



AUSTRIAN  
ACADEMY OF  
SCIENCES

MAI 07, 2024  
START: 4 PM  
PSK (FOURTH FLOOR)  
ROOM 4A.1

GEORG-COCH-PLATZ 2, 1010 VIENNA

## ISA REGIONAL GUEST LECTURE

IN COOPERATION WITH THE AUSTRIAN INDONESIAN SOCIETY

# BEYOND THE SACRED: CULTIVATION OF FAITH, SACRIFICIAL ECONOMIES, AND PREACHING OF ISLAM IN INDONESIA

**WAHYU KUNCORO**

UNIVERSITY OF ZÜRICH AND GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY

Tablighi Jama'at is an Islamic renewal movement that originated from India, arriving for the first time in Indonesia in the 1950s. Despite their comparatively small numbers, the presence of Tablighi Jama'at in everyday life in Indonesia has expanded. They are identifiable from their distinctive Islamic attire and preaching method known as khuruj. This presentation focuses on khuruj, wherein Tablighi followers engage in activities such as visiting Muslim neighborhoods, spending nights in mosques and inviting fellow Muslims to jointly participate in religious worship. This study highlights a paradox between the idea of khuruj and its practices. Khuruj, as preaching method, is ideally designed to reach out to a broader Muslim audience, converting as many Muslims as possible to the practices of Tablighi Jama'at. However, the routines of khuruj seem to be built for Tablighi Jama'at members, strengthening togetherness among Tablighi as well as providing a space for Tablighi to upgrade their Islamic knowledge and preaching skills. This presentation also elaborates on the socio-economic dimension of khuruj, with the consideration that engaging in this activity requires individuals to use their own money. Most Tablighi members interpret this as a sacrifice (kurban) for their religion. Tablighis hope that their sacrifices will eventually remove their sins and reward them with heaven in the afterlife. This study also shows that the hope of Tablighis that drives them to make sacrifices cannot be separated from socio-economic reasoning.

Wahyu Kuncoro is a doctoral researcher at the Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies (ISEK), University of Zürich, as well as a lecturer at the Department of Cultural Anthropology, Gadjah Mada University. His research interests include the anthropology of Islam, mission studies and transnationalism, with a focus on the Southeast Asian region, particularly Indonesia, Cambodia, and Thailand. He published the monograph *"Burmese-Muslim Social Networks in the Borderland: A case Study of Islam Bamroong Muslim Community in Mae Sot, Tak Province, Thailand"* (Chiang Mai University Press, 2018), and has contributed several articles to edited volumes. His most recent article *"Ambivalence, Virtual Piety, and Rebranding: Social Media Uses among Tablighi Jama'at in Indonesia"*, was published in *CyberOrient* (2021).

