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in Tetralogy *Laskar Pelangi***

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## Journal of Islam and Humanities

### Islamic Book and Islam in Indonesia: a Historical Perspective

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#### Abstract

*Alongside the advance of Islamic reformism in the early twentieth century, one central element to pay attention is the rise of printed media, Islamic book, which enhanced the shaping of the reformist Muslims. Written in Malay with Rumi script, the books with Islamic substance first appeared as part of Islamic reform movement. Nearly all the authors were the leading activists of reformist organizations. This trend continued to develop, leading the books to emerge as an important pillar in the formation of Islamic intellectual discourses. This study focuses on the historical study of the Islamic books development and progression, with strong emphasis given to the ideas behind their rising in the courses of Indonesian history. Based on the classical theory of discourse of Michel Foucault, as well as the one of post-linguistic turn historiography, this article demonstrates, in reference to the three time periods which each presented a specific mode of intellectual thinking, the growing importance of Islamic books in the making of print-based religious life, which paved the way for the strengthening of socio-religious plurality in modern Indonesia. Firstly, Islamic Book as the voice of Islamic reform, secondly, Islamic Books in 1950s-1960s, and lastly, Islamic Books in contemporary Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Book, Reformism, Politics, Publishers, Islamic Discourses*

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#### Introduction

As the biggest Muslim country, Indonesia has a huge intellectual market for Islamic books, namely the books published with Islamic substance, both normative and socio-historical in perspective (Muzakki, 2007, p. 423). Before the wide use of internet-based media, Islamic books became a major part of religious dynamics of Indonesian Islam, next to magazines and newspapers. The cited works of Muzakki, as well as the ones of Watson (2005) and Faruk (1998), provide us with ample evidences of the crucial roles of the books in the making of Islam in the country. This is based on the argument that book writing has certain messages, as a part of the ways of undertaking to disseminate Islamic ideas. This explains the fact that the printed books still continue to hold such importance today, amidst the growing social media, in the configuration of Islam.

This article is directed to present an historical study on the rise and development of Islamic books in Indonesian history, covering the long time span from 1900s, when they



began to appear in the Dutch East Indies, until the late 1990s which was marked by the rise of modern-styled Islamic book publishing. The mentioned time span is divided into three short periods, which are taken as the explanations to the stages in the advance of Islamic books. The first one covers the years of 1900s-1940s, when the books started to circulate as the voice of Islamic reform, a newly-formulated Islamic idea next to the long-established one linked to *kitab kuning* (Arabic religious books) in *pesantren*. The second period is 1950s-1970s, when Indonesia was in the midst of nation-state consolidation. Alongside the rise of political factionalism, popularly known *politik aliran*, the substance of the books changed to be more engaged in expressing Islamic politics. The next layer in the development of Islamic book started from 1970s until 1990s, when substantial change occurred in book publishing, in terms of both style and ideology.

Being as such, the Islamic books are conceived here as being historized in character, in the sense that they appear to express the prevailing public discourse through the lenses of the authors. In this case, the theory of discourse as Foucault (1970) asserts is important to take into account. Defined as a rule-governed system for the production of knowledge (Dean, 1994, p. 14), it refers to the orderly underlying structure in a particular time and place, which constitutes the basic foundation for the rise of knowledge. The public themes linked to the three periods in the history of Islamic books seem to present what is just cited as discourse, in which the social practices and power relation exist, emerging as salient features of each period in its historical development. To this fact, (Foucault, 1972, p. 27) argues that the search for “a pure description of discursive events” should be made, in order to grasp and to describe the mass of elements in the reality of discourse.

Yet, while acknowledging the primacy of “discursive fact”, the theory of Foucault is criticized for not giving space for individual initiatives. In this case, the concept of “practice” of post-linguistic turn in historical theory is apt to adopt. It is based on the understanding of culture as “a regime of practical rationality”, and hence practice emerges as “a space in which a meaningful intersection between discursive constitution and individual initiative occurs” (Spiegel, 2005, p. 20). In line with this theoretical argument, the authors of Islamic books are treated in this article as conscious agents who engaged in the formulation of values in terms that were deep-seated in, but not governed by, the prevailing discourses of the Islamic affairs in the courses of history.

The above perspective is relevant with the discussion of this article. Against the fact that many scholarly studies have been made on this subject, using various approaches and perspectives (Federspiel, 2001; Hefner, 1997; Liddle, 1996; Muzakki, 2007, 2009, 2011; Proudfoot, 1992; Watson, 2005), one point is still neglected, which is concerned with the historical process of writing and publishing Islamic book. As a result, the changes of Islamic structure behind the development of book writing, the discourse, has not been explored. And this article is to handle this neglected point. It is directed towards explaining the subject in the three periods already mentioned, each of which had its distinctive Islamic idea, which constitute the main substances of the Islamic books. Hence, this article attaches an important, but abandoned, aspect to the historiography of Indonesian Islam (Alfian, 1989; Ali & Effendy, 1986; Madinier, 2013; Noer, 1973, 1987), that is the significant role of Islamic books in the making of Islam in Indonesia.

## Method

Taking the published books as primary sources, the discussion of this article is based on the widely acclaimed historical method, which is concerned primarily with the ways to gain reliable sources—as is enumerated in several stages of doing historical study—as well as to make a sort of special academic treatment relevant with the subject of discussion. One leading point to emphasize is that the primary sources are conceived here as the social and

intellectual expressions of Indonesian Muslim leaders, “as men and women thinking”, in respond to the development of socio-religious life of the country in the given period. In so doing, the Islamic books are studied from the perspectives which give the primacy of ideas and thought (*the mentalitè*) in history—the thought which occupies the mind of people who engaged in the social and political enterprises. Therefore, the explaining of the main ideas of the Islamic books under the discussion, their authors and publishing process, constitute the core point of the study method of this article.

### Result and Discussion

Several literature studies write about Islamic Book and Islam Indonesia in a historical perspective: Islamic Book as the Voice of Islamic Reform, Religion and Politics: Islamic Books in 1950s-1960s, and Islamic Books in Contemporary Indonesia. The results of literature review are follows:

#### Islamic Book as the Voice of Islamic Reform

As already stated, Islamic books in Indonesia started to appear in the early twentieth century, alongside the development of Islamic reform and the rise of urban Muslims in some areas of the country. As in the case of *kitab kuning* for traditionalist Muslims, Islamic books emerged as an identity of reformist circles. Appeared in book-format, using Malay [Indonesian] language in Latin script (*Rumi*), Islamic books sourced the formation of religious knowledge and practices among especially the reformist groups (Burhanudin, 2004, pp. 38–53). The leaders and the activists of the reformist Muslim organizations, Muham–madiyah and Persatuan Islam (Persis), established in 1912 and 1932 respectively, emerged as the most leading contributors to the development of the books, and Islamic print media at large, in early twentieth century Indonesia.

The increasing importance of Islamic book can be seen in the books listed by G.F. Ockeleon, a dedicated Dutch to the book-related career, leading him to be “best known for his numerous publications relating Indonesian bibliography” (Echols, 1966, p. 157). In his work on the books circulated in the early twentieth century Indo–nesia, *Catalogus dari Boekoe-Boekoe dan Madjallah-Madjallah jang diterbitkan di Hindia Belanda dari tahoen 1870-1937 [Catalogue of Books and Magazines Published in Dutch East Indies 1870-1937]* (1939/40), it appears that Islamic book constituted one important category. The books Ockeleon listed deal with various subjects, ranging from traditional teachings to currently debated Islamic issues of the time. As well, there appeared the books which contained the substance almost in line with the well-known Islamic knowledge in *pesantren* learning (Berg, 1886, pp. 55–518; Briuinessen, 1995, pp. 71–148).

It is clear that the new sources of Islamic knowledge, and of Muslims’ religiosity, were in motion. The Islamic books obviously presented the reformist voices of Islam, alongside the advance of reformist movement in the Indies. The books came to the audiences of readership with a mission to implant the reform ideas of Cairo ‘*ulamā*’, to respond the changing demand of modernity. Therefore, the Malay translations to several works of Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905), the intellectual leader of the reform movement, were made. The religious ideas of this Cairo ‘*ālim*’ appeared to be a major part of the transmitted Islam to Indonesia and Southeast Asia in the early twentieth century (Burhanudin, 2005, pp. 9–26).

The coming of Islamic books also points to the rise of authors who were dedicated to the writing of Islamic subjects. Of the books mentioned, nearly all the authors came from the reformist circles. A.D. Haanie is one of the leading authors of Muhammadiyah which deserves mention. He was a student of Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923) who then followed the path of his teacher, becoming a dedicated activist of this reformist organization (Jainuri, 2002, p. 78). Another Muhammadiyah leader was K.H. Mas Mansoer (1896-1946). He wrote

*Risalah Tauhid dan Sjirik* [Treatise on God's Unity and Polytheism] (1930s) and *Himpunan Putusan Tarjih Muham<sup>h</sup>adiyah* [Collection of Religious Decree of Muhammadiyah] (1929). To be noted in this particular respect is Ahmad Hassan (1887-1958) of Persis, who appeared as the intellectual father who directed this reformist organization to stand for debates and polemics, with printed materials (Noer, 1973, p. 90).

No sound data concerning the readers of the books can be identified. However, the Islamic books did circulate in the markets, precisely the bookshops, in the Dutch Indies, and became the main sources of knowledge the urban Muslims searched for. Instead of consulting the 'ulamā' in *pesantren*, the Muslims of urban backgrounds began taking Islamic books as the sources of religious reference and guidance. As such, the establishment of reformist Muslims, above the so-called traditionalist *kaum santri*, proceeded in line with the development of Islamic books (Federspiel, 2001; Jainuri, 2002).

### **Religion and Politics: Islamic Books in 1950s-1960s**

As the time moved on, the socio-political setting changed which led to the rise of new layer in the development of Islamic book. The period of 1950s to 1960s is the age of ideology and politics in Indonesian history. It points to the fact that the newly-sovereign state witnessed the rise of contested political thinking, alongside the formation of political streams. In the meantime, Indonesia of the period also marked the emergence of what (Feith & Castles, 1970, p. 4) states as "unattached intellectuals" who worked on the age of political arena, notwithstanding they were strongly fascinated to political affairs of the of country.

Included in the "unattached intellectuals" are the authors who expressed their concern in printed materials. As a result, the substance of Islamic books altered, in that they became more engaged in political affairs. As Boland (1982: 75) notes, there appeared Islamic books which were concerned with debated issue of religion [Islam]-state relationship, like the books written by Muhammad Natsir (1908-1993), a leading figure in Indonesian politics of the period. From many works he authored, *Islam sebagai Ideologi [Islam as an Ideology]* (around 1950) and *Capita Selecta* are of special relevance (Boland, 1982, p. 79).

These two mentioned works present Natsir's ideas on Islam and politics, to be more precise the union of the two domains. This line of thought appeared to be a core Islamic idea Natsir began to advocate after his study in General Secondary School (AMS, Algemeene Middelbare School) in Bandung (1927-1930). Under the mentorship of Ahmad Hassan of Persis, Natsir expressed the opinion that Islam and politics is united. In an edition of *Pandji Islam [The Banner of Islam]* (1940), the journal of Persis under his editorship, Natsir wrote that the two domains should not be separated. Moreover, he emphasized the primacy of Islam above the state, stating that "state is instrument for Islam" (Kahin, 2012, p. 21). This idea continued to be held as he was engaged in the Indonesian movement (*pergerakan*), and even strengthened as he was as a leading leader in Indonesian politics.

Given to the above facts, the notion of Islamic politics enhanced. It evolved into the idea in favour of Islamic state, to be more precise an intellectual exercise to the conceptualizing of Islamic state. One of the books with such notion is *Membentuk Negara Islam [The founding of Islamic State]* (1955), a reprint of *Konsepsi Tatanegara Islam [Concept of Islamic Governance]* (1949) by a Masyumi activist, Zainal Abidin Ahmad (1911-1983). Born to be a gifted writer, he had extensive network with journalists in Medan, from where he established a career in politics by joining Masyumi, which facilitated him to have contact with such leading political figure as Muhammad Natsir (Ahmad, 1979; Soebagijo & Ahmad, 1984).

Reading *Membentuk Negara Islam*, it is clear that the author expounds Islamic state into several concepts of politics which have strong ground in Islamic tradition. The Caliphate (*khilāfah*) and the abode of Islam (*dār al-Islām*) are taken as the definitions for



government character and Muslim community respectively, as the basic point of exposition on Islamic state. In reference to the Qur'anic verses (4: 58-59), Abidin Ahmad upholds the four principles to be foundation of Islamic state. They are trust (*amānah*), which points to the authority entrusted to those who are in power, justice (*'ādil*), in terms society, economics and politics, belief in one God (*ketuhanan yang maha Esa*), in line with the Qur'anic statement, "obey Allah and obey His Messenger", and sovereignty of the people (*kedaulatan rakyat*), which is formulated in the concept of *'ulī al-amri*, the elected representatives of the people (Ahmad, 1955; Boland, 1982).

Another author of Islamic book which deserves to discuss is Muhammad Isa Anshary (1916-1969). He followed the path of Muhammad Natsir, in the sense that he took Bandung as the initial ground for his political career, after finishing his basic schooling in Agam in West Sumatra. In 1932, he began joining discussion groups of mainly Persis and Muhammadiyah, leading him to have contact with Ahmad Hassan, who was then his mentor in Islamic learning. Simultaneously, his relationship with Muhammad Natsir, his senior of Minangkabau, strengthened his fascination to politics. With this backdrop, he came to have the line of Islamic political thinking similar to significant extents with Muhammad Natsir, leading him to be described by Feith (1962, p. 137) as to have presented "radical fundamentalist conviction" in Indonesian politics.

Of his works, *Falsafah Perduangan Islam [The Philosophy of Islamic Struggle]* (1949) should be paid attention to here. This book presents the basic premise of his thinking on Islam and politics. In addition to the integration of the two domains, as Muhammad Natsir promulgates, Isa Anshary strongly emphasizes the primacy of Islam above all what are stated as Western ideas, namely intellectualism, rationalism, materialism, individualism, egoism, capitalism, and imperialism. For Anshary, all those -isms are contradictory to the principles of humanity, and hence to the Islamic teachings. The first three -isms are said to ruin the walls of human dignity, while the second two (individualism and egoism) are poisonous for community life. Capitalism and imperialism are viewed to confiscate human right, and therefore against humanity and justice (Anshary, 1949, p. 29).

Based on the above argument, Isa Anshary urges the Muslims to fight again all those -isms mentioned, signifying it (the fight) as the "great *djihad* (Holy War)". More importantly, Isa Anshary took the argument for his political struggle in the Constitution Assembly (1955-1959) as he was an elected member representing Masyumi. He voiced his party's standing to battle against non-Islamic ideologies, notably nationalism of Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) and communism of Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI). For him, these two ideologies should be refuted for Islamic cause. Nationalism is concerned with the separation of Islam and politics, which is against Islamic teaching (Anshary, 1955, p. 105), while anti-religious character was taken to be one of the main reasons of his rejecting communism (Anshary, 1956, p. 9).

The above political voices began to be contested with the rise of Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (1908-1981). With different idea of politics, Hamka appeared a major contributor to the Islamic book, as a great writer and a leading *'ālim* of modern Indonesia. His works number more than one hundred and deal with various subjects of Islam, which led him to be widely acknowledged, as (Hadler, 1998, pp. 124–125) notes, as "the most successful Islamic populist of twentieth century Indonesia". His being elevated into a leading leader of Muhammadiyah since 1953, and a short chairing of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, Indonesian Council of 'Ulamā), 1978-1981, boosted his popularity and religious authority among the Muslims.

In this respect, his book *Revolusi Agama [Religious Revolution]* (1952) is special to note. Taking the struggle for power among the political groups in 1950s as the backdrop, while explaining the Islamic dynamics in some Muslim countries—Turkey, the Arab states,

and Pakistan—, Hamka holds the opinion that Islam is still in the process of struggling to gain an appropriate position in Indonesian society and politics (Hamka, 1952, pp. 7–8). The term “revolution” is aptly used, with the argument that Islamic politics has to encounter the triumph of nationalism. For Hamka, revolution is the natural process of human history to achieve the idealized goals, as the essence of Islam (Hamka, 1952, p. 25).

As an *‘ālim*, Hamka’s idea of religious revolution should never be understood in the same way as Muhammad Natsir’s integration of Islam and politics, neither is with Isa Anshari’s Islamic movement. Despite his idealizing Islamic supremacy, Hamka formulates it in non-political terms; it appears more as a religious call in reference to the Islamic teaching. The books of Hamka are much concerned the social and cultural issues, not the real politics. In so doing, his is rightly attributed to the Islamic movement where the inclusive attitudes toward modernity constitutes a salient feature. In fact, his career demonstrates his openness to many Islamic and Western modes of thought, on the basis of which he tried develop his own terms of reform, the cosmopolitan reform (Aljunied, 2018).

During the period up to 1970s, even until nowadays, the books of Hamka appear as the leading Islamic sources of Indonesian Muslims. Of Hamka’s books, the following titles should be mentioned: *Peladjaran Agama Islam [Instruction on Islam]* (1956), *1001 Soal-Soal Hidup [1001 Affairs of Life]* (1961), *Perkembangan Tasawuf dari Abad ke Abad [The Development of Sufism Across the Ages]* (1952), *Falsafah Ideologi Islam [Ideological Philosophy of Islam]* (1950), *Keadilan Sosial dalam Islam [Social Justice in Islam]* (1950), *Studi Islam [Islamic Studies]* (1973), and *Doa-Doa Rasulullah SAW [The Prophet’s Praying]* (1974). To be noted here his voluminous *Tafsir Al-Azhar on Qur’anic commentary* (1967, reprinted in 1992). These books of Hamka seem to present the universal ideas of Islam, in reference to the thought of *‘ulamā’* from many lines of Islamic schools.

In 1970s, alongside the rise of Bulan Bintang the leading Islamic publisher, the above-cited books by Hamka were [re]published, together the then rising Muslim intellectuals in Islamic universities. Harun Nasution from State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Jakarta was one of those whose books Bulan Bintang published, such as *Filsafat dan Mistisism dalam Islam [Philosophy and Mysticism in Islam]* (1973) and *Pembaharuan dalam Islam [Reform in Islam]* (1978). Alongside his being the rector of the Institute (1973-1984) and then Director of Post-Graduate Program (1985-1998), the books by Harun Nasution became important sources for Islamic studies in the university and of Muslim intellectuals at large.

The growth of Islamic books in 1970s marked the changing Islamic discourse of the period, that became more engaged in the social and cultural issues. The idea of Islam-politics union of 1950s began to be revised, paving the way for the strengthening of culture (not real politics)-oriented Islamic movement. The popularity of the books by Hamka, to mention only one author, denotes the prevailing discourse of Islam which started to focus on the cultural and social empowerment. Therefore, as in the case of Islamic reform in the early twentieth century, the Islamic books of 1970s served the media of presenting and creating the shifting Islamic discourses, which led to the establishment of new line of non-politics in Islamic struggle in modern Indonesia. This trend of Islamic development reinforced in 1980s onwards, alongside the growth new modern publishing houses with their Islamic books, as will be discussed.

### **Islamic Books in Contemporary Indonesia**

Bulan Bintang started to decline in the last years of 1980s. Only few books appeared afterward until 1990s as it ceased publishing totally. Its position was replaced by new Islamic publishers well-known with modern-styled books, which continue producing Islamic books for contemporary Indonesian Muslims. Some leading publishers will be discussed, with

strong emphasis on the Islamic ideas they disseminated. Based on the books published up to the early 2000s, three lines of Islamic thought and ideology of publishers can be identified. The first one is moderate Islam, represented by Mizan, followed by Gema Insani Press which transmits Islamic fundamentalism to Indonesia. The last one is the critical Islamic discourse of the NU intellectual activists who established LKiS (Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial).

The rise of three Islamic ideological lines appears to be the main trend of Islamic book publishing in contemporary Indonesia. The term “main trend” is used to denote the continuing process of publishing until today, and therefore have exerted great impact in the making of Muslims intellectual and religious life. The books of these three publishers come to dominate the production of Islamic discourses, which are somehow affiliated with the loosely social grouping of Indonesian Muslims. There existed certainly the publishing which belonged to Jemaah Islamiyah, now the waned radical Islamic group of Indonesia, (*Indonesia*, 2008, pp. 1–22) and the ones of other Islamic publishers. With due regards to the influence they may have created, these publishers were short lived in period, and therefore are not included in this discussion.

In this part, Mizan is the first to discuss. Established in 1983, Mizan since its inception focuses on publishing Islamic books. The rise of this publisher had strong base in a group discussion among Muslim student activists of Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB =Institut Teknologi Bandung) since 1970s. It served the socio-intellectual hub of Mizan’s founding, as is epitomized in the short intellectual journey of Haidar Bagir, one of Mizan’s founders. This is to be explained that the discussion group, centred in Salman mosque of ITB, led young Haidar Bagir, one of the its activists, to have great interest in studying Islam, next to his formal study on Industrial Engineering. The Salman mosque also facilitated Haidar to learn some technical skills of book publishing as he joined Pustaka Salman, the publisher associated with the mosque (Rahman, 1980, 1984). Few years later, with the support of his relatives and businessmen Abdillah Toha and Mustafa Anis, the spirit of Salman-centred Islamic learning was transformed into a publishing business. Hence, Mizan publishing house was born (Bagir, 2008; Muzakki, 2009, pp. 58–154; Watson, 2005, p. 180).

The books Mizan published in the first year were to some extents in relation to Salman mosque religious milieu, which is described as socially activist and religiously conservative (Damanik, 2002, pp. 1–70; Latif, 2008, p. 371). *Surat Menyurat Maryam Jamilah-Maududi [Correspondence of Maryam Jamilah-Maududi]* (1983) is to mention at first. This book was “designed to appeal to the campus market” (Watson, 2005, p. 185), where the ideas of Ikh-wanul Muslimin leaders in Egypt seems to have enjoyed such popularity and somehow acceptance among student activists of especially the Salman mosque, and other university mosques in Indonesia (Damanik, 2002, p. 70; Hefner, 1997, p. 90).

In addition, the boost of Mizan strengthened as it published another book which gained high reputation as a bestseller, *Dialog Sunnah-Syiah [Sunni-Shi’i Dialogue]* (1983) by an Iranian scholar al-Sayyid Syarafuddin al-Musawi. This book presents a new and broad perspective on Islam in the Sunni majority of Indonesia, and therefore address a forcefully neglected, but wanted, issue of Islam in Indonesia of the time which was under the New Order regime. With this book, Mizan provided the rising new Muslim middle class with religious outlook relevant with their broad horizon of mind, and freed from any authoritarian school of thought in terms of both religion and politics.

Then picture of Mizan as a moderate Islamic publisher was further established as Haidar began building network with the intellectual circles in Jakarta, precisely of State Institute of Islamic studies (IAIN) in Ciputat. It appears to be an important point in the development of Mizan, which provided this publisher with relation and access to the works of Muslim leaders. In 1986 Mizan published a book coming from this Ciputat circle, *Merambah Jalan Baru Islam [Creating New Ways of Islam]* by Fachry Ali and Bahtiar Effendi, which

discusses the socio-intellectual mapping of Muslim scholars during the New Order period. Few years later, in 1990, Mizan also published *Mencari Islam [In Search of Islam]* (1990). Edited by Haidar Bagir and Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, this book is a collection of autobiographies of young Muslim intellectuals who express their struggle to make Islam part and parcel of the meaningful engagement in the socio-political affairs of modern Indonesia.

While in Yogyakarta, Mizan established close contact with Taufik Adnan Amal, whose thesis at IAIN Yogyakarta was published, *Islam dan Tantangan Modernitas: Studi atas Pemi-kiran Hukum Fazlur Rahman [Islam and the Challenge of Modernity: A Study of Legal Thought of Fazlur Rahman]* (1989). Amal also translated and published the work by Fazlur Rahman on Islamic methodology, *Metode dan Alternatif Neo-Modernisme Islam [Method and Alternative of Islamic Neo-Modernism]* (1989).

It was in part from this network that Mizan in the mid-1980s launched a serial publication of Muslim intellectuals, “Seri Cendekiawan Muslim”, to facilitate their ideas to be widely accessed by Indonesian publics. With the editing support of young intellectuals (Hernowo, personal communication, 2012) and designed in new and modern book format—in line with Mizan’s aim to publish substantial works in “an attractive modern glossary format” (Watson, 2005, p. 184)—the Islamic ideas of the Muslim scholars reached the wider audience of readership and hence sourced the Islamic public discourses of contemporary Indonesia. They are among others the book by Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Kemoderenan dan Ke-Indone-siaan [Islam, Modernity and Indonesia]* (1986), *Cakrawala Islam: Antara Cita dan Fakta [Islamic Horizon: between Ideal and Fact]* (1987) by Amin Rais, and *Paradigma Islam: Interpretasi untuk Aksi [Islamic Paradigm: Analysis for Action]* (1991) by Kuntowijoyo (1943-2005).

To be included are the works by Jalaluddin Rahmat, *Islam Aktual: Refleksi Seorang Cendikia-wan Muslim [Actual Islam: Reflection of a Muslim Intellectual]* (1991) and the one by Quraish Shihab *Membumikan al-Qur’an: Fungsi dan Peran Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat [Contextualizing the Qur’an: The Function and the Role of Revelation in Social Life]* (1992), the book by Harun Nasution *Islam Rasional: Gagasan dan Pemikiran Harun Nasution [Rational Islam: The Ideas and Thought of Harun Nasution]* (1995), and Azyumardi Azra’s *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII* (1994) on the network between Malay-Indonesia and Mecca ‘ulamā’ in the 17th and 18th centuries.

With these examples, Mizan is firmly established as a publishing house channelling moderate and progressive understanding of Islam. Mizan appears to be the icon of this trend of publishing house. None of the books with militant ideas leading to religious violence is and will never be published by Mizan. Likewise, Mizan did and will always refuse to publish the books with traditional-mythical messages. Rather, Mizan promotes progressive and tolerant values of Islam (H. Bagir, personal communication, n.d.; Muzakki, 2009).

The next publishing house is Gema Insani Press (GIP). Since its establishment in 1986, GIP has gained its success as one of the biggest Islamic book publishing houses in contemporary Indonesia. Founded in Jakarta by Umar Basyarahil, the grandson of Salim Basyarahil who was affiliated with the reformist Arab organization al-Irsyad (Muzakki, 2009, pp. 8–157) Probably in relation to the purification spirit of al-Irsyad, GIP since its inception emerges as a publishing house with fundamentalist ideology.

Historically speaking, GIP was established alongside the rising conservative Muslim group among university students in 1980s, which constituted its main audience of readership. In the period of 1970s and 1980s, Indonesia showed the development of what is called “*usra*” (small circle) and then became the *tarbiyya* movement—the Islamic movement aimed at producing devout Muslim cadres with strict and even scripturalist adherence to the Islamic teachings (Damanik, 2002; Hefner, 1997, p. 90). This *tarbiyya* movement thrived

mainly in such leading universities as Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) with Salman mosque and Gajah Mada University of Yogyakarta (UGM) with Salahuddin mosque. The leaders of this movement made university mosques the arena for the mission of recruiting university students to be trained and even indoctrinated, through Islamic congregation and discussion, with strict mode of Islamic understanding and practices (Aziz, 1989).

GIP addresses its publications to this Muslim group. This explains the fact that the book by Abdullah Azzam *Perang Afghanistan [Afghan War]* (1986) is the first book GIP published. This was dedicated to mainly the *tarbiyah* groups, in which sentiment of anti-West (in this case Soviet Union) grew. The book provided the readers with information on what was going on in Afghanistan, where their fellow Muslims were in the middle of war against the West. The book was well accepted—it has been reprinted more than three times since 1986—giving GIP the first debut as an Islamic publishing house.

In addition, the publisher produced a number of books that promote the ideas of conservative Islamic ideology. Few books can be mentioned as presenting this line of religious thought, namely *Bid'ah Bid'ah di Indonesia [Religious Innovations in Indonesia]* by Badruddin Hasubky (1993), *Koreksi terhadap Ajaran Tasawuf [Correction to Sufism]* by Abdul Qadir Djaelani (1996), *Sunnah & Bid'ah [The Prophetic Tradition and Religious Innovation]* by Yusuf Qardhawi (1998), and the one by Fuad Amsyari, *Islam Kaffah: Tantangan Sosial dan Aplikasinya di Indonesia [Islam Kaffah: Social Challenges and Potential Application in Indonesia]* (1995).

Consistent with its purification agenda, GIP involves in the advocacy of anti-Western civilization, which is believed as being responsible for making the Muslims corrupted, impure (contaminated by non-Islamic values of the West), and un-Islamic. This anti-Western campaign is best expressed in the book by Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat: dari Hegemoni Kristen ke Dominasi Sekular-Liberal [The Nature of Western Civilization: from Christian Hegemony to Secular-Liberal Domination]* (2005). This book looks the West as the source of multi crisis and problems the Muslim countries have been suffering. Still in this issue, another book is *Palestina: Sejarah dan Perkembangan Konspirasi [Palestine: History of Conspiracy]* by Muhsin Muhammad Saleh (2002). As is known, the case of Palestine is taken as a barometer of US and European foreign policies towards Islam. And this book notes that the un-resolving conflict in Palestine points to the existence of Western [US] conspiracy against Islam (Mujani, 2005).

Related to the above issue is the way and mechanism to make the Muslim countries “purely Islamic”. Here, GIP published several books which present not only the meaning but also the significance of the concept of *jihad*. The books are as follows: *Tujuan dan Sasaran Jihad [Objectives and Targets of Jihad]* by Ali Bin Nafayyi' al-Alyani (1992), *Panduan Jihad Untuk Aktifis Gerakan Islam [Jihad for Activists of Islamic Movement]* by Dr. Hilmy Bakar Almascaty (2001), *Jundullah: Mengenal Intelektualitas dan Akhlak Tentara Allah [Jundullah: Knowing the Intellectual and Ethics of God's Soldiers]* by Said Hawwa (2002), and *Perang Jihad di Zaman Modern [Holy War in Modern Age]* by Abdullah Azzam (1994) (Alkaf, 2003, p. 48; *Gema Insani Publisher*, n.d.). Although not exclusively related to physical attack against the West, these books provided the conservative Muslim groups with a religious foundation to have an anti-West [US] sentiment, justifying the need of fight (*jihad*) to refuse Western values and civilization in Muslims socio-political and cultural lives.

LKiS (Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial [Institute for the Studies on Islam and Social Issues]) is another publisher to mention. It was established in Yogyakarta in 1993 (“Profil LKiS – Yayasan LKiS,” n.d.). The student activists with NU background, some graduated from State Islamic University (UIN, then IAIN = State Institute for Islamic Studies) in Yogyakarta, appear as the socio-intellectual origin of LKiS. Having been engaged in the

social and political affairs of the late 1980s, during which the authoritarian regime of the New Order was in its height, the young NU activist-intellectuals came to the idea on the importance of education for the (Muslim) society. LKiS was born with the mission to build the society who are advanced and capable, being independent in thinking and are conscious with the choices.

For this mission, book publishing was taken to be the best way to educate the people to have independent and critical thinking. LKiS was established as a foundation with book publishing as its main activity. Holding this mission, the books with critical discourse on Islam and social issues emerge as the main feature of the books of LKiS. Thus, the book by Kazuo Shimogaki on Islamic thought of Hassan Hanafi (an Egyptian Muslim intellectual), *Between Modernity and Postmodernity: The Islamic Left and Dr Hassan Hanafi's Thought, A Critical Reading* (1988) was translated and published as the first publication of LKiS with an attractive title *Kiri Islam (Islamic Left)* (1993).

With this book, the picture of LKiS as a publishing house with critical Islamic discourse began to establish. The book gained high appreciation by the readers as it has been reprinted for seven times. For LKiS, "introducing perspective and enriching discourse" is the formulae of its publishing activities. The selection of books and the decision to publish are made in reference to the aim of introducing the people to various perspectives on religion (Islam). LKiS educates the Muslims to hold and implement the values of pluralism, liberty, and democracy in Indonesian soil.

Other important scholars whose books LKiS published is an Egyptian Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, to whom the 'ulamā' of al-Azhar issued a *fatwa* (legal opinion) that credited him unbeliever (*kafir*) for his book on *tafsīr*. His two books are *Tekstualitas al-Quran [The Textuality of the Qur'an]* (1996) and *Teks Otoritas Kebenaran [Text the Authority of Truth]* (1995), in which he proposed the interpretation to the Qur'an should be approached from modern theories of hermeneutics in order to disclose the long-established sociological meaning and interpretation to the Qur'an over the period of time.

In addition to the books with critical discourse, other major publications of LKiS are the books on NU and Gus Dur (Abdurrahman Wahid)-related subjects. This is part of the rising NU activist intellectuals who search for local wisdom of culture they are affiliated with, and hence expect to gain an ethical foundation for their engagement in the socio-political transformation of Indonesia. The following are some examples of the books on this subject: *NU: Tradisi, Relasi-Relasi Kuasa dan Pencarian Wacana Baru [NU: Tradition, Power Relation and Searching New Discourse]* by Martin van Bruinessen (1994), *NU vis-a-vis Negara [NU vis-à-vis State]* by Andre Feilard, *Politik NU dan Era Demokrasi [NU Politics and Democracy]* by Saleh Al-Djufri, *Biografi Gus Dur [Biography of Gus Dur]* by Greg Barton, *Gus Dur, Militer dan Politik [Gus Dur, Military and Politics]* by A. Malik H, and *Gus Dur, NU dan Masyarakat Sipil [Gus Dur, NU and Civil Society]* by Martin van Bruinessen,.

## Conclusion

The Islamic books have such a crucial significance in the development of Islam in Indonesian. Since first appeared as part of the Islamic reform movement in the early twentieth century, the Islamic books continued to grow, providing the Muslims from various religious outlooks with ample space to involve in the contest of struggle to define Islam for Indonesian. This struggle can obviously observed in 1950s, as the books were directed to insert Islam into Indonesian politics, but was then revised alongside the rise of new voice of Islamic reform that focused on social and cultural issues, which intensified in the contemporary period with the growing of modern-styled Islamic books and publishers. One central point to note is that the Islamic books contribute to a slowly growth of new mode of religiosity based on publication. Oral tradition

is complemented by reading printed materials. Books—as well as journals, newspapers, and magazines—contribute to the production of religious meaning. In other words, print culture, next to the traditional oral culture, has begun to constitute an important element in Muslims religious lives. And this will strengthen in the future, with the rising use of internet and social media, creating the condition favourable—albeit somehow sounds blaring—for the growth of pluralism and the consolidation of democracy in the country.

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