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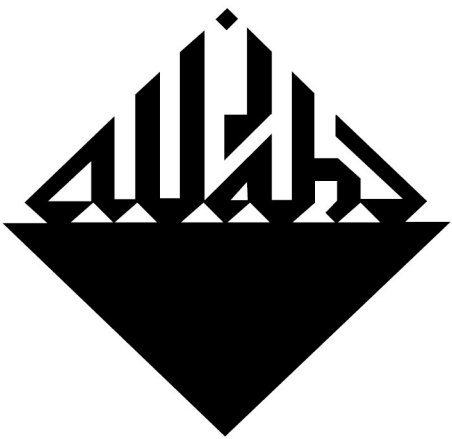

The Study of Islam in Indonesia: A 75-Year Retrospective on a Post-Orientalist Collaboration

James B. Hoesterey

The Social Scientific Study of Islam in Indonesia: A 75 Year Retrospective

Robert W. Hefner

Indonesian Post-Orientalist Study of Islam

Muhamad Ali

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Muhamad Ali

Indonesian Post-Orientalist Study of Islam

Abstract: *This article seeks to explain the emergence of an Indonesian post-Orientalist study of Islam from the 1990s onwards, which results from the increased influx of Indonesian-born scholars into the study of Indonesian Islam, a field previously dominated by Western-born scholars. In contrast to Edward Said's adverse Orientalists, to the Arabic-based dirāsah islāmiyyah, and the previous generations of Indonesian Western-educated scholars, the post-1990s generation of pesantren-and-Western-educated Indonesian scholarship has taken selectively elements from Islamic texts and traditions, humanities, and social sciences in analyzing contemporary Islamic beliefs and practices. With an eclectic intellectualism combining faith and public mission, Indonesian Muslim scholars have reinterpreted Qur'anic and classical Islamic concepts while engaging different Western theories regarding religion, law, identity, and social movements. By analyzing local and national figures and movements, using diverse sources, and negotiating the tensions between the normative, practical, scriptural, and contextual, they aim to represent Islam and Muslims in their diversity and complexity in global, national, and local dynamics. With collaborative work at home and abroad, they contribute to pursuing different trajectories with scholarship and activism for Indonesian society and beyond.*

Keywords: Post-Orientalism, Islamic Studies, *Agama*, Discursive Tradition, Local Studies, Social Movement.

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Abstrak: *Artikel ini berupaya menjelaskan kemunculan studi Islam pasca-orientalis Indonesia sejak tahun 1990-an, yang merupakan dampak dari meningkatnya jumlah sarjana kelahiran Indonesia dalam kajian Islam Indonesia. Bidang ini sebelumnya didominasi oleh sarjana kelahiran Barat. Berbeda dengan pandangan orientalis negatif Edward Said,* dirāsah islāmiyyah *berbasis Arab, dan generasi sebelumnya dari sarjana Indonesia lulusan Barat, sarjana Muslim Indonesia pasca-1990-an, dengan latar belakang pendidikan pesantren dan Barat, menafsirkan kembali konsep-konsep Al-Qur'an dan Islam klasik sambil melibatkan berbagai teori Barat mengenai agama, hukum, identitas, dan gerakan sosial. Melalui analisis tokoh dan gerakan lokal serta nasional, penggunaan beragam sumber, dan negosiasi ketegangan antara normatif, praktis, tekstual, dan kontekstual, mereka bertujuan merepresentasikan Islam dan Muslim dalam keragaman dan kompleksitasnya dalam dinamika global, nasional, dan lokal. Melalui kerja sama di dalam dan luar negeri, mereka berkontribusi dalam mengejar berbagai jalur dengan keilmuan dan aktivisme untuk masyarakat Indonesia dan dunia.*

Kata kunci: Pasca-Orientalisme, Studi Islam, Agama, Tradisi Diskursif, Studi Lokal, Gerakan Sosial.

ملخص: يسعى هذا المقال إلى تبيان نشأة الدراسات الإسلامية الإندونيسية ما بعد الاستشراقية منذ تسعينيات القرن الماضي، كنتيجة لزيادة أعداد الباحثين الإندونيسيين في حقل دراسات الإسلام في إندونيسيا، والذي كان يهيمن عليه سابقًا علماء غربيون. وخلافًا للنظرة الاستشراقية السلبية لإدوارد سعيد، والدراسات الإسلامية ذات المنشأ العربي، والجيل السابق من العلماء الإندونيسيين خريجي الغرب، فإن جيل العلماء المسلمين الإندونيسيين ما بعد عام ١٩٩٠، بخلفياتهم التعليمية المتنوعة بين المعاهد الإسلامية والجامعات الغربية، يقومون بإعادة تفسير المفاهيم القرآنية والإسلامية الكلاسيكية مع الانخراط في نظريات غربية متعددة حول الدين والقانون والهوية والحركات الاجتماعية. ومن خلال تحليل شخصيات وحركات محلية ووطنية، واستخدام مصادر متنوعة، والتفاوض بين التوترات المعيارية والعملية والنصية والسياقية، يهدف هؤلاء العلماء إلى تمثيل الإسلام والمسلمين في تنوعهم وتعقيدهم ضمن الديناميات العالمية والوطنية والمحلية. وعبر التعاون الداخلي والخارجي، يساهمون في تتبع مسارات متنوعة بالبحث العلمي والنشاط المجتمعي لخدمة المجتمع الإندونيسي والعالم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ما بعد الاستشراقية، الدراسات الإسلامية، الدين، التقليد الخطابي، الدراسات المحلية، الحركات الاجتماعية.

In a brief analysis of Western studies of Islam in Southeast Asia in the mid-1990s, American anthropologist John R. Bowen argued that the contrast between the topics chosen by Western scholars and those by Southeast Asian (including Indonesian) scholars should remind us of their failure to understand "the relation between normative texts, interpretative processes, and every behavior that characterizes not only the observable realities of Muslim societies…but also many Muslims' sense of how things ought to work in contemporary social life" (Bowen 1995, 73). Bowen's distinction between practical and normative approaches remains important among contemporary Indonesianists. More recently, Megan Abbas's intellectual history of some Indonesian intellectuals, such as Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Madjid, and Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif, has pointed to their fusionism of both Western and Islamic traditions, with a conclusion that outlines three trajectories: discursive boundary maintenance; self-critical, cross-discursive dialogue; and radical introspection (Abbas 2021, 187-199). Abbas' trajectories remain the concern of Westerners, but the Indonesian Muslims of the post-1990s generations demonstrate a varying degree of self-critical dialogue from within Muslim intellectuals that work back and forth, sometimes ambiguous, often between secular-detached boundary maintenance and the predominantly Arabic and normative orientations. Still, John Bowen and Megan Abbas' observations seem to have overlooked another dynamic within Indonesian Muslim scholars who have studied in the West but remain engaged in Western, Arabic, and Indonesian sources and scholarship, indicating not just fusionism of two traditions but an intellectual eclecticism of using some elements from humanities and other elements from social sciences which have traditionally different foci and methods. The Indonesian *pesantren* students whose background was the Qur'ān, the Hadith, *muqāran al-adyān, sharī'a, da'wa*, *ādab,* and others from their graduate and postgraduate training have employed theories and concepts from humanities such as philosophy, history, and religious studies with qualitative methods, in interpreting meanings and exploring the human experience. Still, they analyze modern ideas among local figures, people, social movements, and political parties, using social sciences and methods such as surveys to study human behavior and institutions.

Here, we define Indonesian post-Orientalism as the critical examination and rethinking of Western representations and interpretations of Indonesian

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Islam through the lens of post-colonialism and the effects of Orientalism. In the context of Indonesian Islam, post-Orientalism seeks to challenge the historical and contemporary stereotypes and the one-dimensional and simplistic portrayals of Indonesian Islam by focusing on the diversity and complexity of Indonesian Islam.

In this regard, Indonesian post-Orientalism asserts that Muslim intellectuals have been not mere borrowers and imitators of foreign ideas without critical engagement. They have been long impressed by streams of thought originating elsewhere – the Middle East, Asia, and other places accessible to them. Still, these ideas apply to local and Indonesian circumstances, producing dynamic results. Although the Malay-Indonesian Islamic world owes much to other parts of the Muslim world, Southeast Asian Islam has made a substantial creative contribution to the mosaic of Islam (Riddell 2001, 321-322). Nonetheless, the Malay-Indonesian Muslim writers from the seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century were educated in the Middle East and other parts of Asia. After the1945 independence of Indonesia, Islamic schools and colleges flourished, and more Indonesian pesantren-students attended Western academic institutions thanks to international funding agencies, print technology, educational reform, open political climate, economic growth, and the social dynamism of grass-root social movements. Muslim students from Java, Sumatera, Sulawesi, and other areas trained in Islamic sciences in the pesantren primarily associated with the Nahdlatul Ulama and its foundations (Dofier 1994), the Islamic schools (*madrasah*), and the state Islamic colleges under the postcolonial Ministry of Religious Affairs, founded in 1946 (Ali 2023), and the private schools and colleges formed by the Muhammadiyah and other organizations, have shifted their graduate and postgraduate studies to Western universities: Leiden, Montreal, London, Bonn, Paris, Melbourne, Chicago, California, and others, to study humanities and social sciences, under the supervision of primarily Western and few Western Muslim professors from the Middle East and South Asia. This development coincided with the development of Islamic Studies in America and Europe, particularly the inclusion of Islamic and Muslim studies in the studies of the Middle Eastern or Near Eastern languages and civilizations, in Religious Studies, Divinity, and Social Sciences – history, anthropology, political science, and women and gender studies (Kurzman and Ernst 2012). The Westen-educated Muslim intellectuals

have learned about Western intellectualisms and biases, but they, too, read Western intellectual diversity and complexity, not as a monolithic tradition. Many have been inspired by Edward Said and other postcolonial critics who argue for East-West power imbalances. Still, they, too, have learned Western theories and methodologies, have been critical of the theories and purposes that do not fit into the Muslim and Indonesian conditions, and have been critical of the Arabic Islamic ideological orientations that they see as inapplicable in Indonesian contexts. In this regard, Westerners can no longer be content to describe Indonesian cultures and local Islam as separate from the wider Islamic world of which they are a part (Woodward 1996, 38). But Indonesian Muslims, too, continue to be part of the Western and globalizing world. For their part, Western scholars have played an essential role in training many Indonesian students who study in the U.S., Europe, and Australia (*Tempo* 2011).

While Orientalism has received much attention from Western and Arab Muslim scholars alike (Hanafī 1991; Al-Sufyānī 1992), post-Orientalism has just begun to be a subject of inquiry, particularly within the Western traditions of studying Religion and Area Studies. Western scholars have depicted post-Orientalism differently. Firstly, post-Orientalism refers to a response to Orientalism by invoking humanist cosmopolitanism, which entails seeing different religions and cultures as having equal rights. This approach is not a radical break from the previous and existing Orientalist traditions, but there is a greater awareness of their assumptions, goals, and methodologies. Some Western non-Muslim and Muslim scholars have integrated Islamic studies in Religious Studies and Muslim societies in Area Studies such as Middle Eastern and Asian Studies (Martin 1985; Ernst and Martin 2010; Lawrence 1989, 1998). These Western post-Orientalist Islamicists usually show a mastery of languages and training in the classical and contemporary societies of others. The second is post-Orientalism which critiques the European Enlightenment and its products in conceptualizing the others (Asad 1993, 2003, 2007; King 1999) that are critical of Western Christian hegemonic constructions of religion, the secular, and modernity in studying non-Western Christian societies. The third use of post-Orientalism points to scholarly and political recognition of diverse cultures and peoples with concepts such as universalism, politics of difference, and equal citizenship

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(Taylor in Gutmann 1994). The fourth meaning of post-Orientalism is the radical critique of Western knowledge production by exilic or diasporic intellectuals (Hamid Dabashi 2008). Indonesian Muslim scholars may be placed in the fifth category of post-Orientalism, the former colonized and postcolonial intellectuals studying their histories, problems, and societies. Arndt Graf describes this type as a non-Western study of the histories and cultures of the non-Western, made possible by decolonization, democratization, and liberalization, with topics ranging from violence, gender, pluralism, democracy, civil society, and human rights (Graf, Fathi and Paul 2011). However, the scholarship that will be briefly reviewed below belongs to an educational and intellectual movement that uses and engages the diverse Western and Arabic Islamic traditions, each characterized by analytical strengths and information accuracy as well as weaknesses and biases. These Indonesian scholars do not necessarily shift the focus from one disciplinary approach to interdisciplinary approaches, from Western knowledge to local knowledge and local scholars, or from Islamic knowledge to Western traditions. Still, they seek to eclectically combine whatever information, concepts, and theories from humanities and social sciences work for their research interests and objectives, informed by their pesantren Islamic studies background and the Indonesian socio-political circumstances. Post-Orientalism does not necessarily mean anti-Western scholarship or resistance to European colonialism in all its forms and manifestations during the colonial time (Ali 2016) and in the postcolonial eras. The Indonesian post-Orientalist study of Islam considers both Western and Eastern, outsider and insider perspectives, foreigners and locals, not as a binary opposition, but as a complementary and inclusive relationship to attain a more accurate and critical interpretation and analysis of Islam and Muslim societies with a sense of mission for public scholarship and social impacts.

To highlight continuity in intellectual eclecticism and public intellectualism, Nurcholish Madjid (d. 2005) remains an influential theologian and intellectual for many of the post-1990s generation (Alam and Ali-Fauzi 2003). Madjid is critical of Snouck Hurgronje as an example of colonial Orientalism and is also critical of Clifford Geertz as an example of colonial bias and negative attitude toward Islam. Still, he praises Robert Bellah, the author of *Beyond Belief* (1970), in discussing the Mīthāq al-Madīnah, or the Constitution of

Medina, and uses Marshall Hodgson, the author of *The Venture of Islam* (3 vols, 1974), in reinterpreting the role of sharī'a in shaping Islamic cosmopolitanism, while also engaging them with Ibn 'Arabī and Ibn Khaldūn. Using modern sources and traditional heritage and seeking to preserve "the old that remains good while seeking the new that is better", Madjid advocates an Indonesian Islam as genuinely Islamic as elsewhere in the world and promotes a shift from the periphery to the center (Madjid 2000). Madjid bases his ideas on expert observations by international scholars and his own experience, participation, and observation. He believed Indonesia was a great nation with its culture, religious community, and complexity. Madjid is aware of the inevitable dominance of the educated classes of the colonial era, but soon to be replaced by "people nurtured in independent, educated, postcolonial times, most of whom are Muslims, just as most Indonesians are Muslims" (Madjid 1990, 91-107). Madjid's critical assessment of some Orientalists while embracing other Orientalists demonstrates an ambiguous yet middle position for depth and clarity with a vision for building democracy and national dignity (Madjid 2003). For historian M.B. Hooker, Nurcholish Madjid develops a systematic Indonesian Islamic thought as an example of a creative scholasticism instead of a responsive scholasticism of the previous eras. Madjid is a model for synthesizing Western philosophy and social sciences and Arabic *dirāsah islāmiyyah*, which were to be implemented in Indonesia (Hooker 2003,13-46).

Another Chicago graduate, Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif (1935-2022), recognizes the positive effects of Western colonialism in creating the archipelago (*Nusantara*) as the nation-state (Ma'arif 2009, 86-87). Ma'arif urges other Indonesians to imitate Orientalists' seriousness in producing creative work while reminding them to cultivate an extra-critical attitude toward their interpretation of Islamic doctrines. For Ma'arif, mistrusting the Orientalists was just another form of intellectual powerlessness. He calls Muslims to study the West to understand its civilization, which is undergoing porousness (*kekeroposan*) (Ma'arif 1993). Like Madjid, Ma'arif sees history as knowledge about the past and a history with mission. He strived to build a middle path between religious fundamentalism and atheistic secularism, advocating a cosmopolitan ethos that should cross ideological biases and interests of domination (Ma'arif 2009). To Ma'arif, Indonesian Islam is a struggle

between different ideologies, and the strategy to move forward is to have faith and look at reality (Ma'arif 1996, 173-194). Madjid and Ma'arif had to select between positive and negative Orientalisms and between positive and negative Islamic normativities and traditions. Madjid and the Paramadina foundation, Ma'arif and his Ma'arif Institute's forms of Muslim cosmopolitanism see Islam, the modern nation-state, Indonesian nationalism, ethnic identity, and humanity as not contradictory ideas but as ideas that could be compatible and even mutually sustaining. These tendencies remained apparent in the work of the younger generation. Still, they offer more locally situated Islamic studies with a broader range of topics, methods, findings, and publication venues than previous generations.

The Post-1990s Generation of Scholars

In their career, Nurcholish Madjid and Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif, among others, strongly encourage the younger generation of Muslim students and activists to study humanities and social sciences in Western universities. They contribute to reforming Islamic higher education through their ethos of critical thinking, open-mindedness, and spiritual courage to promote social change (Ali 2015; Ali 2022; Hidayat and Gaus 2023). The fusion of Western and Eastern traditions is exemplified through the mushrooming of epistemic communities in and outside campuses, such as the Forum Mahasiswa Ciputat (Formaci), and, from the early 1990s, the academic peer-review journals published by Islamic institutes and universities, an outcome of the collaborative work of the pioneering Western-educated Indonesian graduates and Western scholars.[1] Saiful Mujani, for example, was a pesantren graduate, a *ushūluddīn* student at the IAIN of Jakarta, and one of the key founders of the Formaci. He went to Ohio State University and wrote a doctoral dissertation later translated into Indonesian *Muslim Demokrat* (2007). In this book, Mujani criticizes Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis for failing to recognize the compatibility of democracy and Muslim societies as those in Indonesia. Seeing Islam as a multidimensional religion (the fundamental and non-fundamental) and democracy as a political participation and democratic culture (including participation and tolerance), using some quantitative surveys of Muslim political views and behavior, Mujani's work complicates the relationship between Islam and democracy in both theoretical and practical manners. In the

light of our argument regarding an Indonesian post-Orientalist study of Islam, Mujani's work offers a uniquely Indonesian trajectory of a global idea of Muslim democracy, highlighting the Pancasila principles of Indonesian unity (*Persatuan*) and the concept of peoplehood (*kerakyatan*) based on wisdom, deliberation, and representativeness, thus going beyond the East and West dichotomies. In contrast to the pre-1990s scholarship that also touches upon the notion of Pancasila and democracy, Mujani's and other scholarship on Indonesian Muslim responses to Pancasila and democracy offer a more sophisticated argument and quantitative evidence for supporting the compatibility of nationalism, democracy, and Islam.

Mujani and others served as Indonesian editors and published articles in *Studia Islamika,* the first scholarly journal to study Islam in Indonesia, launched in 1994 by collaborating with Western scholars. They sought to change peripheral scholarship of Islam in Indonesia but said that blaming Western scholars for misconceptions and misrepresentations of Islam in Indonesia was no longer productive. To them, Indonesian Muslim scholars were responsible for providing a more accurate picture of Islam in their region ("From Editor," *Studia Islamika* 1994, III). Admitting the challenge of the lack of Indonesian scholars writing in either English or Arabic, one of the factors responsible for the obscurity of the development of Islam in Indonesia, they felt the need to tread the path in the direction of translating Indonesian scholarship into English or Arabic and producing knowledge about the various dimensions of Islam in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries.[2] In contrast to the pre-1990s books and opinion articles, the post-1990s journal articles explore a wider range of local studies and Indonesian intellectual biographies with theoretical sophistication and methodological rigor drawn from humanities and social sciences.

In one of the articles, Saiful Mujani contrasted two Western-educated Indonesians with Arabic graduate training, Mohammad Rasjidi and Harun Nasution. Harun Nasution studied in Cairo, Egypt and Montreal, Canada, whom Rasjidi criticized for being "influenced by orientalist ways of thinking which harm Islam" (Mujani 1994, 107). In the view of Mujani, Nasution sees Islam as highly pluralistic, sees Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism in their terms, and holds that their adherents could attain salvation. In contrast, Rasjidi sees Islam as the only one and the only true monotheism that guarantees

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salvation. But Mujani saw both as reflecting the different orientations: one was an academic, historical, objective, and dialogical (rather than the adverse effects of Orientalism according to Edward Said), and the other was a religious, normative, and missionizing approach to Islam and other religions (rather than the more objective understanding of Islam from within Islamic framework). This distinction between the academic and the normative resulted from Mujani's exposure to Western and rationalist Islamic traditions. In his view, Nasution considered Islamic rationalism and liberalism, not necessarily Christian Orientalist, because he believed liberal thinking originated within the Mu'tazilah Islamic traditions (Mujani 1994). Here, Mujani saw two different orientations of Islamic studies, but Mujani sought neither to essentialize Nasution and Rasjidi's positions nor to essentialize the West and Islam by locating Nasution and Rasjidi's thoughts and academic career as a product of a modernizing Indonesian political, economic, and social system and culture previously dominated by Arabic normativism and Western Orientalism as separate paths. To Mujani, their study in the West would not necessarily make them Orientalist or liberal – a label many Indonesians perceive as harmful and detrimental to the faith.

However, the pursuit of studying Islam in both the West and the Middle East helped develop a distinctly Indonesian form of Islamic studies that draws on both traditions (Lukens-Bull 2013, 67-85). However, we must highlight some features of a distinct Indonesian Muslim scholarship. Carool Kersten's analysis (2011; 2015) regarding new Muslim intellectuals Nurcholish Madjid, Hassan Hanafi, and Mohammed Arkoun as the caretakers of their traditions, who shared some common concerns: critical engagement with Islamic heritage (*turāth*), the place of reason, and humanist concerns, provides a significant contribution to these common traits of these scholars. While we read that the generation of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals of the last two decades shows this engagement with Islamic heritage, the importance of rationality and the concern with humanism, the post-Madjid and post-Hanafi generations offer more diverse concerns, topics, case studies, public opinion, and survey methodology in conducting national and local studies, as well as more varied languages of research and publications.

The first feature of distinct Indonesian Islamic scholarship is the critical engagement with Western and Arabic scholars as developed

by Western-based scholars such as Samuel Huntington, Edward Said, Talal Asad, and Wael Hallaq (Sonn 2021) as well as by such Arabic, Iranian and Asian scholars as Hassan Hanafī, Nasr Abū Zayd, Alī Shariatī, and Fazlur Rahman in explaining Islamic beliefs, practices, and societies in Indonesia which have Hindu-Buddhist and indigenous vocabularies and traditions. They seek a combination of the scriptural, contextual, practical, and normative understandings of Islam in various themes, including the relationship between Arabic Islam, modern concepts, and local traditions. Some post-1990s Indonesian scholars have demonstrated an appreciative but critical stand of their previous generations and contemporaries.

Another feature is the combination of Islam, intellectualism, and social mission, combining academic pursuit and social activism, integrating faith, knowledge, and society, manifested in applied Islamic studies and in the practical effects of the studies for policymakers and Muslims. In what follows, we discuss the combination of intellectualism, faith, and public mission, and the diverse concepts and themes from different origins related to religion, discursive tradition, identity, and social movement to support our central argument regarding the distinct features of Indonesian Islamic post-Orientalist scholarship.

Integrating *Dīn*, *Agama,* and Religion

One of the features of Indonesian post-Orientalism is the use of such different polysemic concepts of *dīn*, religion, and *agama*. The new generation of scholars, such as Ahmad Norma Permata, agree with their predecessors, like Amin Abdullah (1996), who seek diverse directions. Permata cites Syed Naquib al-Attas in his rendering of dīn as both obedience to Divinity and a civilizational worldview, and he references Western scholars such as E.B. Taylor and Ninian Smart, who study religion as an empirical object of study and human reality. Still, as an Indonesian Muslim, Permata wishes to keep being religious without being apologetic and without judging the truth claims of other religions.

Permata's introduction of definitions of religion from Eastern Indian and Chinese traditions (agama*, dharma, tao*) and the Arabic traditions highlight an intellectual eclecticism of Nurcholish Madjid and others of the post-1990s Indonesian scholarship who had to grapple with different approaches, objects, and sources of the terminology used in the study

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of religions and Islam. The dimension of public intellectualism can be read from Permata's suggestion that Indonesian religious scholars should be responsible for formulating positive and constructive interactional patterns that are theoretically, politically, and socially beneficial to the policymakers and the religious communities in Indonesia (Permata 2000, 42-45). Permata has promoted academic concern with the scholarship beyond East and West under the Indonesian national and local interests and circumstances as he sees them.

Another scholar, Media Zainul Bahri, seeks to combine Western and Islamic approaches to examining Ibn 'Arabī, Jalāluddin al-Rūmi, and Abd al-Kārim Al-Jīli in their intellectual and historical contexts, presenting the ideas of spiritual-transcendental-esoteric unity and formal, historical, external diversity in many religions. Bahri's discussion of *wahdat al-adyān*, the unity of religions, in terms of the concepts of dīn, religion, and agama, with the characterizations of the exoteric and esoteric, forms and essence, the profane and the transcendental, the sharī'a and the *haqīqa*, suggests a hybridization of Western and Islamic concepts in the study of Muslim intellectualism. At the same time, being critical of both Islamic and Western scholarship on the Sufi masters, Bahri seeks to invite Muslims and non-Muslims to be critical and apply pluralist spiritually without neglecting their formal religious identity (Bahri 2011, 407-411). Moreover, Bahri's primary audience remains Indonesian Muslim scholars and society who, in his view, still face the challenges of religious intolerance and political and social discrimination based on faith and religion. Permata's and Bahri's cases highlight the creative use of Arabic, Western, and Indonesian traditions for the sake of an Indonesian study of religion that should have practical benefits and practical impacts in shaping the life of the multi-religious nation of Indonesia.

On another level, the distinction of Islam as a reified religion and an inclusive attitude of submission to God has also received some attention among Indonesians. A graduate of Chicago, Mun'im Sirry uses the notion of scriptural polemics to discuss contemporary Muslim commentaries of the Qur'ān on other religions including some controversial topics of Islam's superiority and the exclusivist and inclusivist ideas of the salvation of religious others and the meaning of Islam as submission to God and reified confessional Islam through Muhammad, borrowing Wilfred Cantwell Smith's notion of "reification"

and Muhammad Rashīd Ridā's interpretation of dīn and Islam. For Sirry, Ridā addresses the gap between the Qur'anic inclusiveness of Islam as the one dīn and the exclusive religions in history, including Judaism and Christianity, as a result of the religious and political leaders and fanaticism in each faction (Sirry 2014, 69-98). Egyptian scholar Muhammad 'Abdullah Darāz (2019) notes that Mun'im Sirry discusses Rashīd Ridā, Abul Kalām Azad, Hamka, and At-Tabātabā'ī alongside other Western Islamicists on this notion of Islam as one dīn and many adyān, or religions, agama. But in contrast to Arabic and Western scholarships, Sirry's work includes an Indonesian Qur'anic scholar, Hamka, to provide a comparative case. In this and other works, Sirry highlights a critical analysis of Islamic concepts whose concerns are from within and beyond multiple centers, local and global, Western and Eastern.

The use of agama as religion and religious freedom in Indonesian politics and society has become a focus of Ismatu Ropi, who studied in Canada and Australia. His scholarship on Indonesian Muslim views of Christianity and religion, and state regulation in Indonesia is essential in offering a textual and non-textual, non-apologetic analysis of religious diversity and freedom. The first work on Indonesian Muslim attitudes toward Christianity offers cases of polemic and dialogue with a concluding remark inviting Muslims and Christians to mutual understanding (Ropi 2000). After analyzing how the majority of actors have formulated and promoted the first pillar of the national ideology of Pancasila, the belief in the one and only God (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*), as a political compromise between the secular nationalists and Islamists in Indonesia, Ropi sees problems of discriminations and argues that the state should protect religious freedom for all citizens regardless of their religion (Ropi 2017). Ropi and the other scholars discuss Islam in terms of Western religion, the Indonesian Sanskrit loanword agama, and Arabic dīn in the scriptures and within the Indonesian socio-political institutions and public policy.

Discursive and Non-Discursive Tradition

As Talal Asad and other scholars have argued, the other theme concerns Islam as a discursive tradition. Mujiburrahman, a local Banjarese of South Kalimantan, student of pesantren and the ushūluddin, and McGill University and Universiteit Utrecht graduate who wrote a

dissertation on Muslim-Christian relations in the New Order (2006) and Indonesian essays, sees the Indonesianization of Islam as a problem of representation and ideology. His works offer critical engagement with Western scholars, Arabic scholars, and Indonesian scholars of the past and his time. Mujiburrahman seeks a middle position between Western Orientalism on the one hand and "Orientalism on the Reverse" by Muslim fundamentalists who see the West as essentially imperialist and amoral on the other hand (Mujiburrahman 2008, 19). He sees Edward Said, Talal Asad, and Muhammad 'Ābid al-Jābirī as different influential theorists of discourse in the domains of literature and media, anthropology, and theology respectively, with a quite similar focus on power relations. Discussing Al-Jābirī's contribution to his project of Arabic renewal, alongside Hassan Hanafī, Al-Ghazālī, Philip Hitti, Olivier Leaman, Harun Nasution, and Nurcholish Madjid, Mujiburrahman shows an eclectic intellectualism like his predecessors. Mujiburrahman reads al-Jābirī's idea of Arabic Islamic heritage (al-turāth*,* see Al-Jābirī 1991,1993), including the Qur'ān, the Hadith, and sciences (*kalām, fiqh, falsafah,* and *tasawwuf*), by taking continuity in principles as a priority that could well coexist with Western ideas of religion, discourses, the nation-state, democracy, and human rights, which would be promisin' for contemporary Muslim intellectuals whose predicaments center around how to best respond to both Eastern tradition and Western cultures (Mujiburrahman 2008, 148-166; See al-Jābirī 1996). Mujiburrahman argues that these discourse analyses, of Al-Jabari and others, have overlooked the function of religion as a perennial lifeworld and spiritual experience, advocating a phenomenological approach that should fill in the gap in Islamic studies (Mujiburrahman 2008, 25-43). In contrast to the previous generations of scholars, he sees the need for integrating Islamic kalām, fiqh, and tasawwuf with empirical social research about the contemporary reality of Muslims in Indonesia and other parts of the world.

Also important for our central argument, Mujiburrahman discusses the intellectual contribution of Nurcholish Madjid in the context of personal, urban-class, and socio-political contexts. He praises Madjid's breadth and depth in Islamic theological thinking and Western epistemology, demonstrating a convincing power in formulating Islamic humanist values centering around *tauhīd* and equality. Still, in some of his statements, Mujiburrahman is critical of Madjid's eclecticism and

apologetic tone. He sees Madjid's message on social justice as a crucial problem to be addressed not only from legalistic perspectives but also as theological abstractions, but he criticizes Madjid for emphasizing Islam's contribution to Western modernity and Islam as the fastest-growing religion in the world (Mujiburrahman 2008, 187-188). Reading Madjid's speech on Islamic discourse on human leadership and stewardship (*kalām kekhalifahan*), Mujiburrahman points to Madjid's apologetic statement that Islam had developed the idea of human leadership long before Western humanism. Mujiburrahman wonders why Madjid had urged Muslims to be proud of humanity's values and their contribution to solving world problems while ignoring the fact that Muslims were still under Western hegemony (Mujiburrahman 2008, 187-188; 206-207).

The uses of the scriptural concept of *ahl al-kitāb,* or the people of the book within the socio-political context of Indonesia, present another example of a combination of discourses and a non-discursive tradition crucial in understanding Indonesian Islam. The Qur'ān's rendering of the term points to Jews and Christians, but many Indonesian Muslims have used it to refer to non-Muslims who are not animists. The Pancasila state, which is neither religious nor secular, has been a context for the predominance of the theistic meanings of agama or religion associated with Christianity in particular, but also with extended meanings including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism in the country. The controversy around religious missions toward other people who already have religion and the legal and social debate on interfaith marriage, which concerns Muslims and non-Muslims, has also been related to the discussion of the meanings of ahl al-kitāb. The concept and other related concepts, such as *kāfir dhimmī* and *kāfir mu'āhid*, have had legal implications on the legal status of local religions and the believers in the One God (*Penghayat Kepercayaan kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*) and the discursive debate and practice of citizenship or *muwāthanah* in Indonesia (Mujiburrahman 2008, 279-297). Although Robert Hefner has suggested that the majority of Muslim leaders and scholars have put aside the classical fiqh categories of protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*) and "people of the book" (ahl al-kitāb) and have practiced local models of multi-religious citizenship and national belonging (Hefner 2024), some of the new generation of Indonesian Muslim scholars have also engaged the scriptural Arabic concepts with the Western ideas and the Indonesian socio-political history and realities.

Legal Formality and Substantive Values

Another contribution of the new generation of Indonesian scholars concerns the distinction and accommodation of Islam as formalistic and substantive. Some Indonesian *santris* trained in the sharī'a sciences such as Nadirsyah Hosen, Arskal Salim, and Syafiq Hasyim have engaged in Western and international legal traditions and human rights. Overall, they focus on the intersection of the sharī'a and the modern notions of law and constitution in the spirit of religious and civic human values. In discussing the compatibility of the sharī'a and constitutional reform in Indonesia, citing legal Islamicist Wael Hallaq on key Islamic terms such as *ijtihād* and the notion of change in Islamic law, Nadirsyah Hosen differentiates between the group who sees incompatibility, themselves divided into the fundamentalist and the secularist, and the group who considers compatibility, divided into the formalistic and substantivistic. Hosen supports the compatibility of Islamic substantive law and modern constitutionalism (Hosen 2007, 28-50). Hosen's critical engagement with modern Western legal terms, traditions, and traditional Islamic law has led him to contend that Islamic law is not static and final. Islamic law can be modified without rejecting the fundamental basis, objectives, or spirit. For Hosen, a state that implements Islamic law is possible. To this end, he says, "Islam and constitutionalism can coexist in the same vision, not without risk of tension, but with the possibility of success" (Hosen 2007, 224). Hosen's other work, in collaboration with a Western scholar (2011), discusses law and religion in public life and provides an example of Indonesian Muslim scholars' contributions to the debate on law and religion to the global audience.

Syafiq Hasyim uses the concept of *shariatization* of Indonesia in his study of the *Majlis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI), complementing Atho Mudzhar's book on the fatwas of the MUI (Hasyim 2023). In line with an earlier work by Arskal Salim on the nationalization and localization of Islamic law (Salim 2008), Syafiq Hasyim's work is another project of a cross-discursive dialogue approach between Islamic intellectual tradition and Western epistemology, rather than the secularist and the radical disavowal from the West. Employing Wael Hallaq's conceptualization of ijtihād, *ijma',* and *maslaha* and citing Talal Asad in his discussion on Muslim orthodoxy as the power to regulate or adjust correct practice and exclude and replace incorrect ones, Syafiq Hasyim explores the way the MUI produced their fatwas and functioned as the

central religious authority that sought to impose their orthodoxy on Indonesian Islam, including the Majlis' attack against other Muslim scholars such as Nurcholish Madjid and Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif for being liberal due to Orientalism (Hasyim 2023, 38, 273, 293, 318).

Other scholars, such as Euis Nurlaelawati, examine Muslim women in Indonesian religious courts – one of the unique cases considers the absence of women judges in other Muslim-majority countries and the legal practice through the *Kompilasi Hukum Islam* in Indonesia (Nurlaelawati 2010). Alfitri studies the zakat practices in Islamic banks in Indonesia (Alfitri 2022). Another young scholar, Ayang Utriza Yakin, who studied in Egypt and France and is now an associate professor at a Catholic university in Belgium, seeks to intervene in the study of the history of Islamic law of the Bantenese sultanate and contributes to contemporary issues of Islamic moderation and tolerance (Yakin, Duderija, and Raemdonck 2024). These Indonesian scholars of Islamic law offer a trajectory of research quite different from Arabic and Western scholars of Islamic law.

The fusion of the principles of Islamic law and the values of human rights, the rule of law, and religious liberty is an argument that is in line with Wael Hallaq, who invites Muslims and Western scholars to be critical of their moral problems without telling others what's best for their respective societies (Hallaq 2013). However, different from Hallaq, whose main concerns were classical and global, some Indonesian scholars discussed here have localized the classical, medieval, and modern debate on law, politics, and society within local, Indonesian national, and global contemporary contexts.

Local Studies and Manuscripts

The critical role of nationalist and local identities continues to develop in the post-1990s Indonesian scholarship. Following but also beyond the work of the predecessors like Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Madjid, Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif, and Amin Abdullah, many of the new generation of Indonesians produce work on the histories and expressions of Islam in its local, often ethnic contexts such as Aceh, Makassar, Malay, Bima, Banjarmasin, Manado, Yogyakarta, and Bandung (Ali 2024). They investigate the tension and accommodation between Islam and Indigenous knowledge, sometimes in terms of "local wisdom"(*kearifan lokal*), including local histories, manuscripts, and cultures. They also

bring to the fore the prose, poems, ethics, and material cultures from within Indonesia and regional places in the study of Islam and Muslim societies. Many seek to reassess secondary sources originating from English and Arabic with primary local Indonesian Malay, Sundanese, Banjarese, Buginese, and other local manuscripts and cultures and the Arabic script of these local languages. Acehnese scholar Amirul Hadi, a graduate of McGill University, for example, has used travel accounts, royal edicts and inscriptions, legal texts, manuscripts, literary works, Islamic and local archeological evidence, oral traditions and folklore, local histories and chronicles, artifacts and numismatics such as coins and currency, as well as colonial records and correspondence (Hadi 2004; Ilyas and Gallop 2024).

Local manuscripts in Southeast Asia are abundant and deserving of study, such as the local Malay-Indonesian work on Sanskrit epics and *purana*, and the *hikayats* of Iskandar Zulkarnain, Amir Hamzah, and Muhammad Hanafiyah from the early Islamic period, the poetry or *sha'ir*, the translation and commentary of the Qur'ān, Sufi literature of the different Sufi networks and the jurisprudential interpretations before European impacts or outside colonial control across Indonesia and a broader region of Southeast Asia (Braginsky 2004). Indonesia's leading expert on Islamic manuscripts, Oman Fathurrahman, who graduated from the pesantren and Indonesian universities and researched in a a number of Western and Eastern universities and research centers abroad, focuses on some of these local manuscripts in Indonesia covering Aceh, the Philippines, Southern Thailand, and other parts of Southeast Asia. The emphasis on local voices and perspectives serves as an alternative to the overgeneralization of Islam as a global single religion by Western journalists, public figures, and even academics. Fathurrahman's work is not simply on the local manuscripts but also the trans-local and regional networks, such as his work on the *silsilah* of the Shattārīyah Sufi order in Aceh, Java and the Lanao area of Mindanao. He finds that although the themes of these manuscripts are generally considered "conservative", such as those discussing the tariqah, magics, and jurisprudence, the findings highlight the vibrancy of local Islams from before and beyond European colonialism (Fathurahman 2001, 2016). Dutch scholar Martin van Bruinessen considers the work a valuable contribution to studying Sufi orders in Southeast Asia and the trans-local relations and cultural flows involved (Bruinessen 2016,

487-490). It is also important to suggest that because local manuscripts are in private hands and libraries worldwide are now more digitized, these demand research in their production, transmission, translation, interpretation, reception, and impacts.

In addition, textual studies have been conducted creatively in tandem with ethnography. Inspired by the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) leaders and grand teachers such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Muhammad Luthfi ibn Yahya, Indonesian Arab-descent scholar Ismail Fajrie Alatas uses historiography and ethnography to analyze religious authority using theories such as "articulatory labor" and "concrete universality", moving beyond the Tradition of the Prophet as elaborated in the historical (*Tarikh*) and Hadith studies (Alatas 2021). In contrast to Talal Asad's idea of Islam as a discursive tradition that relates itself to the scriptures and the changing forms of social practice, Alatas' idea of existing foundational texts, the past as a model for action or *sunna* to others in a specific time and place, here and now (hence 'living sunna'), leads to the production of Islamic texts, practices, and institutions that generate diverse forms of religious authority. At the same time, being critical of Max Weber's idea of charisma, Alatas' work focuses on preserving religious authorities often described as charismatic (Alatas 2021; Alatas 2024). In contrast to Wael Hallaq's work and project of "introspective Orientalism" (Hallaq 2018, 439), that history should be written only for one's society, not for the other, Alatas' work here proposes a history that aims to be intelligible to others. Beyond Hallaq's project, Alatas argues in Western academic terms that Islamic religious authority is a local, concrete, and sustained labor of translation, mobilization, collaboration, and competition. To Alatas, Islam's universality has become an object of historical and ethnographic inquiry (Alatas 2021, 214). Local Muslims like himself have the same capacity to conduct such investigations, an inquiry critically appreciated and praised by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars and readers alike.

Social Movement

One of the popular topics among the new generation has been the study of Islam as practiced in the socio-religious organizations like the Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persatuan Islam, Mathla'ul Anwar, Ahmadiyah, Jaringan Islam Liberal, and Salafi networks. Researching the Muhammadiyah and its relationship with NU, Ahmadiyah,

Salafī, and others have become less confessional and more socially and scientifically oriented with the work of Ahmad Najib Burhani , following their predecessors. They use critically the Western concepts of orthodoxy, heterodoxy, and religious authority. Citing Clifford Geertz, Michel Foucault, Mircea Eliade, Bernard Lewis, and Khaled Abou El Fadl, Burhani critically analyzes how moderate Islam has been viewed differently: political in the U.S. and religious in Indonesia (Burhani 2012, 567-581). In other words, mapping Javanese religion in terms of Clifford Geertz's variants of santri, *abangan*, and *priyayi*, but critically discussing the early Muhammadiyah as no less Javanese, Burhani turns to an exploration of a wide range of Indonesian Islam, categorized as fundamentalist, moderate, and progressive, with some actors promoting their orthodoxy against minority groups such as the Shi'a and Ahmadiyah. These and other categorizations of Indonesian Muslim organizations into the traditionalist and the modernists (Burhani 2013) are examples of the critical analysis of Muslim beliefs and practices from within Islamic, Western, and indigenous traditions.

Jajang Jahroni, Noorhaidi Hasan, Dien Wahid, and Zulkifli have addressed jihadism, Salafism, Wahhabism, and Shi'ism in Indonesia, using a combination of historical, textual, ethnographic, and sociological approaches. Noorhaidi Hasan's work on *Laskar Jihad,* The Soldier of Jihad (Hasan 2006), offers important data and analysis combining textual, bibliographical, historical, sociological, and ethnographic approaches to the rise of an Arab-descent Indonesia cleric Ja'far Umar Thalib and his Islamist movement. Hasan interviewed a hundred Laskar Jihad members, actors who "were not the subjects of analysis; rather, they produced the subject of analysis and supplied its meaning" (Hasan 2006, 28). The book demonstrates a theoretical and empirical analysis of an Islamic movement by discussing such Arabic concepts as *umma, jihād, hākimiyyah, al-walā wa al-barrā*, and *hizbiyyah,* as well as considering Western contemporary concepts such as network, community, politics, activism, and identity. For example, on the notion of *jihad,* Hasan cites classical works by Ibn Qayyīm al-Jawziyyah, the writings, interviews, and speeches by the leaders of *Laskar Jihad*, the books by Rudolph Peters, all within the global imaginations of the Western Christian-Zionist conspiracy and the local contexts of Christians and Muslims fighting in the Moluccas. Hasan discusses the different categorizations of jihad in terms of the lesser and

the greater, the offensive and the defensive kinds, the rules when jihad as the war is proclaimed, and the implications of martyrdom for the believers when they die. In Hasan's words: "This belief has developed with the circulation of religious texts, replete with Qur'anic verses and Prophetic Traditions extolling the merits of fighting a jihad and vividly describing the reward waiting in the hereafter for those slain during the fighting" (Hasan 2006, 152).

In this interdisciplinary work, Noorhaidi Hasan seeks to distance himself from his research objects, expecting to provide their meanings, seeking to avoid biases. At the same time, the language of analysis remains Western and Arabic as understood by the Indonesian Muslims, both the researcher and the object of research. In examining the social background of the newly urban religious people joining the jihadi movement, Hasan eclectically cites Max Weber on modernization, Jurgen Habermas on communicative rationality and civil society, Manuel Castells on the impact of globalization, and Pierre Bourdieu on the *habitus*. In the context of frustration and uncertainty arising from modernization, jihad emerges as the concept whose symbols and discourses can be used to express anger among the deprived people. Jihad can transform marginality into centrality and defeat patriotism (Hasan 2006, 157-159, 173, 182-183). Noorhaidi Hasan's concluding remark highlights our argument on an Indonesian intellectual pursuit and critical thinking with a mission:

> Because such militants pursue their struggle through spectacular violence, jihadi Islam remains on the political periphery and may never succeed in the map of Indonesian Islam. Nor has it changed the secular system of the Indonesian nation-state. The majority of Indonesian Muslims remain tolerant and opposed to the use of violence, let alone terrorism. (Hasan 2006, 221)

Using the concept of fundamentalism, which originated in the Western Protestant tradition, Jajang Jahroni seeks to explain how and why the *Front of Pembela Islam* (FPI) emerged in the post-reformation era (Jahroni 2008, 2). Other scholars from Southeast Asia see Jajang Jahroni's monograph published by the Asian Muslim Action Network as a part of the endeavors of presenting the diversity of Islam from Southeast Asia studied by local scholars. Citing Edward Said, Chaiwat Satha-Anand from Thammasat University, Bangkok, comments on the publication of Jajang Jahroni's monograph, "At a time when

Islamophobia is on the rise, it is essential to find fresh perspectives that will allow us to understand the new problems and tensions facing Muslims in contemporary Southeast Asian societies…" ("Foreword" in Jahroni 2008, vii). In addition, an edited volume features Abdullah Faqih's study of NU progressives in Jepara, Agus Salim's article on the rise of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, Syamsul Rijal's article on Sabili and Islamism in post-new order Indonesia, and other articles on the tarekat and pesantren in local contexts (Bamualim 2005; Rahman 2006). These and other studies indicate the diversity and complexity of local expressions of Islam (Azra, Dijk, and Kaptein2010; Fauzia 2013; Burhanuddin and Dijk 2013; Majmū'a Bāhithīn 2013).

There are other topics of study linked to the histories of pre-colonial Islam in its multicultural and inter-religious contexts – identity, interaction, acculturation, and hybrid cultures. Research is also needed about the marginalized and non-mainstream Islamic movements and organizations, such as Al-Washliyah, Al-Irsyad, Mathlaul Anwar, Al-Khairaat, Wahdah Islamiyyah; and the Shi'a such as Ikatan Jama'ah Ahlul Bait Indonesia (IJABI) and Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI); the different factions of the Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, Fahmina, Rahima, *Islam Bergerak*; and other less-known organizations and networks in various parts of Indonesia, to understand how and why specific organizations survive to become mainstream when others do not and to study how and why new organizations and movements have emerged from the 1990s onwards. More studies are needed to analyze Indonesia's relations with multiple centers, including other parts of Asia, Turkey, India, Pakistan, and Iran beyond the Arabic Middle Eastern region. It is also important to engage the political economy in the critical study of Islam: class analysis in the study of Islam in Indonesia is not only about the middle class (Anugrah 2015, 105-116) but also the crossing of social classes in the transmission and application of Islam in Indonesia. Such studies can focus on the ideas and structural factors at work. These studies and other research projects should enhance the quantity and quality, as well as the practice and the theory of an Indonesian post-Orientalist study of Islam.

Lastly, Indonesian studies of Islam must also be part of Southeast Asian (and Asian) Studies. As a subfield, Indonesian studies have, after the 1990s, undergone more transformative changes. Ariel Heryanto observes that local scholars would do best in analyzing data

in specific areas such as contemporary life, oral history, ethnography, religion, popular culture, and media. Still, they were less advantaged in universalist theorization, politically sensitive topics, macro- and comparative studies across regions, or archival studies on research materials currently conserved in a few Western libraries (Heryanto 2007, 75-108), and might want to reconsider their research topic. Indonesian scholars are today research partners rather than a mere object of study. This does not mean Indonesians know more about Indonesia as they have no privilege over foreigners in studying their country; there is a continued need to create a balance, if not equality, in power dynamics (Heryanto 2011). However, the new generation of Indonesian Muslim scholars has made critical observations regarding controversial topics and local archives while falling short in universalist theorization, comparative, and global studies.

Concluding Remarks

For the last two decades, a growing number of Indonesian Muslim scholars have examined a wide range of topics that we don't discuss in this article, including women and gender, arts and popular culture, the new media, economics, and the environment, but select themes in some publications surveyed here may suffice to highlight the significant development of Islamic studies by the post-1990s generations of Indonesian Muslims trained in Islamic traditional schools and the West.[3] Read from the Indonesian Muslim research and publications on the themes of religion and agama, discursive and non-discursive tradition, identity, and social movement, the perspectives evolving from the new generation have not been another binary opposition: Western versus Eastern, Arabic versus non-Arabic, modern versus traditional, but an accommodation of the Western and the Eastern in its diversity, which could include Arabic and Indonesia and local ethnic, Arabic and non-Arabic (Iranian-Persian and South Asian), and different forms of modernity and traditions, each and all neither monolithic nor static. Although not always explicit and bold, the relationship between these geographical and cultural ideas and entities has gradually shifted from superiority, inferiority, domination, and resistance to more inclusive, equitable, and collaborative relationships. From the review of some works above, Indonesian post-Orientalism may be described as the critical examination and rethinking of Western representations and

interpretations of Islam, mainly Indonesian Islam, through the lens of post-colonialism and the effects of Orientalism. In the context of Indonesian Islam, post-Orientalism has started to reject the historical and contemporary stereotypes and to seek to decolonize the ways Indonesian Islam is portrayed. This approach focuses on the diversity and complexity of Indonesian Islam.

When Carl Ernst and Richard Martin argued that the best post-Orientalist scholarship in Islamic Studies should be based on solid training in the languages, texts, and history of premodern Islam as a necessary basis for the discourse of Islam and Muslims today (Ernst and Martin 2010, 13), they proposed a post-Orientalism from within Western traditions rather than from within Muslim scholarship itself. However, many Indonesian Muslim scholars who are well-versed in classical and premodern Islam and contemporary humanities and social sciences have become much more focused on their nationalist and local concerns than they are seeking universalist theorization and global influence. Except for some Indonesian diasporic scholars teaching and researching in Western countries and the Indonesian Islamic organizations such as the Muhammadiyah and the NU with their international conferences promoting an Indonesian archipelagic (Nusantara) Islamic civilization and the idea of religious moderation for the world, most of the Indonesian intellectual initiatives and activities remain from within the motherland, Indonesia, in their organizations, social movements, campuses, and research centers. An Indonesian post-Orientalist study of Islam has emerged primarily from the motherland to enhance local Indonesian Muslims' agency and voices. When Muslim scholars sought to de-Orientalize Islamic studies, many sought to decolonize religion by re-Arabizing religious and Islamic Studies. Others critically engaged the Arabic and Western heritage with the present realities shaped by multiple sources of knowledge. However, Indonesian Muslim scholars have claimed they pursue middle positions, albeit with different trajectories depending on their disciplines and interests. Some of them do not want to perpetuate the production of knowledge to dominate others; they seek to avoid recreating other forms of power imbalance: between Muslims and non-Muslims, between Islam in the majority, and the different religions and traditions in the minority.

The challenge facing the new generation of Indonesian Muslim scholars remains great: how can they produce theories from their diverse research topics and sources, streamlining local and global histories, cultures, and problems within a broader study of Islam and Muslims, consistently engaging more Arabic Islamic knowledge, wrestling Western theoretical and methodological studies, moving beyond providing references to the Westerners studying Islam and beyond the Arab-based Islamic scholarship? They are responsible for developing creative, bold, and confident ways of making Indonesian Islam and its theoretical study accessible and intelligible to scholars of Islam, humanities, and social sciences beyond Indonesia in other parts of the world.

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Endnotes

1. The production of knowledge by Indonesian Muslim academics through the publication of these journals: *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* (Yogyakarta: 1962-present); *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* (Jakarta, 1994-present); *Journal of Indonesian Islam* (Surabaya, 2006- present); *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* (Salatiga: 2011-present), and *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* (2013-present) in English and Arabic, whose authors have been predominantly Indonesian. The oldest academic journal is *al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies,* first published by IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, in 1962, first in Indonesian language and later in English and Arabic, covering a wide range of the study of Islam normatively from the traditional perspectives, and later also in terms of social sciences and humanities.
2. See also articles by Indonesian scholars under the theme Islam and diversity in contemporary Indonesia: belief, gender, and politics in *the Muslim World, a journal devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations*. Overall, they argue that Muslim identities and actions are neither monolithic nor fixed, conditioned by textual and contextual interpretations and the religious, social, and political circumstances at the local and global levels (Ali and Afdillah, eds, 2020).
3. The articles published in *Studia Islamika* between 2011 and 2024 shows approaches used to analyze women and gender, cultural studies, the study of reception of ideas, and social class. For example, different articles explore gender awareness of the Islamic woman's movement, women in the Qur'anic exegesis, and manhood and womanhood in Aisyiyah and the reception of the ideas of Iranian-American Seyyed Hossein Nasr, those of Iranian Ali Shari'ati, and those of Egyptian Hassan Hanafi among Indonesian intellectuals.

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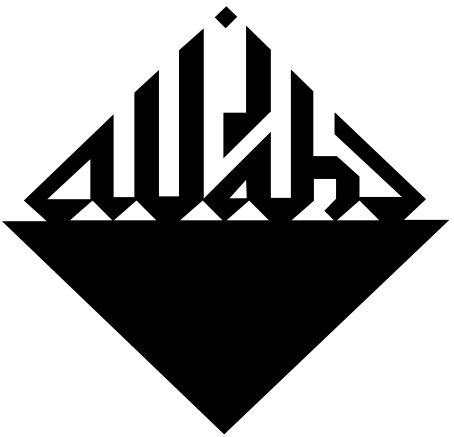

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