

## Chapter 4: Creative Expression Eschatological and Worldly Orientations

Characteristics of the leader, the follower, and their patterns of relationship as portrayed in the preceding chapter are given form by the distinctively creative expressions of Islam initiated by Aa Gym and further institutionalised in the life of Daarut Tauhid. As the adjective 'creative' implies, these expressions of Islam contain many things new to, or at least distinguishable from, local commonly-held understandings and practices of Islam. This is not to suggest that the Islam of Daarut Tauhid has been uprooted from the supposedly original Islam. It is rather a creative adaptation to current social demands.

The practice of Islam at Daarut Tauhid involves some novel combinations between Islamic orientations previously conceived of as being in opposition. This chapter will discuss the nature of such combinations with some comparisons to other practices of Islam and religions at large.

While many Muslims tend to practise Islam based on the prevailing natural-supernatural dichotomy,<sup>1</sup> those at Daarut Tauhid see no reason to separate the two. They instead view the two as different sides of the same religious coin and therefore as having to be practised together. Neglecting one of the two is as dangerous as ignoring the other. In other words, there must be a sort of delicate combination of the two. This principle is seen in the following aspects of Daarut Tauhidian Islamic practices.

### 4.1 The World and Beyond: A Balance

Features of life commonly viewed as worldly and frequently excluded from recent Islamic attention are paid as much attention by Daarut Tauhid as religious concerns. This orientation is clearly observable in both practical and conceptual levels at the pesantren. I shall portray this by describing first its religious and then its worldly practices and concepts.

As at other Islamic centres, Muslims at Daarut Tauhid are involved in both individual and congregational religious practices. *Shalat*, in its various forms and at various times, serves as the cardinal pillar for their spiritual activities. They perform the *shalat* congregationally and, more frequently, individually. It takes place at daytime and, more often, at night. It is generally done at the mosque and only rarely at home. There is almost always at least one person performing *shalat* at the mosque.

At nights, when surrounding houses are both dark and quiet, the Daarut Tauhid's mosque still looks alive, as though the santri are taking turns in performing rituals at the mosque. As a matter of fact, there are no strictly scheduled turns:

the performance of rituals relies on individual obligation. As part of its training, Daarut Tauhid requires santri to perform optional *shalat* every night, to record the performance by filling in a form, and then to report it to the supervisor who is none other than the *kyai*. This is said to be highly effective in internalising an individual sense of discipline.

Besides exercising *shalat*, they also practise *wirid*, *do'a*, and meditative reflection, such as *i'tikaf*. These are mainly done at night, although are sometimes performed during the day. As noted earlier, a profound significance in drawing followers has been attributed to these particular rituals, without which Daarut Tauhid would be unattractive as a religious routine. Needless to say, Daarut Tauhid also exercises the fulfilment of other pillars of Islam: *zakat* (alms), *shaum* (fasting), and *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca), all of which are commonly exercised by other Muslims through other Islamic centres. It is instead important to note that Daarut Tauhidians subscribe, in addition to obligatory rites, to many optional practices such as *shalat tahajjud* (overnight prayer), *shalat taubat* (repenting prayer), *shaum Senin-Kamis* (fasting on Mondays and Thursdays), *shadaqoh* (charity), and so on.<sup>2</sup>

The use of Islamic symbols also asserts the religious intensity of Muslims at Daarut Tauhid. Needless to say, the *kerudung* (female head-cover), the very noticeable identity of Muslim women, is commonly worn by Daarut Tauhid's female followers. Newcomers, who are not yet used to wearing it, usually need only a week or so before they are persuaded of its indispensability to Islam. In regard to the endless conflict between Muslims who view the *kerudung* as indispensable and those who see it as dispensable, Daarut Tauhid is definitely in the former camp. In practice, however, the decision as to whether or not it should be worn is left to individuals. Aa Gym's persuasive abilities on this point is best-illustrated by the following example.

At a *pengajian* occasion I attended, a female follower raised a question with Aa Gym. Claiming that she was a newcomer at Daarut Tauhid *pengajian*, she frankly confessed to not wearing any *kerudung*. However, she declared her willingness to wear it in the near future, but could not imagine the responses to her new appearance with *kerudung*. She thus begged Aa Gym's advice on the matter. After emphasising that she had every right to wear it or not to wear it, Aa Gym said that covering one's *aurat* (parts of the body that have to be covered) is indispensable. He then reminded the audience that, since the time of one's death is not known, postponing wearing the *kerudung* is too risky a speculation. "What would happen to you if you plan to wear it next week, for example, and you die this evening? So, you would be better to wear it as soon as possible," he advised.

Symbolic assertion through clothing also appears among the men of Daarut Tauhid. Although not always, Aa Gym is given to wearing Arabic garments and Pakistani head-coverings. His *santri* and some of the *jemaah* also most often wear white clothing and the white rimless Arabic cap that is known as *kopeah haji* (hajj cap), for it is commonly worn in Indonesia by those who have done pilgrimage to Mecca. When asked about this particular style of clothing, Aa Gym told me that there was, in fact, no rigid obligation here to wear any particular kind of clothing, “that I wear this [Arabic] clothing is simply to follow my mood. That is, I just put on whichever kind of clothing I wish to.” Indeed he often appears in Western-style clothing. So do his *santri* and *jemaah*. This is part of Daarut Tauhid’s inclination to abolish the impression that Islamic tradition is incompatible with modernity.

Religious symbols are also obvious in the daily behaviour of men and women at Daarut Tauhid. Islamic phrases for greetings, making promises, complaining, and so forth are commonly applied in daily life. These Islamic, Arabic-sounding phrases, are a prominent part of their ceremonial and daily conversations. Many followers claim that this has a profound impact on the intensity of their religious feeling. An SMA-student follower explained to me his feelings in relation to this.

My Islamic spirituality increases every time I go shopping at Daarut Tauhid’s mini-market. That is intensified by the Islamic atmosphere and phrases used by the shop keepers. When I get inside they approach me by saying *Assalamu’alaikum* (Peace be upon you). Then I feel at peace. When I approach the cashier to pay, he/she addresses me with great hospitality, wishing me luck by saying *Mubarak Mabruk* (May God bless you in things new you have). This makes me feel that shopping here, in contrast to other shopping centres, gives me a sort of religious benefit.

In a wider context, the impact of this tradition of expressing Islamic (Arabic) phrases is similarly felt by the followers. It brings to them an atmosphere that is highly religious, as seen from the following claim of a follower.

The phrase *Subhanalloh* (The Most Holy Allah) and *Alhamdulillah* (Praise be to Allah), that are most frequently said by people at Daarut Tauhid, makes the atmosphere really Islamic and this effectively intensifies my faith. This is what, in part, drives me to feel like coming back here soon every time I go home. I get religious enjoyment through this sphere of any life.

However, this tendency towards highly religious behaviour is not the whole of life at Daarut Tauhid. One should not be misled into assuming that life there is world-denying. The other part of life at this *pesantren* is usually viewed as non-religious, and is uncommon in other Islamic centres.



**Photograph 10 A pleasant game: followers are devout at the mosque and cheerful on the playing field.**

Activities which attract young people are regularly held at Daarut Tauhid. Such activities include sports or games or, under the first-hand leadership of Aa Gym, hiking and camping in mountainous areas. As an ex-*Menwa* member, Aa Gym is said to like *terjun payung* (parachute jumping) and climbing the slopes of mountains (Risnawati 1993:13). That is why he often brings his followers along to mountainous areas. These activities serve as an effective means of channelling into recreation the energies of young people and, at the same time, inculcating

Islamic values. The latter is done, for example, by means of meditative reflection on the mightiness, brilliance, and glory of Allah in creating the universe. Noticeable here is the delicate combination of efforts to satisfy worldly needs and those of meeting religious requirements.

This is also evident in the attention paid at Daarut Tauhid to economic ventures. The thirteen kinds of entrepreneurial activities run from Daarut Tauhid and their rapid development serve as convincing evidence for the attention paid at the pesantren to economic concerns. Muslims at Daarut Tauhid tend to be involved in both religious concerns and business without being preoccupied by either.

Let me end this section by describing an activity practised at Daarut Tauhid at the time I was there, which illustrates the balance of a worldly and an other-worldly orientation.

The activity is called '*16 Jam Ibadah Bersama Daarut Tauhid*' (16 Hour Ibadah together at Daarut Tauhid). It started at 6 pm on Saturday evening. The 310 participants gathered at that time in the mosque. They performed *shalat Magrib* (Magrib prayer) together. After performing prayers they chanted *wirid* and said *do'a* together. While waiting for the time of *Shalat Isya* (Isya prayer), they recited the Qur'an individually. At about 7.30 pm, they performed *shalat Isya* communally, after which they chanted *wirid* and said *do'a* as after performing *shalat Maghrib*. Then they had dinner together at the mosque with the meal prepared by Daarut Tauhid. Next, after having dinner, they listened to a religious talk delivered by Aa Gym. This ended at 10 pm at which time they went to bed to take a rest, males at a hall and females at the mosque. At 2 am the following morning, the participants came together at the mosque to perform *shalat Tahajjud* (midnight prayer). Then at 3 am they held a reflection led by Aa Gym. The reflection was focused on introspection, reexamining their very existence on the earth. According to Sodikin, this is done "to remember the essence of life and to make sure that they know the reason and the ultimate aim of their existence in the world as Allah's creature, which is nothing but only to perform *ibadah* to Allah." At 4 am, while waiting for the time of *shalat subuh* (dawn prayer), the participants recited the Qur'an privately. When the time came, they performed *shalat subuh* together after which they chanted *wirid* and said *do'a*. Afterwards, they took a rest until 6 am, then had a shower and breakfast. At 6.30 am they started *rihlah* (tour/excursion), walking to a mountainous area. Ending at 10 am, the *rihlah* was comprised of *lintas alam* (cross-country), *Badar* game,<sup>3</sup> consolation games, and other sports. At the *rihlah*, the participants enjoyed recreational tours, games, and sports which are good for both physical and psychological health and

which have an underlying religious orientation. The activities finished at 10 am, completing the 16 hour period.

This example best illustrates the inclination at Daarut Tauhid to reconcile various aspects of life and to see them wholly as the manifestation of *ibadah* (worship/dedication to God). The sixteen hours of activities, which includes sleeping, eating and resting, is considered to be entirely *ibadah*, so it is termed '16 hours *ibadah* together at Daarut Tauhid'. According to Sodikin, the committee chairman,

sleeping, eating, games, sports, and all other activities in life are necessary parts of life and are intended as a form of *ibadah* sincerely dedicated to Allah. However simple our activity, it can be rewarded as a form of *ibadah*, provided we intend it sincerely as an *ibadah*.

The *ibadah*, which is highly valuable to the eyes of Allah, is therefore not just religious ritual but includes these and the other activities of life when sincerely dedicated to Allah.



**Photograph 11 Participants being given instructions and guidance by Aa Gym just before the Badar game starts.**

Given this feature of pesantren life at Daarut Tauhid, Dhofier (1980a:xiii) is right in arguing that



the pesantren life is, of course, very much concerned with life after death but it is also concerned with life in this world. According to Kyai belief, human fate after death is determined by our conduct and weight of our “*amal*” (performances of religious rituals and social obligations).

Certainly, this lesson from Daarut Tauhid is another denial against Geertz’s (1960:238) view of Islam in the pesantren, criticised by Dhofier,

as “grave-and-gift” religion (*kuburan dan gandjaran*), for it is primarily concerned with life after death and with the gaining of blessings from God.



**Photograph 12** The *rihlah* having just finished, the followers arrive back at the pesantren complex.

## **4.2 Inner Dynamics: A Harmonious Combination**

The balance between the orientation of lives here and in the hereafter leads to an inner sense of harmony felt by Daarut Tauhidians. They profoundly enjoy a harmonious combination between spiritual ecstasy and personal physical happiness.

The heavily spiritually-oriented activities of Islamic rituals practised at Daarut Tauhid generate spiritual ecstasy in the followers. Assuming that they have been fulfilling Allah’s commands and avoiding all His prohibitions and that they are thus close to Allah, they feel religiously secure and happy. This assumption of themselves as being sinless has created an inner orderliness since they feel free

of the possibility of divine punishment. Furthermore, they have a feeling that Allah is always with them at all times, so that He will always bless and help them. This supplies a number of positive states such as calmness, easiness, stability, courage, optimism, passion and overall personal orderliness.

These positive feelings are particularly important to young Muslims who experience religious crisis as an effect of their modern existence. Juvenile delinquency drives them away from religious piety and social orderliness, which in turn brings about inward uneasiness. In such a state of crisis, they need moral guidance to replace an inner uneasiness with an inner happiness and certainty. This can be found at many religious centres but which commonly ends up by being world-denying. This often traps young people in the dilemma of either being religiously pious, with the consequence of being world-denying, or vice versa, enjoying worldly life with the consequence of ignoring religious guidance.

This conflict between being religious or otherwise in living in the world is bridged at Daarut Tauhid. The non-religious activities there give rise to the inner satisfaction of personal-physical enjoyment deeply felt by these religious young people. They enjoy, for example, personal satisfaction from their involvement in various sports and communal games. This is best exemplified by the *Perang Badar* game, that is part of the '16 Hour *Ibadah*.' While they learn some highly-valued lessons from the *Badar* battle that took place at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, they also enjoy the simulation as a fulfilling game that satisfies their inner demands for such forms of relaxation. While devotion to such games is viewed by nearly all devout Muslims as a waste of time and is generally outside their scope of attention, this kind of activity at Daarut Tauhid has attracted young followers. Through this, they are able to learn that being devout Muslims is dynamic and far from being monotonous in the religiously emotional realm. Thus, being Muslim is by no means divorced from the joy of games and having enjoyed play is by no means necessitates being up-rooted from religious devotion.

While enjoying the consolation games, the young followers also learn some values through play. A final-year primary school student, twelve years of age, commented on this:

I learned through the game about the battle of *Badar*, in which the Prophet Muhammad was involved, how it would have been, although I just watched without being involved in the game because I am too young. Besides, the game itself is a forum for developing *ukhuwwah Islamiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood).





**Photograph 13** An example of game: to put a nail in a bottle



**Photograph 14** Another example of a relaxing game

For many followers the game is a form of *riyadhoh*, an Arabic word for exercise, which has the double connotation of physical and psychological exercise. According to a female university student, during the '16 Hour *Ibadah*' she learned the proper way of *ibadah*. According to her, the "proper" *ibadah* "combines Islamic ritual practices and physical exercises as inseparable aspects of life." This *riyadhoh* has brought about an inner dynamic that satisfies the physical and psychological needs of the followers.

### 4.3 Modesty and Modernity: A Wonderful Combination

The combination is demonstrated more clearly in the way Daarut Tauhid deals with material things. It adopts many aspects of technology without being trapped in the materialistic life. Being modern is often taken to mean living in comfort, while being modest and *sederhana* (simple) seems to mean living in poverty, Daarut Tauhid tries to reconcile these two polarised view points.

Coming into the Daarut Tauhid complex, one might be surprised by the glamour of its mosque, the modern-styled mini-market right beneath the mosque (ground level), and the *wartel* (telephone shop) next to it. The high-standard sound system of the mosque, the computer-equipped official room of the mosque, and a Western-style clock—showing the am-pm time system that is locally uncommon— all of these things in the mosque may surprise visitors. These things might well lead one to consider that Daarut Tauhid is quite modern in outlook.



**Photograph 15** The computer centre: for use as well as for rent (taken from *Mangle* December 1993)

This consideration may be further supported by the fact that Daarut Tauhid adopts modern communication equipment. The *kyai*, the *santri pengurus*, and

the workers at various businesses are connected by telephones. For local and mobile communication, they also use walky-talkies (hand-held two-way radios) that provide effective and fast connection between them all the time. (This modern communications equipment also allows close relations between males and females at the *pesantren*, since face-to-face interaction between the two sexes is restricted in Islam because it may lead to adultery.) In addition, Daarut Tauhid has some facsimile machines for internal and external communications.

Close attention to the living areas of both the *kyai* and the *santri* might bring one to the contrasting judgement that life at Daarut Tauhid reflects modesty and simplicity. The *kyai*'s house is not his own but a rented one. He and his family share the house with its owner. Located next to the mosque, it is old in contrast to the mosque. Attached to the house is an "operations room" where *santri* take turns acting as receptionist, welcoming visitors and receiving communications.

The living areas of the *santri* are similarly simple. There is only one new dormitory, where female *santri* are housed, and this is so far the only dormitory that has been built by Daarut Tauhid. The others were formerly houses, are still being rented and have been divided into a series of bedrooms, each of six square metres. Each bedroom is peopled by five to eight *santri*. The smallness of the rooms is understandable given that Daarut Tauhid is located in an urban area of Bandung. Despite the urban location, both exteriors and interiors of the rooms are very simple. Some are semi-permanent structures while others are permanent. Inside, I found an assortment of beds and mats. This suggests that some inhabitants sleep on beds, while others sleep on the floor. A *santri* told me that people sleep on beds or the mats on the floor depending on their mood. There are also wardrobes in which the *santri* store clothes and goods. Additionally, many pieces of clothing are hung on the walls. These and other things in the rooms suggest simplicity.

The rooms are in striking contrast to both the luxurious mosque and to the surrounding houses and buildings. The logic behind this scene is the intention of Aa Gym and his *santri* to provide evidence of the glory of Allah and their belief in Him and also to demonstrate their nothingness in the face of Allah by their modesty. The luxury of the mosque, as the *baitullah* (house of Allah) is intended to assert the former and the simple rooms, the latter.

However, the simplicity of their rooms, clothing, and overall behaviour does not lead them to the state of Sufistic *zuhud* (asceticism) or to a fatalistic world-denial. In fact, along with their inner dynamics (portrayed above), they also frequently, appear in modern and recent-style clothing, less common among devout Muslims.

Given these two aspects of Daarut Tauhid life, there is no one-sidedness towards either modernity or modesty but a combination of the two. Following a modern style of life does not necessarily mean forgetting religious values and being

devoutly religious is not necessarily anti-modern. Daarut Tauhid brings together the values of the two to create an advanced Muslim society and religious modernity.

The application of modern technology is underlined by a cardinal principle held firmly by Daarut Tauhidians, which was summed up by Aa Gym:

All modern achievement of everything including technology is nothing but Allah's creation. All is but Allah's *nikmat* (courtesy) to human beings. Whoever, Muslim or non-Muslim, discovered scientific advancement is merely Allah's agent in blessing all human beings. Thus, the most worthy human beings to enjoy any of Allah's blessings are none other than *hamba Allah* (Allah's loyal servants), those who believe in and obey Him The Almighty. Muslims have, therefore, first priority and every right to utilise all the advanced achievements of whatever technology. And it is wrong to undermine and deny all of this or otherwise we [Muslims] would remain backward. This is why we try to equip Daarut Tauhid with the most technologically advanced equipment that we can afford.<sup>4</sup>

In anticipating any preoccupation with worldly modernity, Daarut Tauhidians hold to this principle:

Seek as much knowledge as you can and earn as much wealth as you can but never let them control you. *Ulah kadalon-dalon micinta dunya, sanajan hayoh kaseundeuhan ku dunya, oge hirup tetep basajan* (Never be preoccupied by wealth although you deal with it all the time and be modest in life) (Risnawati 1993:13).

Therefore, while making every attempt to be highly religious, people at Daarut Tauhid also make every effort to achieve a high standard of living in the world. "In short, our mind is one hundred percent *tawekal* (resignation/trust in God) while our body makes the fullest *ikhtiar* (endeavour)," Aa Gym once told me.

#### **4.4 Multi-style Management: A Solid Combination**

This combination also extends to the way Daarut Tauhid is managed. Three managerial styles are applied here; military, entrepreneurial, and divine. The combination of these three is readily recognisable through the terms and forms of Daarut Tauhid's activities.

The military style is seen primarily in the terms employed in organisational practices. Every time Aa Gym leaves his home, especially to deliver religious talks, there are always one or two disciples who accompany him. Santri take turns in accompanying Aa Gym. These santri are called *ajudan*, which is an Indonesian military term for guardian or servant.<sup>5</sup> In the military tradition, an *ajudan* serves the *Jenderal* (general). There is thus an impression that, if those accompanying santri are *ajudan*, then Aa Gym is a general. Indeed, along with

the santri's awe of Aa Gym's charisma, they appear to respect him as their general. However, this imagery tends to be misleading because Aa Gym himself tends to minimise the hierarchical relationship by treating the *ajudan* as his partners. For instance, he drives his car with the *ajudan* as passengers, something a military general would not do.

Although the term *ajudan* might also reflect the influence of kingly or governmental tradition (see footnote), I believe it is adopted from military tradition both because Aa Gym was a *Menwa* (Student Regiment) commander and because of other military terms used at Daarut Tauhid. The term *komandan* (commander) is also used at Daarut Tauhid in much the same way as it is applied in the Indonesian Armed Forces. The head of the daily picket at the pesantren complex is called *komandan piket*, the head of operational activities is called *komandan lapangan* (field commander), and so forth. The 'operations room' itself reflects the influence of military style, since it is "the model of a military command" which forms part of the "push for integration and unity" in Indonesia (Guinness 1994:272).



**Photograph 16** Participants of the *rihlah* ordered to line up in a military style.

The military style also appears in the form of activities frequently performed at Daarut Tauhid. The simulation of *perang Badar* is obviously a case in point. Here Aa Gym and his ex-Menwa-member brother, Abdurrahman Yuri, apply their military experiences. The participants practise the military skills of applying strategy and tactics. (Of course, the main aim here is not that of training an army

but instead, according to Ikin Sodikin, the chairman of the committee, to teach participants the hardness of the Prophet's struggles in the maintenance of Islam.)

Another activity that gives an impression of military style is highland camping. As a form of recreation, this has its origin, and continues to be practised, in the military tradition. Again, this activity also reflects Aa Gym's former experience in a student regiment.

In addition, the military form of management is also reflected by the dress of the officials of Daarut Tauhid. However, what is adopted at Daarut Tauhid is not the type of the dress but simply the military terms for clothing. They wear three kinds of uniform: PDH (*Pakaian Dinas Harian*, daily uniform), PDU (*Pakaian Dinas Upacara*, ceremonial uniform), and PDL (*Pakaian Dinas Lapangan*, field uniform). These are obviously military terms for dress.

The adoption of a military form of management is said to inculcate the positive value of discipline, which has been successful in the organisation of military life. At Daarut Tauhid it has shown its effectiveness in organising followers as a team and in accelerating the implementation of activities.

The entrepreneurial style is another form of management employed at Daarut Tauhid. It is applied particularly in the economic activities of the pesantren. The pesantren's thirteen business ventures are organised using entrepreneurial techniques. The leader of each unit is called a director.

Although further, detailed investigation of this aspect of Daarut Tauhid's business ventures is needed, I find the economic management of the businesses as applied at Daarut Tauhid to be most modern. The organisation of the mini-market involves up-to-date equipment: the cashier section, for instance, is equipped with modern equipment for storing money and calculating purchases.

In regard to the marketing system, Daarut Tauhid applies modern techniques. It employs some skilful personalities to do this. It also uses cars with which to sell handicrafts and other items produced by its santri. In addition, advertising is employed to promote its economic and religious activities. Daarut Tauhid uses printed advertisements in addition to the word-of-mouth advertising commonly employed by its followers.

The third managerial style used at Daarut Tauhid is referred to as the *managemen Allah* (divine management). According to Yuri, the military and entrepreneurial styles of management involve divine inspiration and control that guide every action of Daarut Tauhid's organisation. What is meant by "divine management" is that Allah The Almighty is the single "Director," who by His absolute Will develops Daarut Tauhid. Many things have happened at Daarut Tauhid which are not rationally explainable, and which are therefore believed to be proof of the Will of God.

At first glance, the so-called divine management makes Daarut Tauhidians sound fatalistic, as though they totally rely upon Allah's Will and initiate little or even nothing themselves (Karim 1993:63). Yet I think this impression is wrong. Daarut Tauhid's rapid development in every aspect of its activities is enough evidence to counter this impression. One should note that belief in the close involvement of Allah's Will in the development of Daarut Tauhid produces, instead of a fatalistic attitude, a high degree of conviction on the part of the followers that Allah helps and gives his overall blessing to their *ikhtiar* (endeavour). This, in turn, generates in them a profound degree of self-confidence, both in working for Daarut Tauhid in particular and in living in the world in general. Here Allah is mainly viewed as the source of inspiration upon which their works are based. In the meantime, Allah is also viewed as the Supervisor, in that He examines every single action of his followers. Thus, while still working hard, people at Daarut Tauhid are convinced of Allah's guiding inspiration and supervision.

There are two intended aims of divine management. First, Daarut Tauhid aims at developing personally inward discipline to balance military discipline. The latter has the weakness of being highly dependent on other humans, so that an individual might be personally undisciplined in the absence of others' supervision. Dependence on Allah's supervision is effective in countering this possible weakness, and involves the exercise of *kejujuran* (honesty). In every activity, everyone is expected to be honest to himself, to other humans, and to Allah, in the conviction that Allah will always see whatever one hides. An honest Muslim would not cheat although an economic arrangement, for example, may provide a chance for cheating or corruption. Thus, the weakness of human management systems—military and entrepreneurial—can be covered by the divine management.

Second, through divine management Daarut Tauhid also aims at promoting the characteristic of *ikhlaash* (sincerity). The main idea of being *ikhlaash* is to do everything for the sake of Allah (*Lillahi Ta'ala*). Put another way, whatever a Muslim does has to be sincerely dedicated to Allah. Daarut Tauhidians thus view what they do as their dedication to Allah. This minimises expectations of worldly rewards for what they do.<sup>6</sup> According to Aa Gym, this value of *ikhlaash* is "the very key to the rapid growth of Daarut Tauhid."

A conflict arises at Daarut Tauhid concerning the implementation of this value of *ikhlaash*. A *santri karyawan* said that Aa Gym tends to rely too much on the quality of *ikhlaash* in his employees. Because Aa Gym believes that his employees are truly *ikhlaash* (sincere), in that they intend their works as a form of *ibadah* (dedication) to Allah thus expecting less worldly return or wage, he seems to neglect the role of wage and incentives in maintaining the loyalty of the employees. An employee said:



Too much relying on the *ikhlahash*, Aa Gym seems not to consider the competition of employment. He pays his employees below the common standard of wage. He does not worry about the possibility that his employees might resign to look for another employer who pays more. He has to pay at least the same as other employers do. Otherwise, he could lose his employees. I myself may leave my job at Daarut Tauhid to look for a better wage. Besides, I tend to be independent in that I wish to work independently on my own direction.

Apart from such conflict, *ikhlahash* has been an integrative part of the divine management that is applied at Daarut Tauhid.

This combination of military, entrepreneurial, and divine styles of management has confirmed the tendency of Daarut Tauhid to combine various orientations in ordering human life. This provides the bases for Daarut Tauhid in actualising its mission as the agent of the reinforcement of Islamic morality in the contemporary world, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Islam does not hold a monopoly on this religious outlook. Brennan R. Hill (1988:63-4) records, for example, that such a dualistic view is common among such religious groups as the Theravada Buddhists and Catholics of the pre-Vatican II period. He also notices that "it still prevails in the more conservative ranks of the church."

<sup>2</sup> One is, I think, justified in getting the impression that these practices sound like Aa Gym's own early religious inclinations, as portrayed in chapter two.

<sup>3</sup> *Badar* game is a simulation in which the participants pretend to be involved in the *Badar* battle at which the Prophet Muhammad was involved.

<sup>4</sup> This confirms the idea that current Islamic resurgences are demonstrated in their basic acceptance and accommodation to modernity (Cantory 1990:183-194).

<sup>5</sup> As a matter of fact, the term *ajudan*, with the same meaning, was also common in the tradition of Indonesian kingdoms and is now perpetuated among high level governmental authorities.

<sup>6</sup> This may confuse one who has read Geertzian concept of *ikhlahash* (*iklas*) found among Javanese (Geertz 1960:73). Geertz's definition of *ikhlahash* as the "state of willed affectlessness" is obviously misleading. This is because Geertz drew his conception of *ikhlahash* from the context of death. Geertz writes that his informant, whose wife had just died, was truly *iklas* in that "he didn't feel anything at all." This, to me, sounds like *sabar* (patience). (For the concept of *sabar*, as understood at Daarut Tauhid, see Chapter Five on the *Qolbun Salim*.)