related to the late Al-Habsyi, the students are urged to perform ziyara, the act of visitation to his grave after the dawn prayers on Fridays. The grave itself is located behind the mosque. Thus, with the exception of those secular and religious lessons conducted in the classroom, all other educational and religious activities of the institution are centred in the mosque, which is called Ats-Tsaqolain (al-Thaqalayn). These activities are very important for the students of the pesantren in terms of their becoming accustomed to Islamic practice and developing a religious spirit to accompany their mastery of various branches of Islamic knowledge.14

In relation to the position of the learned men and the leadership of the pesantren, there has been a transformation at YAPI from a charismatic to a rationalistic leadership. As stated, YAPI originally came under the authority of Husein Al-Habsyi, who as its scholar, founder and leader was the central element of the pesantren and directly responsible for its development. Today, there is no single person able to match Al-Habsyi’s qualifications and charisma or to take over his position. While his third son, Ali Ridho Al-Habsyi, was formally appointed leader of YAPI, its programmes and the Islamic foundation supporting it are governed by a formal organisational structure, comprising a chief, a secretary and a treasurer. The organisation is split into several divisions, including education and da’wa, which are responsible for the three educational centres at YAPI. Such is the rationalistic leadership of YAPI.

The chief figures at present responsible for the development of the educational programmes in particular, and the foundation in general are - aside from the aforementioned Ali Ridho Al-Habsyi - Muhammad bin Alwi BSA, Ali Umar Al-Habsyi and Muhammad Alwi Al-Habsyi, all of whom are YAPI alumni and students of Husein Al-Habsyi. A number of other Qum alumni also have important teaching roles at the institution.

In the past, the most important figure at YAPI, following the death of Husein Al-Habsyi, was Zahir Yahya, Al-Habsyi’s student, son-in-law and Qum alumnus. However, a conflict, most probably originating from struggles over the accumulation of symbolic and economic capital among certain individuals of Husein Al-Habsyi’s clan, led Zahir Yahya and his party to leave the pesantren. At one point, Iran became involved in the conflict and was said to have sided with Zahir Yahya. Subsequently, the institution’s current leadership visited Iran for clarification of their position. Today, it is the abovementioned figures who collectively attempt to maintain the continuity of Islamic learning in the institution and to implement strategies to preserve its existence and to continue its development.

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Examined from the perspective of its current educational system, YAPI is a modern institution. Until 1997, it only organised programmes of religious education at the levels of *i’dadiyya* (preparatory), *ibtida’iyya* (elementary), *thanawiyiyya* (secondary, corresponding to Islamic Junior High School) and ‘*aliyya* (secondary, corresponding to Islamic Senior High School). The curriculum of the first three levels gives priority to the study of Arabic, including *nahwu* (syntax) and *saraf* (morphology) and to several branches of Islamic knowledge such as *Hadith*, *tafsir*, *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *’aqida* (doctrine) and logic. At the ‘*aliyya* level, the students are introduced to branches of Islamic knowledge from comparative perspectives, such as *kalam* (theology), philosophy, *’ulum al-Qur’an* (the Qur’anic sciences), *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence) and comparative Islamic jurisprudence. Additionally, at this level there are lessons in translation and *tahqiq* (editing) instructing students on how to read, translate and edit Arabic materials.\(^\text{15}\)

Since 1997, YAPI has transformed its educational programme by incorporating both the national curriculum and traditional religious education, “so as to provide the best solution in the field of education sought by the people of high spirituality and intellectuality.”\(^\text{16}\) This transformation has involved the integration of religious education at the *ibtidaiyya* and *thanawiyiyya* levels into the programme of Indonesian Junior High School (SLTP) and Senior High School (SMU). The ‘*aliyya* level was converted into a special programme for religious education called *takhassus* (specialisation) and was structurally separated from both schools.\(^\text{17}\) Following these changes, YAPI now offers a general school, a religious school and *takhassus*. With regard to the first system, YAPI offers a programme of secondary education, providing SLTP (Junior High School) and SMU (Senior High School), both of which teach general secular subjects of the curriculum regulated by the Department of National Education. In order to be formally recognised by the Department, the institution must follow specific guidelines and meet required standards. YAPI also offers a programme combining the national system with its *pesantren* system in the form of a religious school, the curriculum for which comprises 60% general subjects and 40% religious subjects. Now, graduates of YAPI are expected to possess both basic general and religious knowledge and to be capable of successfully pursuing tertiary education at general secular or religious universities. Like the schools belonging to the *Muthahhari* Foundation in Bandung (to be described below) YAPI adds the title ‘Plus’ to both its SLTP and SMU programmes.

YAPI’s religious education programme, also termed the ‘mixed’ programme, is compulsory for students at both the secondary levels. It consists of three

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\(^{15}\) *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417).


\(^{17}\) *Al-Isyraq* (7/2/1418/42).
5. Education

stages. The first is known as the *mutawassit* (intermediate) level and is offered to graduates of primary education who, on the whole, do not yet possess the basics of religious knowledge and Arabic language. The programme begins from the first to the sixth semester during the Junior High School period and students are taught the basics of religious knowledge, as well as skills in reading, speaking, listening and writing in Arabic. Arabic is also the language of instruction for the third-year students. As well, the programme provides first year students with courses in Qur’anic recitation, *tajwid* (science of the pronunciation of the Qur’an) and the memorisation of certain chapters of the Qur’an. The primary textbooks for Arabic language instruction are *Al-‘Arabiyya li al-Nashi’in* (6 Volumes) and *Al-Amthilah al-Tasrifiyya* on Arabic morphology by Maksum Ali. These resources illustrate YAPI’s focus on the students’ comprehension of Arabic and its importance for Muslims because – as stated in an institute pamphlet for the admission of new students - about 90% of religious and intellectual sources for Islamic teachings are written in Arabic. It is interesting to note that *Al-‘Arabiyya li al-Nasi’in* has recently begun to be used to teach Arabic to the students at the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) and the State College for Islamic Studies (STAIN).

Students of YAPI’s Senior High School also receive religious instruction, thus combining both general and religious components to form a single system of education. Those who finish the intermediate level of religious education go on to the *thanawiyya* level, which provides a much deeper and more extensive programme of religious knowledge and Arabic. Having followed both general (SMU) and religious education (*thanawiyya*) the students are considered to have received the skills to be well-rounded members of society, regardless of whether they go on to pursue tertiary education or not.

The religious curriculum comprises five subjects: Arabic, the Qur’an or specific chapters of the Qur’an, *tatbiq* (reading Arabic texts without diacritical signs), *‘aqida* and *fiqh*. Here the primary source for Arabic instruction is *Durus fi al-‘Arabiyya* (Lessons in Arabic) and is the next step up from *Al-‘Arabiyya li al-Nashi’in*. The main sources for *‘aqida* and *fiqh* are those by prominent Shi’i scholars and legists, including Ayatollah Nasir Makarim Shirazi’s *‘Aqa’id wa Mazahib* and Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeini’s *Zubdat al-Ahkam* respectively. This training gives the students the ability to disseminate this knowledge to their own communities; furthermore, they are prepared to continue their religious learning at higher institutions in the Middle East.

In addition to these two programmes, YAPI offers one that is called *tamhidiyya* (preparatory), designed for students of SMU who have graduated from other

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18 *Sekilas* (n.d:6-7).
SLTPs with a basic religious knowledge. Its curriculum is similar to that of the thanawiyya level, with the exception that the main source for the instruction of Arabic is Al-‘Arabiyya li al-Nashi’in. The goals of this programme are generally the same as those mentioned above. Because tamhidiyya students generally join the programme without a prior knowledge of Arabic, twelve out of eighteen hours a week are set aside for practice in spoken Arabic, plus four hours for syntax and morphology.20

A unique characteristic of the educational system at YAPI also lies in its exclusively religious programme, the takhassus, or specialisation in Islamic knowledge, which is offered to male students intending to concentrate on this field. Since the programme covers only Islamic subjects, to a large extent it resembles the pesantren salafi within the pesantren tradition.21 Takhassus aims at producing students fully capable of developing Islamic views using comparative and critical methods.22 The programme, which is organised in three levels, can be considered to be a continuation of the above-mentioned thanawiyya programme and many graduates of the thanawiyya programme do in fact enrol in the takhassus programme. The institution also provides an i‘dadiyya (preparatory) programme for students who have not come via the thanawiyya programme, or for those who lack the necessary knowledge required for undertaking the takhassus level. The preparatory programme usually takes four semesters and emphasises proficiency in Arabic language and introductory Islamic doctrine and jurisprudence.23 In the academic year 2002/2003, 23 students were enrolled in YAPI’s takhassus programme.

The curriculum of the takhassus programme includes nearly all of the subjects from the body of Islamic knowledge, namely Arabic, tafsir, kalam, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, Arabic syntax, balagha (rhetoric), Sira (biographies of the Prophet and his household), mantiq (logic) and Islamic philosophy. It differs from Sunni institutions of learning in Indonesia in that not only does YAPI provide instruction in Islamic philosophy, but it also offers an intensive study of general philosophy. Two scientific activities organised at YAPI illustrate the importance given to the study of philosophy and logic at the institution: first, the establishment of the Study Group for the Study of Religion and Philosophy (KSAF) and second, a large number of articles on philosophical topics are published in the journals of YAPI, including the now defunct Al-Isyraq (9 numbers, (1417-1418/1997-1998) and Islamuna (1424/2003-the present). This is in stark contrast to scholarly findings on the books used in pesantren milieus in Indonesia during the 19th and 20th centuries conducted by van den Berg (1888) and van Bruinessen (1990),

23 Sekilas (n.d:8).
which report an absence of the subject. The factors for this are historical: for centuries Sunni learned men and institutions of learning forbade the instruction of philosophy, possibly in consequence of the great influence of al-Ghazali’s Sufi teachings in the Sunni world. This prohibition of the study of logic and philosophy in the traditions of Islamic learning in most Muslim countries has been criticised by scholars such as Abu Ali (a pseudonym), who suggests that institutions of Islamic learning should in fact emphasise the instruction of both these sciences. Ali believes they are essential in order for students to be able to discuss, analyse and study Islamic teachings correctly.24

Another special characteristic of the takhassus programme can be seen in the primary sources used for instruction. While, like the majority of pesantren in Java, the takhassus programme uses the authoritative texts, Muhammad bin Malik’s Alfiya on Arabic syntax and Al-Balagha al-Wadiha on rhetoric, other teaching resources include books written by prominent Shi’i learned men from Iran or Iraq. Examples are Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi’s Al-‘Aqida al-Islamiyya (3 Volumes) for the study of doctrine, Muhammad Javad Mughniyya’s Al-Fiqh ‘ala al-Mazahib al-Khamsa for the comparative study of Islamic law, Muhammad Baqir Sadr’s Al-Halaqat al-Thalath for principles of jurisprudence, Ayatollah Rida Muzaffar’s ‘Ilm al-Mantiq for logic and Muhammad Husayn Tabataba’i’s Bidayat al-Hikma for the study of Islamic philosophy.25 The Shi’i character of the programme is clear and is in striking contrast to the majority of pesantren in Indonesia.

As a pesantren offering an integrated system of education, YAPI maintains an extra programme to supplement the intra-curricular programme in Arabic and religious subjects and the educational system of the institution at large. Given the fact that all of the teaching texts in the religious subjects are in Arabic, it is imperative that students possess these language skills. Besides formal instruction in the classroom - developing vocabulary, writing essays, speaking in formal activities and in daily life, mastering syntax and morphology - other learning techniques are used. Islamic and Arabic films or other such materials are also presented. Each semester, extra-curricular courses are provided in religious subjects such as fiqh, ‘aqida, akhlaq (ethics) and sira for the students of mutawassit, thanawiyya and tamhidiyya, and in logic, usul al-fiqh, and ‘ulum al-Qur’an for the students of thanawiyya and tamhidiyya. In addition, there is an optional programme for those students wanting to deepen their knowledge of Shi’ism. Other important extra-curricular programmes offered are various kinds of arts, sports and other skills; e.g. the use of computers, English language and journalism. These are provided for the male and female students in segregated groups.

24 Abu Ali (1417:18).
25 Sekilas (n.d.8).

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Thus YAPI is a modern institution of Islamic learning, integrating the general schooling of national education, the classical religious madrasa system, elements of pesantren salafi in its use of standard texts for Arabic syntax and morphology and the takhassus programme. Not to be forgotten is the strong element of Shi‘ism in the curriculum and instructional materials, and in the religious rituals and ceremonies conducted at the institution. And like most modern pesantren, YAPI requires that all students and teachers use Arabic in their daily life; the mastery of Arabic has been a continuing priority since its foundation.

With regard to its Shi‘i orientation, as previously mentioned, the leaders and teachers at YAPI are reluctant to publicly name it a Shi‘i institution (in contrast to the view of scholars, such as Zainuddin et al., who wrote: “in Bangil (East Java) Yayasan Pesantren Islam (YAPI) was established and openly displays the Shi‘i banner”.

The current leadership’s rejection of the Shi‘i label is not entirely without justification, since admission to YAPI is not confined to Shi‘i students but is open to all Muslims, regardless of denomination. There is also no obligation for students to adhere to the Shi‘i school of thought. As its curriculum demonstrates, certain programmes teach comparative theology and jurisprudence with the specific aim of fostering a tolerant attitude in the students. The ideals of openness and freedom within Islam, as promoted by Husein Al-Habsyi, are the foundation of the pesantren:

What forms the basis of all activities and programmes of the Foundation is a reflection of Al-Ustadh Husein Al-Habsyi’s open-mindedness and universal worldview, seeing the world of Islam as a (single) system and every Muslim from any religious orientation as a part of the body of Islam. Therefore, YAPI is always proud of its openness and integrates all streams and Islamic organisations.

YAPI’s strategy of openness and pluralism can be seen as a reaction to the schism in Islam between the Sunni majority and the Shi‘i minority. The same divide is, of course, reflected within Indonesia’s Muslim population. For YAPI, openness and pluralism should be encouraged, not only as true teachings of Islam but also to protect the existence of the educational institution and of the Shi‘i’s themselves. There are two benefits to be gained by promoting these ideals: the recognition of Shi‘ism as a valid branch of Islamic orthodoxy and a tolerant attitude toward the Shi‘is in a framework of Islamic unity. YAPI’s stance may also be seen as the strategy of practicing taqiyya, a valid teaching in Shi‘ism.

Valuable comparisons and contrasts can be made between the educational system of YAPI and that of Pesantren Al-Hadi. This latter institution, located in

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26 Zainuddin et al. (2000:33).
27 Al-Isyraq (1/1/1417).
28 Zamzami (n.d:113).
Pekalongan, Central Java, was founded in 1989 by Ahmad Baragbah, who had spent five years studying in Qum. Baragbah, an Indonesian Arab of non-Sayyid extraction forged good connections with the late Husein Al-Habsyi, who had recommended him for his study in Qum and supported him in the establishment of his pesantren. Although Baraghbah had never studied at YAPI, his relationship with Husein Al-Habsyi is considered to have been one of student and teacher. Both were supportive of each other’s institution, especially when faced with internal or external problems.

Al-Hadi is smaller than YAPI in terms of students and teacher numbers, educational facilities and educational programmes. In October 2002, for instance, Al-Hadi had approximately 70 students (male and female) trained and educated by six teachers, all Qum alumni. (This is smaller than a report by Ulumul Qur’an in 1995, which gave the number of students as about 112 and teachers as nine). Unlike YAPI, which is open to all comers, Al-Hadi tends to attract students only from the Shi’i community. The students live in a hostel on the pesantren complex. The complex itself, situated in the residential part of the densely populated city, comprises two houses and two two-storeyed buildings. One large house is for all the activities of the female students – the hostel as well as classrooms - while the second smaller house accommodates Ahmad Baragbah and his family. The first building houses a mosque on the ground floor, while the first floor contains an office and a hostel for teachers and classrooms and a hostel for male students. Unlike YAPI or most other schools in the country, Al-Hadi students study sitting on the floor. In short, compared to the educational facilities of YAPI, those of Al-Hadi are limited.

Yet this relatively small Shi’i institution has all the basic elements of the pesantren tradition: pondok, mosque, a student body of santri, the instruction of Islamic texts and a kyai. Students are drawn from all over Indonesia, including Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. They live in the pondok and follow all the activities of the institution. Since there is no entry examination, some of the students arrive not having completed their primary education. They can attend a primary school located next to the pesantren every morning if necessary, but this is optional. Compared to YAPI, the rules and regulations of this institution are more lenient.

Al-Hadi’s small mosque is multi-functional, even though its use is confined to the students and teachers of the pesantren. With the exception of the Friday afternoon prayers – which students have the choice of attending at other mosques outside the pesantren – the mosque is the hub of education and training activities and for the conducting of obligatory and recommended religious rituals and ceremonies. However, the rituals and ceremonies are limited to those

recommended within the Shi’i tradition, unlike YAPI which still carries out the *ratib* recitation, a practice from Sufi traditions. Indeed, the *Al-Hadi* mosque provides a model for the practice of Shi’i teachings, as understood by its leaders and teachers. It is for this reason that parents choose to send their children to this institution. I even heard reports that a few had moved their children from YAPI to *Al-Hadi* because of its direct focus on the instruction and application of Shi’i teachings.

Unlike YAPI, *Al-Hadi* only provides students with a religious education which, to a great extent, follows the educational system of the *hawza ‘ilmiiyya* in Qum, where its founders and teachers have been trained. This is particularly true in terms of subjects and instructional materials. The educational programme is organised into six stages. The subjects offered are similar to those of the religious education programme at YAPI and include Arabic, ‘*aqida*, *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *hadith* and Islamic history. All instructional materials are the standard books used in the institutions of Islamic learning in Qum. The basic tenets of Shi’ism, specifically ‘*aqida* and *fiqh*, are taught at the first stage and the students are expected to follow them in daily life. Guidance and training are provided regarding the Shi’i daily obligatory rituals and ceremonies of the *pesantren*. All instruction, training and guidance given in *Al-Hadi* are directed towards the institution’s main goal, which is to provide its students with the basic knowledge and skills to become Shi’i teachers in Indonesia. Furthermore, with the knowledge its graduates possess, they are able to pursue higher Islamic education in Qum itself.

*Pesantren Al-Hadi* and its head, Ahmad Baragbah, as he himself has admitted, have connections with Iran via the office of *wilayat al-faqih* and a number of individual learned men. The *pesantren* is said to send regular reports of its educational progress to Iran via a representative. Today, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Jakarta also observes the *pesantren’s* development, including the curriculum and the activities of students and teachers, in order to ensure progress. Important events occurring in the *pesantren* are all reported to the office of *wilayat al-faqih* in Qum. The *pesantren* also receives financial assistance from Iran, as well as educational aids, particularly books and periodicals. The relationship with Iran is also indicated by the fact that a number of *Al-Hadi* graduates continue their Islamic education in Qum. Some have finished their study and returned to Indonesia: Muhammad in Purwakarta, Ali Al-‘Aydrus in Bandung and Salman Daruddin in Jakarta, to name but a few. In addition, representatives of the Supreme Iranian Leader (*wali faqih*) and individual Shi’i scholars frequently take the opportunity to visit the *pesantren* during trips to Indonesia. At the same time, Ahmad Baragbah, with his experience in Qum, has

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30 Ahmad Baragbah, interview, (21/10/2002).
been recognised by Iran as an important Shi’i figure in Indonesia and is expected to play a major role in the spread of Shi’ism. Along with other prominent figures such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Zahir Yahya, he is an appointed representative of the wali faqih in the collection and distribution of the one-fifth tax, khums, in Indonesia and together with Umar Shahab, this group were also expected to prepare for the establishment of Shi’i organisations in Indonesia.  

The strategies implemented by Al-Hadi in the promotion of Shi’ism reveal striking contrasts to those of YAPI. The founder of Al-Hadi openly admits that his institution is Shi’i. Its establishment was motivated by “Ahmad Baragbah’s anxiety over the emergence of misconceptions in the Muslim community in Indonesia about the Shi’i school – especially after the outbreak of the Iranian Islamic revolution.” Baragbah maintains that the institution is not intended to create religious conflict in multi-religious Indonesia, instead, its purpose is to invite fellow Muslims to recognise the existence of Shi’ism as an equal religious stream within Islam. The hope is that by openly expressing all Shi’i doctrinal beliefs and observing Shi’i religious practices in all situations, including those aspects different from Sunni Islam, they and the Shi’i community will be recognised. Consequently, all anti-Shi’i bias and libel will disappear, the goal shared by YAPI and Al-Hadi.

Although reactions to its chosen strategy of openness are very negative – as will be discussed in Chapter Eight - Al-Hadi continues to maintain this course in its struggle for recognition. The habitus of Ahmad Baragbah as a graduate of Qum is integral to the exercise. It seems that this habitus was acquired during the 1980s, when he was young and full of missionary zeal. Jalaluddin Rakhmat has described Ahmad Baragbah and other ustadh of the Qum alumni as young graduates strong in spirit, determined to save the world by applying a fiqh-oriented approach, and according to Rakhmat, their orientation in fiqh is exactly what the Shi’is in Indonesia need. To put it more accurately, returning with the knowledge and experience gained at the heart of Shi’i learning, they attempted to provide an exemplary model for the total practice of Shi’i teachings. Baragbah once stated that, in general, his fellow Shi’is had not yet fully implemented Islamic doctrines in real life and thus there had been no attempt by the existing Shi’i figures to outwardly express the Shi’i teachings in all their forms.

32 Ahmad Baragbah, interview, (21/10/2002).
36 See for the notion of habitus Chapter Two, n. 54.
38 Statement made in Baragbah’s speech to the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung, later published in Buletin Al-Jawad. The article is entitled “Menanamkan Sikap Persaudaraan Kaum Muslim (To plant the spirit of brotherhood among Muslims)” (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/muslim.htm).
Unlike Husein Al-Habsyi, who had already occupied a position of learned man in the wider Muslim community, as a young graduate in religious education, Ahmad Baragbah was still in the process of building up his status. In Bourdieu’s terms, he did this by implementing strategies to accumulate symbolic capital that could easily be converted into economic capital. In doing so, he used very different strategies from those of Husein Al-Habsyi, who needed only to maintain the various kinds of capital he had already gained. Even though the two men shared the same goal – to bring about the recognition of Shi’ism and the Shi’i community in the Sunni-dominated country - Ahmad Baragbah is clearly still struggling to accumulate the same kind of capital as Al-Habsyi.

B. Schools

Alongside Shi’i foundations such as YAPI and Al-Hadi with their pesantren, there are others that have set up school programmes. The first and most famous is the Muthahhari Foundation, founded on 3 October 1988 in Bandung by Muslim intellectuals. According to the legal founding document, the first executive board included Jalaluddin Rakmat (Head), Agus Effendi (Vice Head), Haidar Bagir (Secretary) and Ahmad Muhajir (Treasurer). As with YAPI, the Muthahhari founders, and in particular Jalaluddin Rakmat, frequently rejected the notion that the institution was Shi’i; however, it is still considered to be an important centre for the spread of Shi’ism in Indonesia. An historical account tells that the foundation was born of the good relationship between Rakmat and Husein Al-Habsyi, who also provided financial capital to the institution. It is not by accident therefore that both Husein Al-Habsyi and Jalaluddin Rakmat shared similar strategies in their promotion of Shi’ism.

The Muthahhari Foundation, with its slogan “for the enlightenment of Islamic thought” was established to organise programmes in the fields of research, education and information to Indonesian society at large. Its brochure states that the general goals are to develop Islamic thought, to formulate an Islamic world-view, to participate in the fields of education and da’wa and to contribute to the promotion of Islamic unity, just as all of these were demonstrated in the life of the Iranian intellectual and activist, Murtada Mutahhari. The Muthahhari Foundation has organised programmes which are classified into three categories: a specific programme promoting critical studies and the advancement of

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41 For information on the ideals of the Muthahhari Foundation and a brief biography of Murtada Muthahhari, see Chapter Two, pp.126-127.
Muthahhari’s thought; a general programme comprising all efforts to develop Islamic thought and education and an additional programme which serves as a link between the foundation and the community at large.42

In order to implement its educational programmes, the foundation established the *Lembaga Pembinaan Ilmu-Ilmu Islam* (Institute for the Establishment of Islamic Knowledge), abbreviated as LPII and headed by Jalaluddin Rakhmat. As a division within the structure of the foundation, LPII runs a number of programmes with the purpose of overcoming the dichotomy between religious scholars, the ‘ulama and the intellectuals (as discussed in Chapter One). Besides providing the opportunity for intellectuals to study fields of Islamic knowledge and for ‘ulama to acquaint themselves with the secular sciences and modern information, the institute provides a forum in which ‘ulama and intellectuals can collectively find solutions to problems in Muslim society. LPII sees its role as advancing a modern curriculum of Islamic knowledge in accordance with the current needs of Muslim society.43

In the beginning, LPII organised courses on both Islamic and secular sciences for university students in the form of a *Pesantren Mahasiswa*. The university *santri* were divided into two groups, regular and non-regular. Regular students joined a two-year programme. Like the *santri mukim* of the classical pesantren tradition, the regular *santri* were university students or graduates of non-Islamic universities and were treated as having no prior Islamic knowledge. The curriculum included Arabic, *tafsir*, Hadith, Islamic history, ethics, comparative Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy. Resembling the *santrikalong* of the pesantren tradition, the non-regular *santri* only enrolled in a specific lecture series held on a certain day or week. They were offered courses in the Islamic and secular sciences, from which they chose their subjects according to their interest. Diverse subjects were offered, including, in the field of Islamic knowledge: Arabic, ‘*ulum al-Qur’an, ‘ulum al-Hadith*, Islamic history, *usul al-fiqh, ‘ilm al-Qira’at* (Qur’anic recitation), Sufism, theology and Islamic philosophy. The secular science course included logic, Western philosophy, journalism, research methodology, management and organisation, entrepreneurship and communication technology.44 During a sermon delivered at *Darut Tauhid* (an institution founded and headed by Abdullah Gymnastiar) in September 1992, Jalaluddin Rakhmat said that his pesantren was established in order to provide traditional Islamic knowledge to the educated who attended campuses within a Western system of education, such as students of ITB, UNPAD and IKIP. At the same time, he was teaching the *santri* of traditional

pesantren certain modern sciences. He then stated: “Overall, we would like to become a bridge for intellectual and pesantren groups, as well as to develop a non-sectarian attitude.”

However, the pesantren programme for the regular santri did not run as well as was expected. According to an internal report, it only managed to recruit 30 students and was maintained for less than a year. In contrast, the series of courses for the non-regular students, with its diverse curriculum, was more successful and continued to develop. Forced to re-assess their plans, in 1992 Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates established a new school, which has since become the main project of the Muthahhari Foundation. This school, SMU Plus (Senior High School Plus) is now one of the most desired in Bandung, if not in all of Indonesia. As we saw above, the attribute ‘Plus’ is used because the programme combines a number of subjects from the national curriculum with Islamic instruction and a focus on fostering good moral conduct. The school has attracted an enthusiastic response from people throughout Indonesia, and parents - both Sunni and Shi’i - from Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and other islands send their children to study there. While the Muthahhari Foundation provides accommodation for first year students from outside Bandung who need it, unlike the traditional pesantren system, SMU Plus is not a boarding school. This transformation has enhanced the popularity of the Muthahhari Foundation and its leaders, including Jalaluddin Rakhmat, who is now the chief of the foundation and head of the school.

SMU Plus can be regarded as an alternative model for secondary education in Indonesia. It is also an attempt to bridge the gap between the ‘ulama and intellectuals, as explained above. It also has unique characteristics in comparison to other senior high schools (SMU) in the country. Its curriculum integrates the SMU curriculum set by the Department of National education with basic computer science, intensive Arabic and English and fields of Islamic knowledge (dirasa Islamiyya) such as ‘ulum al-Qur’an, ‘ulum al-Hadith, usul al-fiqh and comparative fiqh. Unlike regular high schools, which teach for about five and a half hours a day, SMU Plus requires students to attend eight and a half hours a day, from 7.00 am to 3.30 pm, six days a week, in order for them to complete all their educational requirements. The school also has a library containing a significant number of collections in Indonesian, Arabic, Persian and English and other facilities, such as laboratories.

Various extra-curricula activities are also offered, so that the students may further improve their skills. One example is the so-called ‘X-day’ (usually Wednesdays)

\[45\] Al-Tanwir (19/1992:3).
\[47\] http://smuth.net/Profile/03-sejarah.asp accessed 18/10/2005.
when students are expected to take part in an extra-curricular programme following their own interests. Activities on offer include Achievement Motivation Training (AMT), various study clubs (computer, English, Arabic), photography, advertising, calligraphy, theatrical arts, graphic design and various kinds of sports. There are also comparative studies and a spiritual camp. The spiritual camp deserves special attention here. In it the students are required to observe the life of ‘oppressed’ people located in a certain area, interview them and write reports. Spiritual camp also requires certain Islamic rituals and prayers to be performed. The aim is for the students to incorporate the spiritual aspects of religion in their daily life. These activities are seen as an integral element of the educational system of the school.

Four philosophical principles form the basis of SMU Plus’s intensive educational programme. These are formulated from the so-called ‘quantum learning’, an accelerated programme invented by Bobbi DePorter and Mike Hernacki. The first principle is that since human potential is unlimited, education - which is a process towards perfection - should be able to maximise this potential. Second, the relationship between teacher and student should be considered a partnership rather than a one-way ‘subject-object’ relationship. The third principle is that since humankind is progressing towards God throughout life, both teacher and student attempt to realise within themselves God’s qualities, as expressed in his 99 beautiful names. Fourth, education is a process in which physical and psychological dimensions influence each other and so both aspects need to be incorporated in teaching methods. On this basis, the institutional objectives of SMU Plus are: first, to develop the students’ intellects by implementing critical methods based on the philosophical principle that humans possess unlimited potential; second, to develop creativity by implementing exercises based on the belief that education attempts to maximise students’ potential; and finally, to develop moral conduct by implementing riyada (a Sufi ritual) on the basis of the philosophical principle that humans possess the spiritual capability to approach God.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat emphasises that these methods entail maximising the effect of the physique on the psyche, maximising the effect of the psyche on the physique, and guidance towards mystical experience. To maximise the effect on the physique, students are provided with a pleasant physical and social environment, which increases their self-esteem. They carry out physical exercise and also undertake exercises in critical thinking, listening to music, and so on. A so-called ‘modelling’ method involves presenting examples of figures who have achieved excellence in a certain field as role models. These have a

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48 Quantum Learning by DePorter and Hernacki was translated into Indonesian and published in 1999 by Kaifa, an Offshoot of Mizan.
psychological influence on students who, when they find their appropriate model, will imitate them in their own behaviour. These and other techniques used at the school are designed to generate self-reliance and positive thinking in the students. In respect of the riyada, the students are guided on how to practice religious rituals such as dhikr (the remembrance of God’s names) and prayers which impress on them the idea that their teachers resemble murshid, or teachers in the Sufi tradition.50

Another characteristic of the educational method implemented by SMU Plus which sets it apart from other schools in Indonesia is its emphasis on reward rather than punishment. The teachers at SMU Plus do not criticise their students because it is seen as a destructive influence on the learning process. Instead, the students are shown appreciation and rewarded for achievements in order that their potential is maximised.51 In this regard, the school has developed various types of rewards for achievements in certain subjects and skills; for example, the Quarterly Award for the best score in each class, the Grade Award for the best score at each level, the Annual Award for the best in all levels and the Achievement Award for achievements in academic, moral and extra-curricular activities.52 With this goal of maximising the students’ potential in mind, the school continues to implement new findings in the field of education, such as the principles of multiple intelligences53 and accelerated learning.

The implementation of the above methods and the unique curriculum, supported by teachers who are graduates from ITB, UNPAD, IKIP, IAIN and Middle Eastern schools, combined with excellent educational facilities, are all factors that make the educational programme of SMU Plus successful. Since its foundation, its students have won prizes in various kinds of educational competitions and a large number of its graduates have gone on to enrol at well-known state universities in Indonesia. For its achievements the school has received praise and credit from the government, particularly the Department of National Education and from other sections of Indonesian society. In 2001 the Department declared SMU Plus to be a model for the development of personality and moral conduct (akhlaq) in students in Indonesia.54 Rakhmat himself admits that a number of senior bureaucrats and eminent leaders of religious organisations send their children to

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51 Rakhmat (1999:35).
52 Yulina (1997:44).
53 Howard Gardner has defined eight kinds of intelligences that may be possessed by individuals: linguistic, logic-mathematical, spatial, musical, kinetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic (Hernowo 2001:160-162).
the school. A large number of heads and teachers from educational institutions throughout the country - from primary, secondary and tertiary levels, state as well as private - have made visits to the school owing to its high reputation.

The Muthahhari Foundation’s success has led it to set up another branch of the school in Jakarta, in order to attract the interest of the population there, with a particular eye on upper middle-class Jakartans. However, while the original school in Bandung attracted significant numbers, the Jakarta branch has proved less successful. For various reasons (the most significant being an internal quarrel) the Jakarta branch of SMU Plus closed in the middle of 2004. Some of its students were transferred to a new school called Lazuardi which belongs to Haidar Bagir, a co-founder of the Muthahhari Foundation.

In addition to the establishment of the Jakarta branch, in 2000 the Foundation also set up a Junior High School Plus (SLTP Plus) in Rancaekek, a district of Bandung. This branch resembles the pesantren system, providing a dormitory for its students. Syamsuri Ali observes that, unlike the SMU Plus, students at SLTP Plus are only instructed on Shi’i teachings within the subject of Islamic jurisprudence. In most other aspects of the school – its philosophy, principles of curriculum and methods, the SLTP Plus attempts to follow the path of SMU Plus. However, as a relatively new school, it is yet to attain the same level of achievement as its sister institution. The development of these institutions reveals the dynamic nature of the Muthahhari Foundation and its participation in education in Indonesia, a field that still deserves more attention, not only from the government but also from such private institutions.

The Muthahhari Foundation has not only been concerned with education - although its success in this field seems to have overshadowed other influential activities. It is also involved in cultural and social activities; for example, between 1990 and 1997 the foundation published 17 issues of Al-Hikmah, a journal of Islamic studies and the bulletin Al-Tanwir. In addition, the foundation has produced studies of the life and scholarly works of Murtada Mutahhari, including translations and a biography written by Haidar Bagir, both produced in collaboration with the Islamic publisher Mizan. The foundation is considered to be one of the most active organisations for the spread and promotion of Muthahhari’s thought to the people of Indonesia. Like YAPI, the foundation has also expanded its role as a publisher of Islamic works,

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56 Al-Tanwir has continuously reported all the visits and comparative studies by educational institutions throughout the country.
58 A description of this journal appears in Chapter Six.
59 Its title is Muthahhari: Sang Mujtahid Sang Mujahid (Bagir 1988).
producing at least twelve books including biographies, prayers and Islamic thought written by Ali Shari’ati, Mutahhari, Jalaluddin Rakhmat and even two by a student team from SMU Plus.\textsuperscript{60}

Another important contribution by the Foundation is its work in the social field and specifically its social programme for the poor and orphans, the group called by Shi’is ‘the Oppressed’. Since its inception the Muthahhari Foundation appears to have paid attention to the education of this unfortunate group for two reasons: first, the foundation’s aims include generating and improving the self-respect of the poor and other segments of the lower classes; second, it is intended to guide children of the Oppressed so that they may compete in the field of education, from primary to tertiary levels.\textsuperscript{61} As a Shi’i institution, the Muthahhari Foundation also organises public religious rituals. Every Thursday evening the kumayl supplication is performed collectively at the Al-Munawwarah Mosque. Other rituals and ceremonies to celebrate important Shi’i historical events, particularly ‘Ashura have involved the participation of not only members of the Foundation and its students but also of participants from outside Bandung. Seen from this perspective, the foundation is, without doubt, Shi’i and aims to preserve Shi’i traditions in Indonesia.

This portrait of the Muthahhari Foundation reveals its role in the spread of Shi’ism in the country. Its strategies are similar to those adopted by YAPI, and both institutions embrace the mission to promote Shi’ism as a legitimate school within Islam to the rest of the Muslim community. At SMU Plus, religious subjects are comparative and the students - children of both Sunni and Shi’i parents - are taught the skills of critical thinking and how to utilise critical analysis with regard to religious thought and practice. The students are taught to exercise intellectual freedom and to believe in the principle of plurality, in particular with respect to the Sunni-Shi’i divide. That said, the religious rituals and prayers followed by the teachers are generally Shi’i, although the students are free to continue to perform rituals, particularly the daily obligatory prayers, in accordance with their own beliefs. In this regard, there are maximum and minimum targets set by the Muthahhari Foundation: the maximum is the conversion of the students to Shi’ism, whilst the minimum is an acknowledgement of Shi’ism by the students and a tolerance of its followers.

\textsuperscript{60} The full name of the publisher is Muthahhari Press, Warisan Intelektual untuk Kesucian dan Pencerahan Pemikiran (Muthahhari Press: Intellectual Legacy for Purity and Enlightenment of Thought) and is headed by Jalaluddin Rakhmat’s second child, Miftah F. Rakhmat. Its publication of two works by a student team of the SMU Plus shows the creative activity of its students. The first is Pintu Ilmu: 1001 Filsafat Hidup Pencinta Ilmu (The Gate of Knowledge: 1001 Philosophies of Life of Knowledge Lovers) and the other is a translation entitled Mukhtasar Shahifah Husainiyah: Nasihat, Kisah and Doa Imam Husein as (the Abridged Husayniyya Psalm: Advice, Story and Prayers of Imam Husayn).

\textsuperscript{61} Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:39-43).
Jalaluddin Rakhmat, the central figure of the Foundation, uses strategies similar to those of Husein Al-Habsyi in promoting Shi‘ism. He continues to stress the importance of Islamic brotherhood between Sunnis and Shi‘is, stating in an interview in 1995 that the dichotomy between the two is no longer relevant. He maintains that the establishment of the Foundation is not only a bridge between the intellectuals and the pesantren but also a means of promoting Islamic brotherhood and the principle that personal achievements, rather than *madhhab*, should become a basis for the judgement of others.\(^{62}\) Regarding the importance of actions, Rakhmat’s response to a letter written by one student’s parents questioning the position of the *Muthahhari* Foundation in relation to Shi‘ism warrants direct quotation

> If I am questioned whether I am a Shi‘i or a Sunni, I will only answer that I am a Muslim. I do not want Muslim society to be divided into *madhhab* and streams, only into knowledge. Everyone has status according to his/her deeds, God says in the Qur’an. Not according to *madhhab*, nor group. That is what we also teach to the children studying at our school.\(^{63}\)

Another institution of learning that shares many similarities with both *Mutahhari* and Y API is *Lazuardi*, recently established in Jakarta. The founders of the *Lazuardi Hayati* Foundation are Haidar Bagir, Lubna Assagaf, Alwi Shihab, Nizar Shihab and Abdurrahman Mulakhela. Haidar Bagir heads the foundation, which began in 1994 as a kindergarten led by his wife. Today, *Lazuardi* comprises a playgroup, kindergarten, primary school and Senior High School. The philosophical basis, curriculum and methods implemented in Lazuardi’s schools are similar to those of the *Muthahhari* SMU Plus. With the exception of the playgroup and the kindergarten, which have proved very popular, these relatively new schools are yet to establish a reputation in the country.

Shi‘is in Indonesia have been active in tertiary education as well. *Madina Ilmu* Islamic College, located in Sawangan, Depok in South Jakarta (on a site next to Lazuardi’s SMU) was set up to produce scholars with the skills and capabilities to advance knowledge, as well as to implement this knowledge in Indonesian society. At first the college planned to offer a programme in economics; however, it could only organise a department of Islamic education and *da‘wa*, based on the core curriculum of Islamic higher learning as outlined by the Department of Religious Affairs and a curriculum of its own formulation.\(^{64}\) Like the aforementioned schools, this college, under the leadership of Abdurrahman al-‘Aydrus, has adopted the principles of openness and pluralism. It is open to students regardless of *madhhab*. Since its establishment in 1997, *Madina Ilmu*

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\(^{63}\) *Al-Tanwir* (200/2001:6).  
\(^{64}\) *Selayang Pandang* (n.d:5).
has produced a number of graduates, some now working in Shi’i foundations or schools in Indonesia while others have pursued further study in Qum. However, for several reasons – not least a difference of opinion regarding whether or not it should openly present itself as a Shi’i college - its development has fluctuated.

At the graduate level there exists ICAS (Islamic College for Advanced Studies) in Jakarta, established in co-operation with the University of Paramadina, belonging to the late prominent Muslim intellectual Murcholish Madjid. Since it is a branch of a London-based institute, it uses English as the medium of instruction. Reflecting the great interest among Shi’is in the subject of philosophy, ICAS offers a Masters programme in Islamic philosophy and in Sufism. It is interesting to note that most of ICAS’s Indonesian staff are Shi’is. Its director, Muhsin Mirri, is Iranian. Even though ICAS is open to students from all schools of thought or religious conviction, most of its students are Shi’i. This newly established school has not yet produced graduates.

In sum, despite their small numbers, Shi’is in Indonesia have participated widely in the field of education from pre-school to the tertiary level. The institutions of learning that they have founded reveal that this religious group views education as an important field for participation and development. In general, their institutions either take the form of the traditional pesantren or belong to the modern school system. In some cases there have been attempts to adopt elements of both systems and to integrate them into a single system - a creative idea in the educational domain. With respect to their connections with Iran, the Shi’i institutions (perhaps with the exception of the Lazuardi schools) have, or used to have, good connections with the Iranian government or with Iranian learned men. With the exception of Al-Hadi, they attempt to provide all Indonesian Muslims, regardless of madhhab, with educational programmes designed for their children to develop their full potential. With regard to religious orientation - again with the exception of Al-Hadi - these institutions have adopted open strategies in order to promulgate Shi’i teachings. They are educating their students to recognise that Shi’ism is a valid and legitimate madhhab within Islam. Recognition among the Sunni in the country is without question a crucial issue for Indonesia’s Shi’is, and they consider education to be a key to achieving this goal.