

Editorial:

CONTINUING ISLAMIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

In a recent discussion forum at Postgraduate Program UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Greg Barton, an analyst of Indonesian Islamic thought, said that the reason why Muslim thinkers in Indonesia are still left behind in promoting their ideas globally is because of a lack of these works being found in English. No one doubts that Islamic discourse in Indonesia is very dynamic and shows constant development. We have, for example, neo-modernist Muslim thinkers such as Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, Djohan Efendy, and Ahmad Wahib. There are Muslim intellectual reformers such as Harun Nasution, Mukti Ali, Munawir Sadjali, Amin Abdullah, Syafi'i Ma'arif, and Abdul Munir Mulkhan. There are also progressive Muslim thinkers such as Masdar Farid Mas'ud, Mansour Fakih, and Muslim Abdurrahman, to name a few. We can list still more Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. However, one important question must be asked: how many of these thinkers produce their works in English so that their thought can reach a wider intellectual audience, not only in Indonesia but outside as well? Honestly speaking, it is only a few.

In order to make the Indonesian Islamic intellectual tradition heard outside of Indonesia, it is necessary, therefore, to increase the publication of English articles on Islam. By publishing their articles in English, it is hoped that Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia can contribute significantly to initiating, constructing, formulating, and enriching the global discourse of Islam. The massive publication of Islamic works in English by Indonesian Muslim intellectuals has the mission of showing to the world, the intellectual dynamic of Islam in Indonesia. This volume of *Al-Jāmi'ah* is dedicated to continuing the spread of Islamic thought throughout the world and showing the on-going

progress of the Islamic intellectual tradition in Indonesia. At this point, *Al-Jāmi'ah* provides a space for Indonesian Muslim intellectuals to articulate their thoughts on Islamic studies.

This volume of *Al-Jāmi'ah* begins with Zulkifli, who discusses the education of Shi'ī leaders in Indonesia. No one could deny the existence of Shi'ī in Indonesia, but the study of Shi'ī in this country is still limited. The Shi'ī community in Indonesia is not single, but consists of several groups that belong to certain recognized leaders. This article investigates the education background of Shi'ī leaders in Indonesia. From this investigation, it is found that there are two types of leaders in the Shi'ī community, namely *ustādhs* and intellectuals, each having different education backgrounds. The *ustādhs* received their education from Islamic institutions of higher learning and most of them graduated from *hawza 'ilmiyya* (colleges of Islamic learning) in Qum, Iran. On the other hand, the intellectuals have secular education backgrounds, but they received religious instruction in non-formal education institutions. This article argues that being a leader in the Shi'ī community not only depends on education *per se*, but also on other factors, such as involvement in *da'wa* and education activities, as well as leadership experience in education and socio-religious institutions.

The next article, written by Muhammad Adlin Sila, deals with *Tarekat Kadisiyyah* in Bandung, West Java,. The focus of the study is on the students who participate in this *tarekat*. These students come from middle-upper class families, have an over-abundance of material wealth but, having experienced existential emptiness, find themselves in a state of uncertainty. Their material needs have been fulfilled, but their psychological needs are still unsatisfied. The central question is: Do they join *Tarekat Kadisiyyah* to escape from psychological problems or to genuinely meet their spiritual need? The author argues that they join the *tarekat* for the sake of spiritual need, i.e., pursuing the sweetest way of gaining closeness to God.

The third article discusses freedom of thinking in *pesantrens* and is written by Hatim Gazali and Abd. Malik. *Pesantrens* are well known as conservative Islamic education institutions in Indonesia, in which freedom of thinking is limited and not respected. This article attempts to counter this impression. The authors argue that not all *pesantrens*

limit their students' freedom of thinking, at least from what they found in Ma'had Aly at Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo. Unlike the majority of *pesantrens*, which limit their study on *fiqh* to one school of thought, particularly the school of Syafi'i, Ma'had Aly teaches not only *fiqh* of four schools of thought but also combines them with other sciences such as philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. As a result, a rich discourse of *fiqh* is found. The discussion of *fiqh* includes topics such as religious relationships, gender, human rights, ecology and other contemporary issues such as interfaith marriage, the possibility of a non-Muslim being president, and the role of women in the public sphere. Given this view, the authors argue that freedom of thinking is maintained at Ma'had Aly.

The next article is written by Ahmad Choirul Rofiq, who discusses the methodology of Al-Māturīdī's Qur'anic exegesis. From his research, Rofiq found that Al-Māturīdī prefers to combine traditional and rational sources, and this can be identified as *tafsīr bi'l-iẓdimāj*. To interpret the Qur'an, he does not employ excessive grammatical analysis and almost never uses the Judeo-Christian traditions and tales. In dealing with different points of view among theologians, Al-Māturīdī prefers to choose *tamassuṭ* or a non-aligned and independent standpoint, while in discussing the jurisprudential Qur'anic verses he prefers to follow the Hanafite school of thought.

In the next article, Ujang Tholib discusses the decline of the 'Abbasid caliphate, particularly in the era of Buwayhid rule in the fourth/tenth century. He analyzes many factors that contributed to the sharp decline of the economy, including civil wars, the Zanj and Qarmaṭian revolts, political interference by the Turkish and Daylamite soldiers, military *iqṭā'* and the activity of the *'ayyārūn*. Although most of these factors were political affairs, the economic implications were significant. The civil wars, for example, ruined most of the land and caused a devaluation of *dirham* and *dīnārs*.

The last article in English discusses *Al-Muḏḥir*, a work written by Egyptian scholar Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505). Munirul Ikhwan, the author of this article, comprehensively analyzes a number of manuscripts written several decades after the death of al-Suyūṭī. He, then, focuses on three issues: the authorization of the manuscripts,

a sample of the critical edition of the book, and a discussion of section twenty on Islamic terms.

The next article focuses on the five foundations of Mu'tazila's thought, namely *tamhīd* (the oneness of God), the Divine justice, the promise and the threat, the intermediate position, and commanding the good and prohibiting the evil. According to Zamzam Afandi Abdullah, the author of this article, the five Mu'tazila doctrines should not be seen dogmatically from a religious perspective *per se*, but should be seen as a process of interaction between social, political, and religious domains. Thus, the five doctrines are a product of the intersection between religious and non-religious domains.

Another issue is raised by Sofwān 'Ārif Dawd Aḥmad al-Jarrāḥ who discusses abortion from the perspectives of classical and contemporary ulama. After intensively discussing the issue of abortion, and considering many perspectives, the author concludes that abortion is forbidden in normal situations, in all phases of development, whether or not the fetus has been formed, arguing that the process of life has already begun.

Enjoy the reading!