

The book contains relevant references as well as further readings. Some of the books referred are rather dated probably due to the historical nature of the presentation. To make the book more comprehensible, a comparison between the selected countries could have been tabulated in terms of figures highlighting their similarities and differences. This would disclose the uniqueness of the mass media in the Muslim countries compared to the Western countries in terms of selected attributes deemed suitable for comparative purposes. Future edition should include other countries, such as, Brunei, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and member countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Overall, the book can be used in introductory courses for those planning to major in communication and related disciplines. It would expose students to the mass media and help widen their horizon into the nature, and the practice, of mass media in the selected countries of the Muslim world.

Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in Twentieth Century Indonesia: A Critical Survey. By Fauzan Saleh. Leiden: Brill NV, 2001. ISBN 789004123052.

Reviewer: Abubakar Eby Hara, lecturer at the University of Jember, East Java and Program Officer at the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), Jakarta.

The relationship between religion and human development has attracted attention of many scholars. The progress in the West, for example, was often identified with the Protestant ethics.¹ In Asia, people talk about Confucian and Asian values behind the East Asian economic progresses.² In Latin America, there was “liberation theology” attempting to link Christianity with social structure and offering a solution to free people from the state hegemonic power.³

Fauzan Saleh, in a way, investigates the linkage between Islamic values and human development with reference to Indonesia.⁴ However, in contrast to liberation theology, which attempted not

only to adopt rationality but also to restructure unjust social system, the development of Islamic theological discourses in Indonesia, as discussed in the book, is more limited to efforts to improve condition of Muslims by selecting some Islamic teachings relevant to the spirit

The Indonesian theological discourses are closely related to local and global conditions of a society. The emergence of modern rational theology among Indonesian Muslims coincided with the emergence of New Order hegemonic discourses of modernity and progress in Indonesia. After the fall of the Sukarno's Old Order in 1965, the New Order regime under Suharto (1966-1998) adopted economic and political development policies as advised by Western experts. For Suharto, Old Order regime totally failed because it was trapped in unending political rivalries and hence could not overcome poverty and raise people's income. Suharto, therefore, adopted the goal of economic modernization which required restructuring the political set up. In his new political system, the people were forced to accept government interpretation of Pancasila (the five national principles such as Rukunegara in Malaysia) as the final ideological base for Indonesians. Pancasila was seen as a symbol of unity and a justification for government's unpopular policies.

The political restructuring had several consequences. It forced the Islam-based parties in Indonesia to leave their ideological credence as Islamic parties and replace it with Pancasila as the sole ideology. It also gave birth to modern theological discourses moving away from a formal Islamic State as the panacea for all ills in Indonesia to a position where Muslims are asked to embrace the ideas of modernity, progress and entrepreneurship as a solution to underdevelopment. This discourse is captured by Fauzan Salleh in the book under review.

After discussing the discourses of Islamic theology prior to the advent of the reform movement, a phase in which Islam was mixed with traditional Hinduism and Buddhism particularly in Java, Saleh discusses the dynamics of theological discourses of Indonesian Muslims to purify the practices and teachings of Islam in Indonesia in chapter two. Theological discussions centered on efforts by some Muslims who claim to represent Islamic orthodoxy, known as *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah*. Not surprisingly, Salleh chose Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama as the representatives of

Islamic orthodoxy. These two organizations developed different traditions and practices in performing religious practices (*'ibādah*), and yet claim to represent true Islam. Occasionally, their conflicting claims led to serious conflict. However, the two groups believed in the principle of ummah or a unity among Muslims. They also subscribed to the spirit of *jamā'ah* (belonging to one group), which contains the spirit of inclusivism and non-sectarianism.

In the third chapter, Saleh reconstructs the theological discourse developed by the reformists to sustain orthodox beliefs. In its formative years around 1930s-1950s, Saleh mentioned the efforts of two organizations, Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam, as early attempts to sustain orthodox belief by purifying belief in one God (*tawhīd*) and by eradicating polytheism.

Saleh discusses Muhammadiyah theologian, Mas Mansur, and his efforts to make sure that true Islamic spirit could be rediscovered and implemented in daily life. Mas Mansur's efforts to purify religious belief and his emphasis on rational thinking were continued by H. Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah or Hamka and then by Amien Rais. Hamka introduced Mu'tazili's concept of freedom of action, rational interpretation of religion and moral responsibility. He criticized the fatalistic doctrine, which was responsible for the backwardness of Muslims and recommended Muslims to improve their living conditions. Rais introduced the concept of *tawhīd social* thus linking *tawhīd* (belief in one God) to the necessity of promoting social justice. Saleh observes that Persatuan Islam was explicitly motivated by efforts to overcome the poor social condition of Indonesian Muslims. According to A. Hassan, the main leader of this organization, Muslims would not have fallen to misery had they followed the Qur'ān and Sunnah rigorously.

Despite much space devoted to Nahḍatul 'Ulamā' (NU), the works of young scholars from NU have not been elaborated significantly in Saleh's writing. The concept of "modern" advocated by Saleh, which is in line with the Western concept of modernity and progress, has limited him from looking at Islamic theological views from a broader perspective. As a consequence, theological discourses among NU supporters including those related to gender discourses, which flourished well under the leadership of Abdurachman Wahid during the last two decades of twentieth century, seems to have been

excluded simply because they have emerged from a traditional Islamic organization.

There were others who did not join Islamic organizations but actively participated in the theological discourse. Among these, Saleh discusses, in the fourth chapter, the works of Harun Nasution who was influenced by tradition of rational thinking from Mu'tazilism and Nurcholis Madjid, who belong to a group called Neo-modernism. Nasution criticized the majority of Indonesian Muslims who relied much on Ash'arī doctrines which brought Muslims to a fatalistic worldview. To cope with modernity and progress, Muslims should adopt rational thinking as initiated by the Mu'tazilī group. In one of his lectures in Jakarta, Nasution urged students to critically review Islamic thoughts of four Madhahibs afresh. He was a neo-modernist which, in the Indonesian context, meant to attune modernization to the ideas to local traditions. Muslims, according to Madjid, should understand their religion and the spirit of its doctrine to cope with modernity. To be modern, for Madjid, did not mean to be westernized; the Muslims are advised to select and take advantage of modernity.

The neo-modernist believed in the idea of religious pluralism, inclusiveness, tolerance, political relativism, mutual respect and non-sectarianism. Madjid's famous dictum regarding political context is "Islam yes, Islamic party no." He criticized the Islamic parties in the Soeharto's New Order era (1970s-1980s), which claimed to represent Islam but actually used Islam as a political tool. For him, Islam should be kept aloof from politics. The neo-modernists were criticized by a group called scripturalists that included such personalities as M. Natsir, HM Rasyidi, Endang Syaifuddin Anshari, Ridwan Saidi, Abdul Qadir Djaelani, Daud Rasyid, and others. They argued that Islamic parties did not fail because of the bankruptcy of the Islamic political parties to offer a clear and attractive agenda based on Islamic ideology as Madjid argued. It was because of the government political structures, which limited Islamic political parties' activities and which privileged the government party, Golkar.

Salleh does not give much prominence to the scripturalists. Their interpretation of Islam might not be popular, but their voices are vocal and can be heard everywhere. The groups such as Lasykar Jihad, Lasykar Hisbullah and Jamā'ah Mujāhiddīn, for example, follow the scripturalist line in dealing with non-Muslim communities.

They also use Islamic symbols to discredit the US by referring to some Qur'anic verses. They have different conceptions of democracy regarding the sovereign power. For them sovereignty is in the hand of God not in the hand of people. They also think that the US does not really support democracy but using democracy only to support and fulfill its interests. The theological background of this group ought to have been discussed to make the study comprehensive. Saleh concludes that the process of theological reformation has led to the growth of orthodoxy among Indonesian Muslims. This is because the theological discourses made Muslims aware of the relevance of Islam to their daily life. There was also intensification of Islamic *da'wah* or revitalization in many areas of Indonesia. Soeharto's economic policies and the adoption of Pancasila as the sole ideology reduced political conflicts and primordial sentiments among Muslims paving way for them to work jointly on religious aspects of life.

The beauty of Saleh's book is that it tries to link theological discourses to the reform movements of Muhammad Abduh and to Mu 'tazilah and the Asharites. This shows that the efforts of Indonesian Muslim has some connection with the original and true message of Islam. By elaborating theological reformation in this way, Saleh does not see the reformist attempt only as a response to the onslaught of modernity, democracy and pluralism as was done by others political analysts. He tries to show that theological discourses have their roots in the past and that they are natural and are not simply reactive.

On the whole Saleh's book is worth reading. He is able to describe the mainstream thoughts of reformation among Indonesian Muslims. He shows the compatibility of Islam with modernization, rational thinking, and moderate and tolerant practices. Saleh shows that the Muslims in Indonesia are different from those in the Middle East. Since its early inception, Indonesian Muslims have developed a moderate attitude and tolerant practices in dealing with non-Muslim communities.

Notes

1. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner's Press, 1958).

2. Abubakar Eby Hara, "The Claims of 'Asian Values' and 'Asian Democracy': Some Implications for International Society, with special attention to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia" (Ph.D. dissertation, ANU, Canberra, 1999).
3. Phillip Berryman, *Liberation Theology, Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America and Beyond* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).
4. Fauzan Saleh, *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in Twentieth Century Indonesia, a Critical Survey* (Leiden: Brill NV, 2001).
5. R. William Liddle, "Skripturalisme Media Dakwah: Satu Bentuk Pemikiran dan Aksi Politik Islam Masa Orde Baru," *Ulumul Qur'an*, 4, no. 3, 1993.