

Editorial:
MUSLIM WORLD CURRENT ISSUES

Globalisation has proofed its self as a very spectacular phenomenon until no one may deny its impacts, but on the other hand, it reflexively suggests localization of the global. In this context, religion is not exclusion. It remains believed however, that religion still has its formula for solving the problems that emerged from globalisation. Scholars have devoted attempts to propose new ideas for this challenge. Local interpretations of symbols representing “global” Islam, for instance, increasingly grow in line with the growth of Islamic revival. This has drawn very much attention and responses from Muslims, whether to protest against or support for the new idea. The present edition of the journal is designed to more deeply explore the current issues from Muslim world, whether as very local phenomena or in a more global context.

Svetlana Kirillina opens the discussion by her article on oriental studies in Russia, in which she especially examines the role of Arab scholars in the development of this discipline in Russian universities. The article shows an overview on the role of local agencies in developing such global discipline as oriental studies. Furthermore, the backgrounds of the figures –life, ideology, education, and to some extent, religion— unintentionally drive the discipline to certain directions reflecting the “real actor” of the development. Still in this context, the idea Munawir Sjadzali is still interesting to discuss for the case of Indonesia. His idea of re-actualisation in Islamic teachings is more deeply elaborated by Yunahar Ilyas. Another case, which has very recently blown up, that leads to a big controversy among Indonesian Muslims is the liberal Islam movement associated in *Jaringan Islam Liberal* [*Liberal Islam Network*]. Ahmad Bunyan Wahib successfully brings an analysis of this controversial phenomenon and both

methodologically and apologetically supporting and protesting responses.

The above-mentioned articles discuss Islam much in connection with its social, local context. The issues discussed are religious, social phenomena, which develop within Muslim communities as parts of global movement of Islamic revival. Two other articles, written by Tulus Mustofa and Nazri Syakur, colour the discussion with different perspectives. The first writer provides us with a discussion on the problems arise in interpreting the Qur'an under the perspective of linguistics, while the latter uses psychological theory to discuss the relationship between language and education process. These two articles give more normative approaches to see Islam from within.

An optimistic perspective at seeing the future of Islam appears in Mustafā Dasūqy's writing. Based on his analysis on global economic dynamism, he argues that the economical development of the West, which has been grown very slowly since 1970s, indicates the beginning of its decline. Meanwhile, the rapid improvement of Asian countries' economy, especially that of China, demonstrates their initial resurgence. Dasūqy sees, as well, natural and human resources possessed by Islamic countries are very huge power that potentially leads them, if seriously and properly managed, to become world economic super power. This optimistic view emphasizes Muslim attitude that Islam is still a hope. They believe that Islamic teachings will be alternative solutions for contemporary global problems, as what Meizer Nahdi and Aziz Ghufuron explain in their article on environmental issues. In addition, it is common that for Muslims, Islam always plays significance role in their daily life, as reflected in another article by Abdul Karim analysing the process of Indonesian independence. (editor)