

Interpretation and Action of Islamic Organisations Responding to the Yogyakarta Earthquakes (27 May 2006): Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia

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Abstract

Disasters always happen in human life and have produced many responses from the surrounding society. Recently, disasters in Indonesia have happened more frequently than before. So, attention needs to be paid to discourses about disaster to illuminate the relations between perceptions about disaster and society. Yogyakarta's earthquakes of 27 May 2006 elicited discourses that are related to local social organisation based on Islam. In this paper I focus on the interpretations and responses to this disaster of three Islamic organisations: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI).

Every Islamic organisation has produced texts, such as *fatwa*, letters of legalization, or articles that circulate among its members. This paper begins with interpretation of Islamic organisations' understandings of the Yogyakarta's earthquakes based on texts that they have produced and then proceeds to analyse their action responses based on the texts that they produced. I explore the impact of the diverse ideologies regarding disaster that have been produced by Islamic organisations, specifically the relations between the ideologies of Islamic organizations with *mazhab tafseer* that are used in interpreting and carrying out disaster responses.

The interpretations of NU, Muhammadiyah, and MMI have different characteristics. NU's ideology as *ahlus sunnah wal jama'ah* interpreted the disaster as *kaffarat*, according to the *mazhab tafseer* philosophy. Muhammadiyah's ideology of al-Maun, interpreted the disaster as a test for increasing belief according to the contemporary *mazhab tafseer*. MMI's textualist *syari'ah* interpreted the disaster as punishment, *mazhab tafseer* that was referred to *fiqhi*. Each organisation engaged in a strategy of action in response to the earthquake that related to its interpretative stance. NU based its actions on the *istighotsah*, *qunut nazilah* by highlighting recovery transition shelters in its programme; Muhammadiyah strengthened the society of the victims of disaster with communal healing, and MMI directly gave donations home by home on the example of Sayyidina Umar.