ESSAY

UIN Jakarta: Islam and the West, Democracy and Education:

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Introduction

In this essay, I mostly discuss the impact of Western democracy on leading Turkish and Indian Muslim scholars who lived in the 19th century. Specifically, I study the impact of the Western models of education on Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri/UIN) Jakarta.

I use the term the “West” to refer to the people, cultures, or institutions that introduced democracy and the education systems of these western countries to the Muslim world. The Western countries I draw on for this paper are England, France, Germany and the U.S., whereas the Muslim countries are Egypt, Turkey, India, and Indonesia.

However, here I would like to briefly explore relevant historical themes as to the impact on Islamic inquiry of Western intellectual values. I suggest that the history of Islam in the modern times started from Napoleon’s conquest of Egypt and some Muslim countries in 1798. This modern history of Islam reached its peak in 1840. Then, it declined until 1940 when World War II occurred. The modern times of the history of Islam will probably be going on as such. This process resembles to the nature of Islamic modernity; in its continuous progress, modern Islam will receive its correction from the post-modernity: checking and balancing.¹

The French conquest in Egypt encouraged Muslim scholars in the Muslim world, such as Turkey and India, to reform their government systems on the basis of a new paradigm, democracy: government of the people, by the people, and for the people.² The banishment of Ali Suavi (1839 - 1878) and that of Namik Kemal (1840 - 1888) by the Ottoman sultans shows us that the problem of reform came from the caliphs’ absolutism. In addition, the

²This definition of democracy is similar to that of Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic, (London: Franklin Covey Co. 1999) p. 30.
caliphs’ judicial authority, which made the judges bow to the caliphs’ decrees, depicts that the governments and their elites manipulated the democratic doctrines of Islam, such as consultation (shura), and oath of allegiance (bay’a) for their vested interests. In concert with this evidence, the ideas of Ziya Göklap (1876 - 1924) from Turkey, Abul-Kalam Azad (1888 - 1958) from Bengal-India and the stubbornness of Chiragh Ali (1844 - 1895) from North-India may give us clues as to the degree to which the Muslim reformers could not yet develop a type of basic scheme of human rights in line with modernity and its concerns.

As the following discussion suggests, significant and innovative elements of UIN Jakarta’s academic missions originated in the European university model partly due to the historical influences on the Muslim world, as briefly sketched out above. The mission of education or learning in class is originally the strong college teaching model initiated by Oxford and Cambridge universities. Whereas, a university’s function as an institute of research was initially developed in the strong research and professorship of German universities in the early 19th century, the Berlin model under Von Humbolt, for example. A university’s final function, and one that UIN also absorbed, is that of community service. In contrast with the previous academic missions, a university’s community service role originally emerged in the middle and latter part of the Nineteenth century in North America under the President Lincoln’s administration. This innovation was known as the Land Grant Movement with the dissemination of the Morrill Act in 1862. America, then, also adopted these European universities’ positive models. As a result, American universities now unite these three into their academic missions. American universities add another function: international co-operation. As I will explain below, these academic missions have been extremely influential on UIN Jakarta’s development. However, first, it is useful to provide a little historical context to the discussion of UIN Jakarta’s emergence as one of Indonesia’s and the region’s leading tertiary institutions.

**UIN Jakarta and academic functions**

The following brief history of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri/UIN) Jakarta helps illustrate how this university has successfully adopted many of the traditions of Western academia. This description, then, explores how this university has become an effective agent for dialogue of interfaith and dialogue between civilizations. The narrative is as follows.

UIN Jakarta uses the name “Syarif Hidayatullah” to refer to one of the Nine Wali (Islamic Saints) in Java. Syarif Hidayatullah was born on the Arabian Peninsula in 1448 and legend has it that he died in Cirebon, West Java, in 1568. His mother was the daughter of

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Prabu Siliwangi from the Pajajaran (a capital city of Sunda) Kingdom, and Syarif Hidayatullah was a high ranking officer in the Egyptian army. He propagated Islam in Java wisely and kindly; he spoke to the people heart-to-heart and showed tolerance for their beliefs and traditions. In addition, he is also well-known as a man who assisted many people including those underprivileged in the Indonesian society of the time.

How Syarif Hidayatullah came to Java is a question that attracts another resource about his origin, one that is different from an origin located on the Arabian peninsula. This resource says that Syarif Hidayatullah was born in Pasai in the North of Aceh. When he was a child, he studied Islam from his parents in Pasai. Next, he went to study Islam in Mecca in Saudi Arabia when the Portuguese occupied Malacca, including Aceh, in 1511. When he returned from Mecca to Aceh, the Portuguese still occupied Aceh. Syarif Hidayatullah was disappointed with this occupation. Consequently, he left Aceh for the Islamic Kingdom in Demak, Central Java. Sultan Trenggono of this kingdom welcomed Syarif Hidayatullah, and married him with his (king's) daughter.

Due to Syarif Hidayatullah’s tolerant, compassionate and helpful attitude, UIN Jakarta adopts his name. On 1 June 1957, when it was first founded, UIN Jakarta was a State Academy of Islamic Sciences (Akademi Dinas Ilmu Agama/ADIA). The goal of ADIA was to provide state employees with an academic and semi-academic education, so that they could become professional Muslim educators at high schools. Three years later (24 August 1960), the Indonesian government established ADIA in Jakarta and the State Higher Education for Islamic Studies (Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri/PTAIN) became one institute: the State Institute for Islamic Studies (Institut Agama Islam Negeri/IAIN) to develop Islamic higher education. As a result, in the early 1963, UIN Jakarta was able to establish three faculties: Education (Tarbiya), Literature (Adab), and Theology and Philosophy (Usul al-Din). Having seen this progress, the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs declared Decree Number 49 on February 25, 1963. On the basis of this decree, IAIN became divided into two: IAIN Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta and IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta. This division led IAIN Jakarta to add two other faculties: Law (Shari`a) and Preaching (Da`wa).

The growth of these five faculties of IAIN Jakarta was in tandem with the Indonesian government’s policy before 1965, exactly in 1962. Each of provinces in Indonesia should have established a public university to be able to serve as an agent of development. Moreover, the Indonesian Minister of Higher Education and Science of that period, Prof. Dr. Thoyyb Hadiwijaya, assigned each university in Indonesia the objective to accomplish three

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Ibid., pp. 1-5.

Ibid., pp. 5-6.
academic missions: “education, research, and community service.” Since then, the education law and the government's regulation act on higher education in Indonesia have been carrying out these missions. From that time on, IAIN Jakarta has also been applying these three missions into its academic activities. Having employed them and having introduced philosophy into its curricula, IAIN Jakarta, under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Harun Nasution (1973-1984), was well-known as the “Campus of the Reformers”, one that has emphasized rationality. This image helped IAIN Jakarta found its Graduate School in Islamic Studies in 1982; it is the first Graduate School in Islamic Studies in Indonesia.

The academic progress of IAIN Jakarta encouraged its leaders to initiate the Wider Mandate concept of this institute: integrating general and religious sciences. Prof. Dr. Azyumardi Azra, MA., who became rector of IAIN/UIN Jakarta from 1998 to 2002, and from 2002 to 2006, intensified this effort by opening new departments, such as psychology, mathematics teaching, economics, shari'a banking, agribusiness and information technology, management and accounting, and international and interdisciplinary classes. He also launched three new faculties: Dirasat Islamiyya, psychology, and science and technology. Consequently, IAIN Jakarta under his leadership has established nine faculties including its Graduate School.

This rapid progress of IAIN Jakarta led its leaders to transform IAIN Jakarta into the State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri/UIN). In response to this academic demand, Ministry of National Education (MONE) and Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) issued a joint decree, recommending that IAIN become UIN, on 21 November 2001. IAIN officially became UIN Jakarta on the basis of Presidential Decree Number 31, dated 20 May 2002. UIN Jakarta leads the way for other IAINs in Indonesia to become UINs. Nowadays, we have seen five other UINs, such as UIN Yogyakarta, UIN Riau, UIN Malang, UIN Makassar, and UIN Bandung.

Based on these details, I can draw the conclusion that 1963 is a major turning point for UIN Jakarta because since this year the university has been able to stand independently from UIN Yogyakarta. This objectivity was encouraged by the policy of the Indonesian government in 1962. In this time, the Indonesian Ministry of Educational Affairs obliged all Indonesian higher schools to carry out academic missions: education, research, and community service. This policy enabled IAIN Jakarta to establish nine faculties as well as to integrate general and religious sciences into its curricula.

UIN Jakarta is now under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat, who obtained his master degree and PhD in Philosophy in 1995 from the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. He has officially been appointed Rector of UIN Jakarta since 6

13Ibid.
15Ibid., pp. 7-8.
16Ibid., p. 9.
March 2006 to 2010 (2010 - 2014). Since then, he has been articulating the academic doctrines (education, research, and community service) into a motto that comprises three elements: knowledge, piety, and integrity. The first element, knowledge, refers to both religious and general sciences that are rationally and wisely taught according to the academic standard accredited by the Ministry of National Educational Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The second aspect, piety, is character building; it is to say that these religious and general sciences should lead the students to be honest, humble, patient, and wise. The third factor, integrity, means that the students should apply these religious and general sciences for the benefit of all people.

On the basis of this motto, UIN Jakarta aims to develop religious and natural sciences that integrate faith, knowledge, and good deeds to eliminate the dichotomy between general and religious sciences. This integration aims to provide an ethical basis for developing science and technology. Moreover, this combination helps UIN Jakarta articulate an Islamic worldview in all walks of life; thereby reducing radicalism.

Prof. Komaruddin considers the motto of UIN Jakarta to nurture leadership from within, a model of leadership, with the hope that his students will become model leaders in their work and service places. In his opinion, since its establishment in June 1957, UIN Jakarta has consistently kept the leadership-from-within principle. Prof. Komaruddin clarifies that these principles referred to surrendering to God, serving the community, and developing the nation. He adds that UIN Jakarta reached its golden (50th) anniversary — 1 June 2007 — on the basis of these principles.

An International outlook

On the basis of this motto, a month after the appointment (March 6, 2006) of Prof. Komaruddin as Rector, UIN Jakarta received international academic recognition. For instance, on 7 April 2006, His Excellency Prime Minister Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende of the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands visited UIN Jakarta and made dialogue on religion and civilization with students. Said Fazili, Second Secretary Political of the Embassy of the Netherlands in Jakarta, Indonesia, and me had organised this dialogue. In this dialogue, I took the role of the master of the ceremony, speaking in Dutch. During lunch, as I recall quite vividly, Prime Minister Balkenende said to me that this dialogue was the one that he had been expecting to occur.

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17 Presiden Republik Indonesia, Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, “Salinan Keputusan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 16/K Tahun 2006,” pp. 1-3. This is an unpublished document.
20 Said Fazili sent to me by email on 21 March 2006 the list of attendants that encompassed the delegation from the Netherlands and from its embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia. The delegation from the Netherlands were Jan Peter Balkenende, Prime Minister, Gerard van der Wulp, Director General of the Netherlands Government Information Service/Spokesman of the Prime Minister, Rob Swartbol, Foreign Policy Advisor of the Prime Minister, Pieter de Gooijer, Deputy Director General for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Max
Prime Minister Balkenende started his speech by saying that the students of UIN Jakarta represent a new generation of Indonesia; their ideas would determine Indonesia in this 21st century. He explained that more than a month, previous to this UIN visit, he had attended an international conference in Jakarta, where he listened to the speech of Indonesian President Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono that Indonesia is developing not only freedom but also tolerance; thereby shattering the gap that splits the West and the Muslim World. Being impressed by this speech, His Excellency Balkenende signed up an international Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia in countering terrorism. Balkenende said that tolerance and defying terrorism were the issues that impressed him to come to Indonesia. He clarified that tolerance was highly valuable to oppose dangerous radicalism. He took an example that one year and half before his visit, the film maker Theo van Gogh of Amsterdam was killed by a young Muslim man who said that his religion allowed this killing.21

In accordance with him being impressed by the Indonesian president’s agenda of tolerance and anti terrorism, Balkenende said to the audience of UIN Jakarta that he came to visit this university to know its students’ ideas on tolerance: “At this university, I found a strong focus on international affairs, and this academic mission qualifies its students with competency to challenge global context as well as to flourish the quality of the life of society [...] This is the principle [UIN Jakarta’s academic mission of international cooperation] that has impressed me very much,” said Balkenende.22

As an important turning point, this successful visit of His Excellency Balkenende to UIN Jakarta resulted in the Islamic Studies Program at Leiden University offering UIN Jakarta’s lecturers and staff Young Leaders Program scholarships to pursue doctoral studies at Leiden University. In consequence, a number of lecturers from UIN Jakarta pursued doctoral programs at Leiden University. These scholars included Mr. Kusmana and Mr. Din Wahid of the Faculty of Islamic Theology and Philosophy, and Mrs. Siti Nurul Azkiyah of the Faculty of Education and Teaching Sciences.23

Since 2006, UIN Jakarta has also welcomed a growing number of other distinguished international guests, such as the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt. Hon Helen Clark, on 18

Valstar, Senior Policy Officer, South East Asia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Simone Bakker, Protocol Advisor of the Prime Minister, and three bodyguards: Marco Wesselius, Huib van Son, and Cornelis Burger. The delegation from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Indonesia were Nikolaos van Dam, Ambassador, Peter Mollema, Head Political Section, Hans Smaling, Head Economic Section, Usha Gopie, Press Officer, Said Fazili, Second Secretary Political, Bert Venema, Security Manager, and Frank Knaapen, Logistics Manager.

21See “Draft yang akan diberikan sebagai pertimbangan untuk Pidato Perdana Menteri Negeri Belanda, Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende di Universitas Islam Negeri, Jakarta, Indonesia, 7 April 2006,” pp. 1-6, mainly 5. I thank to Mrs. Nining and Mr. Said Fazili of the Dutch Embassy in Jakarta, who had sent me this unpublished draft a week ahead of the dialogue.

22Ibid., pp. 1, 5.

July 2007. She delivered her public lecture on “Fostering the Alliance of Civilizations through Interfaith Dialogue” and witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UIN Jakarta and Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) in New Zealand. I was also a master of ceremony for this dialogue and the MoU in English. In a similar tone to Balkenende, Clark regarded UIN Jakarta as a distinguished university that contributes to Indonesia’s political, economic, and social development; she said so in her speech. She also stated that both New Zealand and Indonesia place great importance on peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, her government approved funding for UIN Jakarta personnel to visit New Zealand on teaching fellowships during 2008.24

Given the fact that UIN Jakarta received international recognition of its academic progress, Rector Prof. Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat formed a new logo and motto for UIN Jakarta in 2007. According to the Rector, this logo should function in three main ways as follows: symbolic identity that draws the essence of UIN Jakarta, a route where by this university should develop by referring to this identity, and media to develop communication nationally and internationally.

The symbolic identity of UIN Jakarta refers to its open commitment of knowledge to amalgamate religious and general sciences, its spiritual steadfastness of piety as the quality of its academic life. This commitment of UIN Jakarta also identifies its cosmopolitan integrity as an international door to different cultures and perspectives. This symbolic identity has become the logo of UIN Jakarta that encompasses the orientation of Islam, science, and Indonesian-ness. This means that the new logo sketches a deep impression of UIN Jakarta as grand, modern, inclusive and international; it is to say that the new logo should indicate not only three characteristics (Islam, science, and Indonesian-ness) but also internationality.

On the basis of this cosmopolitan paradigm, the new logo of UIN Jakarta has seven characteristics: 1) the globe’s shadow, 2) an atom’s rotation, 3) a lotus flower, 4) a book, 5) white line on the phrase of UIN Jakarta, 6) blue, and 7) gold yellow colors. I insert the picture of this logo and the motto of UIN Jakarta as follows:

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24PM’s Address at Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic University,” in http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/print.html, 10/12/2008, pp. 1-5. Minister Prof. Dr. Bambang Sudibyo of National Educational Affairs (MONA) also attended this dialogue. In his speech, he said to Rt. Hon Helen Clark that she came to the right place, UIN Jakarta: “It is one of the best national universities in religious studies,” This statement of Prof. Sudibyo is similar to the fact that in 2006, MONA, regarded Islamic Studies program of UIN Jakarta as a center of excellence of this university. This accreditation led two lecturers of UIN Jakarta to be successfully nominated as recipients of Presidential Scholars Fund (PSF): Mr. Badrus Sholeh, lecturer of the Department of International Relations of UIN Jakarta, and me of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities. Mr. Badrus accepted a letter of acceptance from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. He dropped this nomination as he obtained Australian Development Scholarship to study at Deakin University, Australia. I took this PSF to pursue my doctoral study in the Social and Political Sciences Program, Monash University (September 2010 to the present). Furthermore, the successful visit of Prime Minister Rt. Hon Helen Clark resulted in university-to-university-contract fellowship, namely between VUW and UIN Jakarta. In fact, two senior lecturers of UIN Jakarta, Prof. Dr. Bachtiar Effendy and Dr. Nurlena Rifai, appeared to have been successful as senior lecturers at VUW during April and June 2007, see Usep Abdul Matin, “Two Senior Lecturers of UIN Jakarta Visit VUW as Researchers,” in UIN News, 22nd edition, May 2008.
The globe’s shadow implies the broad-based horizon of UIN Jakarta, its mission of Islam and blessing the religion of the universe, and the mosque. The atom rotation entails knowledge that should endlessly be developed. This includes change and life dynamics that should be responded to as well as divine determination that should be contemplated by UIN Jakarta for the benefit of the universe. The lotus flower signifies *sidrah*. It is to say that each Muslim has an ideal to obtain the highest truth for the advantage of human beings. The *kubah* shows the qualification of the life and literature under the inspiration of the Qur’an and *hadas* (sayings of Prophet Muhammad and his companions) for the development of UIN Jakarta. The color white suggests humility in intellectual life. Blue is the color of deep knowledge, peace, and Nusantara archipelago, where diverse civilizations meet and exchange with each other. The golden yellow color means the ardor of UIN Jakarta towards golden years.²⁵

This change in the logo connotes the keenness of UIN Jakarta in both enhancing academic life and responding to the needs of people nationally and internationally. In fact, its missions that include not only education, research, and social service but also international cooperation have conceived an excellent university following the positive models of universities in the West: Oxford, Cambridge, German universities, and especially those of North America. It is important to explain why UIN Jakarta has changed its logo; not all people understand this. For instance, a popular Islamic magazine *Sabili* magazine misunderstands totally this shift of logo.²⁶ This change in logo signifies UIN Jakarta as a center of excellence in promoting better life in education, particularly its Islamic studies program.

In tandem with this promotion, on 14 and 15 August 2014, 73 experts of Islam in Southeast Asia from 57 universities of Indonesia and overseas went to UIN Jakarta to celebrate the 20th anniversary of its international journal, *Studia Islamika*, published by its *Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat/PPIM)*. Some of these universities were UIN Malang, UIN Yogyakarta, Bandung Technology Institute (ITB), Monash University in Australia, Australian National University, Kyoto University, Utrecht University in the Netherlands, the University of Michigan, Boston University, Waseda University, Goethe University in Frankfurt, and the University of Kebangsaan, Malaysia. The experts of Islam in Southeast Asia of these universities presented their

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²⁶ About this misunderstanding, see *Sabili*, 5th edition, September 18, 2008, pp. 84-87.
findings that broadened their audience’s knowledge about Islam in Indonesia and in Southeast Asian countries.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Conclusion}

On the basis of these details, I draw a threefold conclusion as follows. First thought, I recognize that England with its \textit{Magna Carta} in 1215 preceded other Western countries, such as the U.S (1776) and France (1789), in pioneering the most fundamental element of modernism: democracy.\textsuperscript{28} Nevertheless, second thought, I discovered that France seemed to be most influential in spreading this component in the Muslim world. This is evidenced by the fact that before its conquest of Egypt, France had become civilized by its revolution that reduced the absolutism of the king and built liberty. The impact of this conquest resulted in the modern concept i.e., citizenship, which spread to the Muslim countries, such as Turkey and India. Furthermore, the citizenship ideas of the Muslim scholars I explained above imply the status of freedom that accompanies political rights, including the rights to vote the rulers and to retain public office. In this context, the rulers should attach themselves to their responsibilities in public service. For this reason, I would say that citizenship is the characteristic of a modern cyber history. Along with this spirit, Western modern democracy emerges in the Muslim world in forms of consultation (\textit{shura}), and allegiance (\textit{bay'a}).

In the third thought, I understand that the United States has emerged to exercise profound influence in the Muslim world, including Indonesia as the largest Muslim population in the world, especially with reference to the development of specific traditions now anticipated by universities in Indonesia, for example, and certainly at UIN Jakarta. This is evidenced by the fact that since the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, precisely 1862, American universities have adopted the positive models of European universities: education or in-class learning model of Cambridge University and Oxford University in England, and the research and professorship models of Berlin under Von Humbolt in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Not only did the U.S combine education and research, but also it added two other academic functions: community service and international cooperation. Since the latter 20\textsuperscript{th} century, precisely in 1962, Indonesia has adopted these academic doctrines.

These four academic functions are embedded in the new logo of UIN Jakarta that was launched on August 21, 2008 under the leadership of Rector Prof. Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat. These four academic functions help UIN Jakarta promote its international status and build cross-cultural understanding. This promotion has seen distinguished leaders of other countries, such as His Excellency Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende of New Zealand and Prime Minister Rt. Hon Helen Clark of New Zealand visit UIN Jakarta and hold dialogues on religions and civilizations. Furthermore, many experts in Southeast Asian Islam also shared


\textsuperscript{28}See Jacob E. Safra and Ilan Yeshua, \textit{loc. cit.}
their findings in UIN Jakarta's international journal, Studia Islamika. Thereby, I believe, contributing to the making of a better world.

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