

## Conclusions



## Bandung 2.0

### *Audible Dakwah and the Performance of Indian Ocean Islam*

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#### AUDIBLE DAKWAH

Clad in a flannel shirt, jeans, a woolen beanie, and with an Arab kaffiyeh around his neck, Muzammil Hasballah recites *Surah al-Rahman*, a chapter from the Qur'an. His soft, gentle *tilawah* (recitation) reverberates within a mosque, his back to a congregation of young men in rows, arms folded, heads bowed. The event is preserved on his YouTube channel.<sup>1</sup> In another clip, this one on Ammar TV's channel, we see and hear Muzammil Hasballah against a plain white wall, dressed in a collared shirt and sweater, reciting the same tuneful rendition of *Surah Al-Rahman* into a round, mesh pop filter that protects a side address microphone, suspended in a shockmount. We can find clips of him in a trio (again in flannel) or wearing a Western suit jacket over his collared shirt and sweater, at his desk, his open laptop poised to one side. Appearing in attire that intentionally extends traditional *baju koko*, men's Muslim dress, and with a voice that is sweet, cool, gentle, clean, diatonic, and modern, Muzammil's Hasballah's persona resonates with a cadre of male millennials whose performance of Islam and presentation of self across a variety of social media platforms constitute a multidimensional, cosmopolitan, Muslim masculinity. Visitors to his Instagram account may discover his line of perfume and men's clothing, including a practical prayer vest. The names of each individual product recall places in the Islamicate world, Gaza, Istanbul, and Medina, as well as the names of Arab musical scales: *Kurdi* (the prayer vest), and *Hijaz*. His perfume is named for his company, *Habba*, which derives from the Arabic word for love (*hubb*).



FIGURE 14.1. The official stamp of “Bandung 2.0,” *Konferensi Islam Asia-Africa*, March 6–14, 1965. Note the iconography of maps and mosques on the stamps, top right as well as the orientation of the globe on the left. Image credit: James Phillips.

In this “sounding” of the Indian Ocean, I begin with Muzammil Hasballah to explore musical circulations around an Afro-Asiatic zone looking backward from this example to ponder the shared Islamic soundscape of the *Konferensi Asia-Africa*, known as the Bandung Conference of 1955, and the *Konferensi Islam Asia-Africa* ten years later, Bandung 2.0.<sup>2</sup> As we chart the topography of Indian Ocean history, we must consider the Asia Africa Conference of 1955 (KAA) and the Islamic Asia Africa Conference of 1965 (KIAA) as two of its highest peaks.

Like any number of influencers of his generation, Muzammil Hasballah’s persona refracts *dakwah*. Sometimes translated as proselytization, *dakwah* is the Indonesianized version of the Arabic term *da‘wa* (the letter *ayn* converts to a *k*), which connotes strengthening the faith and encouraging others to do the same. In Indonesia it is important to display piety by participating in and generating religious culture, for example, *seni musik Islam*, or Islamic musical arts, the focus of my research.<sup>3</sup> Carla Jones (2021), emphasizes the importance of style in the expression of Islamic piety, drawing our attention to the transnational character of public and publicized acts and the “domestication of foreignness,” particularly among young women. Such phenomena, like fashion, she writes, are “particularly well suited to the celebration of cosmopolitan lifestyle that social media celebrity affords” (173). I want to place Jones among many others (Husein, Slama, Beta), whose concern is with the visible, the material, and the lexical, among acts of piety in what R. W. Liddle (1996) calls “the Islamic turn” in Indonesian politics: the post–New Order era of reform (*Reformasi*) that saw a proliferation of mostly right-leaning Muslim political parties and social trends. My work draws attention to the audible, namely, the soundscape of Muslim Indonesia and the ways that “Islam in the Atmosphere” (Rasmussen 2010, 38–73) references the traditional and local, the Inter-Asian (Ho 2017) and international, the political, the aspirational, and the personal.<sup>4</sup>

Muzammil Hasballah was on the margins of my research in Indonesia in 2017 when all eyes and ears were fixed on a heated debate about Muhammad Yasir Arafat, a reciter who performed at the presidential palace two years earlier (in May 2015). This *qari'* (reciter) surprised everyone by reciting the Qur'an in *langgam Jawa*, or Javanese melodies. In an act of aesthetic disobedience, he strayed from the conventional melodic framework of the Arab (or more correctly, Egyptian) system of *maqamat*, a melodic modal network described in Indonesia with the shorthand expression, or *singkatan*, *Bi Hosrin Jasat*, an aide mémoire for the eight principle Arabic musical modes: *Bayyati*, *Hija*, *Saba*, *Rast*, *Nahawand*, *Jiharkah*, *Sikah*, and *Ajam*.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently exploding on social media, this performance of Javanese melody, ironically by a reciter not from Java but from Sumatra, stirred an anxious and recurring refrain, *Islam yang mana?* Or, which Islam?<sup>6</sup>

To recite in *langgam Jawa* resonates with any number of examples across the time and space of *Islam Nusantara*—the tolerant, open-minded, and flexible Islam of the Indonesian archipelago. Burning incense, visiting graves, performing ceremonies such as the seven-month blessing for a pregnant woman (*tujuh bulanan*) are other examples of practices that might come under scrutiny by modernist hard-liners who referee diverse communities and practices, including local traditions and the bodies, voices, and activities of girls and women. While the Islamization of Indonesia obviously involves a certain degree of Arabization, a new intensity of Salafi/Wahabi originalism among conservative modernists and right-wing hard-liners has involved not only a remarkable degree of neo-Arabization but also of cosmopolitan, middle-class consumerism (Rasmussen 2022; 2010a).

I submit that with his audible *dakwah*, Muzammil Hasballah offers one response to the question *Islam yang mana?* (Which Islam?). It is not only his soft gentle voice, but also the melodic phrases, grouped into paragraphs, and then repeated as if they were verses in a song that together are as striking as the recitation in *langgam Jawa* already described. Taking his cue from the reciters of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf who deploy a simpler, faster chanting style called *murattal*, and who have become extraordinarily influential in Indonesia due to the omnipresence of Saudi Arabian soft power, Muzammil's recitation abjures the model of Egyptian and Arab-world artists whose sonic imprint and concomitant habitus of *tarab* (ecstasy, rapture, enchantment) have shaped the nationalized culture of the Qur'an in Indonesia since the midcentury Bandung era. His style resonates with *nasyid* or *akapella*, the musical boy bands who, beginning in the 1990s, brought innovative ideas and images along with a stripe of conservatism to Islamic musical arts, including hip and cool urban lifestyles, functional western harmony, and objection to women's voices and musical instruments (Rasmussen 2010a; Barendregt 2017).

Rather than to exhibit the virtuosity prized among Indonesian reciters who can exhibit the path or (*seyer*) of a *maqam* and who are expected to navigate among the eight primary *maqamat*, Muzammil delivers his *Al-Rahman* in the diatonic Phrygian mode, akin to *maqam kurd* with its flattened 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and

7th degrees. A Western ear might hear this as the melodic world of flamenco (D-E♭-F-G-A-B♭-C-D). His sequence of descending thirds beginning on the 6th degree of the scale—6–5–4; 5–4–3; 4–3–2; 3–2–1—constitutes a four-phrase sentence that is repeated over and over. The repetition and the predetermined melodic movement render the recitation as a kind of easy-listening song, that, while friendly to the ears of Muzammil Hashballah's millennial *sahabat* (companions), do not adhere to the rules of recitation as they have been taught, learned, practiced, and enforced through the institutions of Quranic education, including a scaffolded competition system, a hallmark of Muslim Indonesia.<sup>7</sup>

Master reciter and educator Kiayi Hajji Rif'at Abi Syahid explained to me that a reciter such as Muzammil Hasballah positions himself among young millennials who aspire toward pious lifestyles. However, K. H. Rif'at commented further that his recitation exits (*keluar*) from the Arabic modes (*Bi Husrin Jasat*), is outside of the Arabian style or *lahja* (accent), and that the notes (*notasi*) he uses are not from Arab nations (*dari negara Arab*) (pers. comm. October 27, 2021). Anthropologist Dadi Darmadi pointed me toward a number of other “modern” reciters, many of them from the Arabian Gulf, who prescribe their YouTube recordings, labeled *tilawah*, *takbiran*, or *zikr* (recitation, praise, and remembrance) to help calm anxieties, put babies to sleep, unwind after a long day, or even accompany your workout. Given the extraordinary protocol surrounding Quranic recitation we must ask: Does the popularity of this new style and the transactional purpose of recitation present a tipping point in a stable system or is it an example of the kinds of Indian Ocean circulations that have been ongoing for centuries?

How does Quranic Arabic and by extension Arabic and Islamic song and music crisscross the Indian Ocean? To study the Indonesian category, *seni musik Islam*, from sacred text to saccharine song, is to penetrate the enduring routes and roots of shared culture across the region for the *longue durée*, to echo Eric Tagliacozzo and colleagues (2009) who adopt the term coined by Fernan Braudel (see also Lavin this volume). Although mimesis of and homage to the authentic homelands of Islam, namely Mecca, Medina, the Hadramaut, and the Arab *Mashriq* are to be expected, circulation of praxis originating from the lands below the Monsoon winds upward to South Asia, East Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula through commerce, pilgrimage, and pleasure are not to be overlooked. I join Byl and Sykes's challenge to “methodological nationalism” with an ear toward what Ronit Ricci (2011) calls “the Arab cosmopolis,” where those capable of performing authoritative texts, particularly the language of Islam, possess a “special kind of authority.” Complementing such authoritative texts are processes of linguistic domestication and vernacularization. In Indonesia, Arabic terms have mutated to suit the alphabet and pronunciation preferences of the national language Bahasa Indonesia: *da'wa* becomes *dakwah*; *ta'lim* becomes *taklim* (learning); *faham* becomes *paham* (understand), to cite just a few examples. In religious parlance, Indonesian and Arabic go hand in glove with expressions such as *pelantun Al-Qur'an bil-ghina* (singer/

chanter [I.] of the Qur'an with song [Ar]). While rules for sustaining the aesthetics and techniques of melody or *irama* (I.) abound, processes of vernacularization apply to melody as well (Rasmussen 2010). Let us turn back from the contemporary example of a millennial *qari'* and the Inter-Asian circulation of modern recitation styles to the *Konferensi Asia Africa* in Bandung and the conference that followed ten years later, the *Konferensi Islam Asia-Afrika* 1965, or Bandung 2.0.

#### PERFORMANCE AT THE BANDUNG ASIA AFRICA CONFERENCE OF 1955.

The *Konperensi Asia Africa*, held in the cool mountain town of Bandung, West Java, from April 18 to 24, 1955, marked the beginning of postcolonialism for twenty-nine nations and delegations of Asia and Africa. The participants were united by the experience of imperial subjugation; some of them had yet to achieve independence. Held at the height of the Cold War (*peran dingin*), one aim of the conference was to establish a position of nonalignment with either the Soviet bloc or with Western Europe and the United States. Another was to acknowledge siblinghood through a collective and shared performance of emerging national selves. Jennifer Lindsay (2012), asserts: "As the first Asian nation to declare its independence at the end of World War II, Indonesia was seen in the region as the leader in the fight against imperialism. Between 1950 and 1965, five Asian and 35 new African nations emerged from previous colonies" (9).

In his *New York Herald Tribune* article "Watch Bandung!", published on the eve of the conference, April 17, 1955, General Carlos P. Romulo, head of the Philippine delegation to Bandung, cautioned the United States to pay attention to the "ominous meeting" for two reasons. As "Special and Personal Envoy of the President of the Philippines to the U.S.," Romulo cautioned that the alignment of Asian nations could challenge "the free world's struggle to stay the advance of Communism" and stressed the Asia-Africa coalition as a racial alliance: "the first important manifestation of a conscious, deliberate, banding-together of the non-white world against the white." Romulo's unapologetic entreaty condemns Americans for not having grasped "the real nature of anti-colonial emotionalism."

I have argued that the basic reason some Asians were so cold to the propaganda of democracy and so vulnerable to Communist blandishments was that the so-called democracies, in times past, had brought them, for the most part, not democracy but colonialism . . . five-cents-a-day wages and racial barriers. (Romulo 1955)

If absent and overlooked in the American press, critical documentation of the 1955 Bandung conference appeared immediately in two small but important volumes, both published in 1956. The first is a chronicle of the meetings and speeches of the KAA by George McT. Kahin (1918–2000) a historian and political scientist after whom the Cornell Center for Advanced Research on Southeast Asia is named; the

second is *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference* by acclaimed African American author Richard Wright. In his autobiographical account of the conference, Wright reveals: “I found that many Asians hated the West with an absolute-ness that no American Negro could ever muster” (1956, 25). He cites “terse phrases” of the *Christian Science Monitor*’s notice of the conference on January 23, 1955.

The West is excluded. Emphasis is on the colored nations of the world. And for Asia it means that at last the destiny of Asia is being determined in Asia, and not in Geneva, or Paris, or London or Washington. Colonialism is out. Hands off is the word. Asia is free. This is perhaps the great historic event of our century. (Wright 1956, 88)

Naoko Shimazu writes that the 1955 conference “came to represent the mythical moment when the combined dynamism of the newly decolonized, independent states of Asia and Africa monopolized the centre stage in international relations” (2014, 226). Noting the tensions between various parties who naturally, due to their colonial histories, were aligned with either the West or the Soviet bloc, Shimazu describes the resulting Ten Bandung Principles as “a miraculous feat of collective determination” that established “Afro-Asia as a new collective force in international politics” (227–28). Shimazu goes on to emphasize not the political but rather the cultural significance of the event as conferring “symbolic meaning” through the “performance of pageantry,” for example, the fashion show of national dress in Bandung, a city that had been recently reclaimed from the Dutch and “prepared as the stage for a diplomatic theatre” (231–34; see also Spiller [2023] and Mackie [2005]).

#### TILAWAH AS DIPLOMACY: BANDUNG 2.0.

Of my research in the 1990s and 2000s, I recall more than one of Jakarta’s senior reciters telling me that an international competition in Quranic recitation (*Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur’an*) was staged as a part of the Bandung Conference (Rasmussen 2001, 2010b). Quranic recitation was likely to have been used as a frame for various ceremonial events at the conference, after all, Indonesian president Sukarno’s NASAKOM, a *singkatan* or abbreviation denoting the three ideological streams of NAS-nationalism, A-religion, (*agama*), and KOM-communism (or Marxism), recognized Islam as a pillar of Indonesian society (Chisaan 2011). Furthermore, the Muslim participants among the twenty-nine delegations would have worshipped together and shared interests in religious ritual and recreation. They were, to use Ricci’s term, part of the “Arab cosmopolis” (2011). While it is plausible that festivalized presentations by reciters were a part of the cultural entertainments that played on in the marginalia of the seven-day conference, I have not been able to corroborate my consultants’ assertions of either a scheduled competition, *musabaqah*, or of a *haflah*, literally a Qur’an listening party, among the reciters at the Bandung conference. What is certain, however, is that Quranic arts and Islamic culture were central to the second iteration of the Bandung



conference, the *Konferensi Islam Asia Afrika* (KIAA) held ten years later, from March 6 to 14, 1965: Bandung 2.0.

Choirotun Chisaan (2011) characterizes the 1965 *Konferensi Islam Asia Afrika* (Bandung 2.0) as the culmination of fifteen years “in search of an Islamic cultural identity.” The conference, attended by 107 delegates from thirty-three countries, four observers, and forty delegates and twenty-one advisors from Indonesia “representing the full spectrum of the Islamic community in Indonesia at the time,” confirmed “Indonesia’s place as a centre of Islamic revival and renaissance equal to the existing examples of Turkey, Egypt, Palestine and India” (Chisaan 2011, 288). The conflation of pan-Asianism and pan-Islamism was an idea that was underscored by the writings and initiatives of President Sukarno, among them the KIAA of 1965. What is significant for our purposes is the emphasis at this moment in history on Islamic praxis as both cultural and artistic, on religion as a wellspring for creativity, and on art as an act of *dakwah*. Among the numerous Islamic arts and culture organizations that emerged in Indonesia in the mid-twentieth century, Chisaan draws our attention to the *Himpunan Seni Budaja Islam* (HSBI, Association for Islamic Arts and Culture), formed in 1956, and *Lembaga Seniman Budayawan Muslim Indonesia* (LESBUMI, Institute of Indonesian Muslim Artists and Cultural Figures), formed in 1962.<sup>8</sup>

One year prior to the conference, in June 1964, a planning committee consisting of delegates of thirteen countries set out an agenda that would follow the political and social principles of the first Bandung conference in 1955. Chisaan (2011) summarizes that in addition to its goals of strengthening solidarity and cooperation among the *umma*, “Additionally, the conference would aim to discuss ‘matters concerned with Islamic Proselytizing (*Dakwah*), Education (*Tarbijah*) and culture (*tsaqofah*)” (289),

Specifically, the conference aimed to discuss: 1) developing an Africa-Asia people’s culture that did not conflict with Islamic teachings; 2) establishing cultural exchange programs between the Islamic peoples of the Africa-Asia region with a view to strengthening cooperation and Islamic brotherhood; 3) intensifying the application of Islamic teachings and developing a good quality Qur’anic recitation (*qiraah*) among the peoples of Africa-Asia; 4) encouraging the development of Islamic libraries; 5) promoting the use of spoken Arabic as a language of unity among the *umma*, alongside the national language of each country; and 6) working towards the establishment of Islamic cultural centres, at both the national and international levels. (Chisaan 2011, 294–95)

This is an exciting moment in Indonesia’s leadership of the Afro-Asiatic *umma*. Rather than to be only on the receiving end of Arab Muslim-ness, Indonesia defined and disseminated Islamic culture, offering models of cultural practice and aesthetic standards. This stance—that arts, culture, and aesthetics are part and parcel of an Islamic life—is one that is repeated, reinforced, and indeed debated through the actions of individuals and organizations to the present day.<sup>9</sup>

The *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an* at the second Bandung conference originates with the extraordinary acts of ordinary individuals.<sup>10</sup> Their history, as far as I can piece it together, is worth recounting here. We center on the figure of Basori Alwi (1927–2020), renowned Quranic, educator, competition judge, recording artist, and author known for developing and popularizing the melodic recitation of the Qur'an, usually referred to in Arabic as the *mujawwad* style. Like many reciters he learned the Arab melodies for reciting from other Indonesian reciters and from the records (*piringan hitam*) and cassettes of Egyptian reciters that circulated among students and audiences and on the radio.

It is recounted that beginning in the 1950s before the *subuh*, morning prayers, Alwi and four of his friends performed *tarhim* (A.) or *sholawat* (I.), songs in praise of the prophet Muhammad, and verses of the Qur'an at the ancient Ampel Mosque in Surabaya, East Java. The mosque is still a site of worship and pilgrimage to the grave of Sunan Ampel, 1401–1481, one of the nine saints or Wali Songo who introduced Islam to Java.<sup>11</sup> The singing and recitation by Alwi and his friends caught the attention of the locals, and his group subsequently launched a regular Friday evening *Laylatil Qur'an*, or evening of the Qur'an. The coalition of interested reciters spawned an organization of male and female reciters and memorizers, from across Java and beyond. Finally, the *Jami'yyatul Qurra' wal Huffadh* (Association of Reciters and Memorizers) was formally established in 1951 by K. H. Wahid Hasyim, Indonesia's Minister of Religious Affairs. The organization exists to the present day. Founding member Basori Alwi was invited to recite for President Sukarno at the palace, then to appear at the inaugural KAA in 1955, and then to assist in the planning of the first international competition in Quranic recitation, *musabaqah tilawatil quran*, or MTQ, held at the KIAA in 1965. Immediately following Bandung 2.0, Alwi and two colleagues embarked on a government-sponsored mission to nine Arab nations, along with Pakistan and India, using recitation or *tilawa* as their *alat* (tool) or *cara* (method/style) of *diplomasi* (diplomacy).

#### TILAWAH AS SPECTACLE

I momentarily pause this historical reconstruction to convey something of the spectacle of Quranic recitation as public performance.<sup>12</sup> A reciter (male or female) typically approaches the stage or place of performance, dressed appropriately in Busana Muslim, and with a posture of modesty. Reciters, *qari'* (m.) or *qari'a* (f.) often sit on the floor as is common practice for many social occasions. The reciter prepares, breathing in deeply, and then begins their recitation (*maqra'*) in the very lowest grumble at the bottom of their vocal range. As their recitation progresses, she or he interprets the Arabic words (*kalimat*) of the verses (*ayat*) of the Qur'an's 114 chapters (*surat*), matching text to tune, progressing through the expected paths (*seyer*) of the *maqamat* (pl.), climbing up and up in their vocal range, embroidering

phrases with ornamentation and variations. It is commonly recounted that the Qur'an in Indonesia was likely chanted first with local melodies and *lagu Makkawi* or Meccan *maqamat* transmitted through the experience of the *haji* pilgrimage to Mecca and the tutorials of early traders and teachers. The Meccan melodies were dramatically superseded by the musical language of Egypt around the 1950s. An official publication of the Indonesian government's Division for the Development of the Qur'an (*Lembaga Pengembangan Tiwatil Qur'an*) within the Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Departamen Agama*) notes that the Quranic arts, were "enlivened" (*diramaikan*) by the beloved Egyptian reciters who, beginning in 1955, systematically visited Indonesia during the month of Ramadan. Their visits and the institutionalization of Quranic learning, reinforced by the developing competition system, were bolstered by the recordings (*piringan hitam*) of these Egyptian masters that circulated among the public and on the radio (Rasmussen 2010b, chapter 3). And there is no question that the Egyptian reciters took back with them as souvenirs the stories of young, enthusiastic, Indonesian men and women. As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Division for the Development of Quranic Recitation extolls:

By 1955 there had developed a revolution of Quranic melodies that heretofore had been in the Makkawy style (in the style of Mecca). The melodies became Mishry (from Egypt, Ar. Mizr) because of the influence of the Egyptian reciters, especially Syeikh Abdul Basith Abdus-Shamad and Syeikh Shiddiq al-Minsyawy. (LPTQ 1994, 18–19)

To recall Ricci's *Islam Translated* (2011), the *experience* of the language, especially Quranic Arabic with its qualities of sacrality, power, prestige, and untranslatability, may eclipse the *understanding* of the language. Although recitation is a solo act, its context is communal and meant to reach the ears of the masses. In Indonesia as elsewhere in the Islamicate world, it is common for audiences, sometimes numbering in the hundreds or thousands, to participate in a reciter's performance by humming the landing note of a vocalized phrase during the pregnant pauses between lines and by exclaiming Arabic expressions of exhilaration and acknowledgment aloud, a process that A. J. Racy (2003) describes as "creative listening." Furthermore, recitation is not only cast as functional ritual, it is also athletic and showy, demanding a great degree of physical effort and expertise on the part of male and female reciters, something that is palpable, perceived, and appreciated by audiences, the majority of whom have also at least practiced at recitation themselves, at some point in their lives (Rasmussen 2011). I submit that with its best reciters in the show, Bandung 2.0 cultivated a sense of shared aesthetics within what Ho (2017) has promoted as "Inter-Asia . . . an old world crisscrossed by interactions between parts that have known and recognized one another for centuries." Thus, cultural capital among the Bandung participants was shared not only through discourse but also through practices that participants could experience and bring home.<sup>13</sup>

AUDIBLE DAKWAH AND KIAI HAJI RIF'AT'S HAFLAH  
AL-QUR'AN VIRTUAL<sup>14</sup>

Muzammil Hasballah, the millennial, hipster, skateboarder, influencer, reciter described at the outset of this piece taps into the contemporary modernist *cosmopolis* of Inter-Asia. His cool style references physical and material techniques that are outside of the framework of the recitation world as it developed (*berkembang*) and was broadcast (*menyebarkan*) beginning in Sukarno's Bandung era and throughout the rest of the twentieth century. Muzammil's *Al-Rahman* resonates on the one hand with the Saudi Arabian soft power soundscape (Jones 2021, 173; Rasmussen 2022), while also calling out to half a century of Islamic popular music groups from Bimbo, to Snada, to Sabyan. Let's listen to the flip side.

During the spring of 2021, a research team comprising Dadi Darmadi, Muhammad As'ad, and myself invited Kiai Haji Rif'at Abi Syahid (quoted earlier) to join our online Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with professional Quranic reciters and educators. This was the time when people worldwide were reeling from the pandemic and adapting to recommendations to quarantine, social distance, and wait for the COVID vaccine to be developed. K. H. Rif'at, director of two large boarding schools (*pesantren*) and secretary of the West Java committee of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, the largest Muslim social organization in the country), a member of the brotherhood of mosque *imams* (callers to prayer), and a *mutawwif*, or guide for the *Hajj* and *Umrah*, told our group about the experience of hosting a *Haflah-t-al-Qur'an* on zoom. While not ideal, the format allowed for several international participants to join, particularly the sensation, Sheikh Rajai Ayoub from Tanzania.<sup>15</sup>

So, I think it turns out that this pandemic also provides a kind of avenue for us to be creative, yes, including making international *haflah-s* through zoom meetings. It is true that what we love, [we can experience] through zoom, it is not as beautiful as in live, because we can't set the sound system and so on. But in my opinion, there (through zoom) we can see and hear the authenticity of the reciter's sound without amplification or effects. It's amazing, we can listen to Sheikh Ayoub's authentic voice without the echo effect and the delay effect and it's amazing. Even though the participants are far away; the view is very close. That's how that emotional connection works, in the zoom room we feel very, very close. (pers. comm. K. H. Rif'at, April 22, 2021)

We see with this last example that the reciters in the "*umma* below the winds" (Laffan 2003) are part of a communal sound world within an Indian-Ocean-Asia-Africa. It is an ancient predisposition that has proved resilient to political and scholarly categorization by nation, race, class, gender, and religion, and that has been boosted by the capacities of today's internet and social media. This final example of audible, mobile *dakwah* joins with the numerous examples cited in this volume and beyond that compose the Indian Ocean soundscape throughout history and in the contemporary moment.

It is stunning to realize that the *Konferensi Islam Asia Afrika* occurred in March 1965 and that just a few months later, on September 30, 1965, six generals were murdered, setting into motion (1) the genocide of nearly a million more citizens thought to have associations with the communist party, (2) the fall of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, and (3) the rise to power of Indonesia's second president, Suharto, who, backed by the United States and its allies, ruled from 1966 to 1998. As the second-largest independent nation after India, Indonesia had been poised to guide a postcolonial Asia-Africa toward the path of political, social, and cultural Indian Ocean interconnectivity of the *longue durée* (see Tagliacozzo 2009; Lavin this volume; Alpers 2014; Boulos, Danielson, and Rasmussen 2021; Bose 2006; Al-Harthy and Rasmussen 2012). While the nonaligned movement as envisioned was never realized as a political outcome, the cultural materials of its travelers and the soundings of its recreation and ritual continue to resonate in the atmosphere and in the spirit of Bandung 2.0. To give the last word to Carlos Romulo, the Philippine delegate from a Christian and Catholic Asia and who, according to Richard Wright, "made the most race-conscious and stinging speech of all" (1956, 150): "The handwriting of history is spread on the wall; but not everybody reads there."

## NOTES

1. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOdi8cxR9xY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOdi8cxR9xY) MH, *Surat al-Rahman* with congregation. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=m\\_47v5-7l9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_47v5-7l9s) MH, *Surat al-Rahman* in the studio. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mYgb1tF7c4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mYgb1tF7c4) MH, seated at a desk, tutorial of 8 *maqamat*.

2. Note that *konferensi* often appears as *konperensi*. The *f* in English and Arabic often converts to a *p* in Bahasa Indonesia.

3. Piety as demonstrated by folkways, to include dress, cuisine, and consumption, has been noted by numerous if not the majority of scholars of Indian Ocean Islam. On recent trends of the fine line between demonstrating piety and showing off (*riya'*), see Hussein and Slama (2018); Husein (2017); and Jones (2021). See also Harnish and Rasmussen (2011) for fourteen case studies of musically oriented *dakwah*.

4. Such expressions, whether material or audible, are conveyed both digitally and live, or in Indonesian pandemic parlance: *daring* or online and offline—from *dalam* (inside) *jaringan* (the network) and *luar* (outside) the network (*jaringan*). "Hearing Islam in the Atmosphere" is a chapter in my 2010 book.

5. See Rasmussen (2022). I borrow "aesthetic disobedience" from philosopher Jonathan Neufeld. For more on the technicalities of recitation, see Rasmussen (2010b), chapter 3.

6. In her 2022 article, Marie-Claire Hefner describes a play, *Islam Yang Mana*, the title of which summarizes the angst among Indonesians to measure up to Islam as it is practiced in the Arab world and Middle East. See also Harnish and Rasmussen (2011).

7. The Qur'an is not made by a human and the melody of the recitation should be improvised, based on a spontaneous compilation of already internalized and appropriate materials. Like instrumental improvisation, recitation should not be rehearsed and re-sounded over and over in the same way. That would render it a human and individual creation. What reciters are trying to do is to model an archetype in the moment of performance (Nelson 1985; Racy 2003; Rasmussen 2010b, chapter 3).

8. Chisaan's work on LESBUMI (The Institute of Indonesian Muslim Artists and Cultural Figures) Political Strategy of Culture that is under the wing of Indonesia's largest Islamic social organization,

Nahdlatul Ulama, is extensive (see Chisaan 2008). LESBUMI leaders have also figured consistently in my own research.

9. Chisaan mentions at least six other organizations, in addition to LESBUMI and HSBI, in Indonesia whose mission it was to identify, define, and promote various aspects of Islamic art and culture. The insistence among people “in the business of religion” that religious praxis is artistic and aesthetic is the scaffolding of much of my own work. That religion and art, and by extension the involvement of women in both, are compatible are positions that must constantly be safeguarded from accusations by a conservative, hard-line, ill-informed patriarchy from within and outside of the country. Much of this defense is accomplished through both discursive and nondiscursive modes, such as material and audible *dakwah*.

10. This reconstruction is enabled through a number of sources, listed in the references as: Basori Alwi Obituary; LPTQ Nasional; Pesantren Ilmu al-Qur’an, Sejarah Asal . . . ; Shalihah; Sjaafari; and recent discussions with Maria Ulfah and Mukhtar Ikhsan.

11. See, for example, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ug69omzRUZw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ug69omzRUZw). While Sunan Ampel’s father was Javanese, his mother was a princess from Champa, present-day Vietnam, where he was born. Sunan Ampel does not migrate to Java until 1443, marries the daughter of a Chinese captain, and is likely descended through his father’s lineage from an Arab family from the Hadramout, true embodiment of Indian Ocean cosmopolitanism.

12. Examples abound on YouTube of both the public recitation of the Qur’an and/or Quranic competitions and of Indonesian and international competitions (*Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur’an*). A *Haflah* (party) or *Layla* (night) of Quranic recitation can occur at a private home or as part of a larger celebration or competition.

13. In the case of the Bandung conferences, Inter-Asia extended to much of the African world as well.

14. I attribute the privilege of continuous communication with the family of Pondok Pesantren Al Qur’an Al-Falah and Al-Falah II in Cicalengka to my longtime research partner Dadi Darmadi of the Universitas Islam Negeri. The patriarch of these schools, K. H. Ahmad Syahid (1945–2017) figures importantly in my 2010 book.

15. K. H. Rif’at respects Qari’ Rajai Ayoub not only because of his breath control (*nafas panjang*) but also for the originality of his ornaments and phrasing and his *thouq*, an Arabic term having to do with feeling and soul. He has invited the Tanzanian reciter, both live and virtually, to Indonesia. See: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtCVLfdZ4sg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtCVLfdZ4sg), Qari Rajai Ayoub reciting at a haflah in Pakistan—note the tips showered upon him. Tipping is a Pakistani tradition that you would not see in Indonesia. See also [www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF-q2sOjrV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF-q2sOjrV8), Qari Rajai Ayoub reciting at a haflah in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Check the beginning of the clip and then again from 8’30” to 10’ to appreciate the dramatic shift in range, extraordinary breath control, and the way the crowd interacts with the soloist. The other guest reciter at this event is from Egypt.

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