

Book Review

Rakhmad Zailani Kiki (ed.) (2022). *Intellectual Genealogy of Betawi Ulama: Tracking the Betawi Ulama Network from the Beginning of the 19th Century to the 21st Century*. Jakarta Islamic Centre. 213 Pages. ISBN: 978-602-98707-0-1

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In recent years, the Center for Islamic Research and Development of Jakarta, better known as the Jakarta Islamic Centre (JIC), has become a reference point for Islamic and Betawi studies in Indonesia and overseas. The research on the Intellectual Genealogy of the Betawi Ulama, conducted by JIC, began at the end of 2006 and continued until 2017, including visits to primary sources of information. This research extended beyond Indonesia to several countries in Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Pattani in Thailand, and Cambodia, to trace the spread of Islamic da'wah. The history of Betawi is closely linked to the history of Islam in the archipelago. However, it remains minimally explored and lacks comprehensive, in-depth research by scholars, particularly concerning the intellectual genealogy of Betawi ulama.

There has been a study on the intellectual genealogy of Nusantara ulama and their connections with the Middle East in the 17th-19th centuries AD by Azyumardi Azra. However, according to the author, the research conducted by Azra summarises the Nusantara ulama network with Middle Eastern ulama in general, especially in the period of the 17th–18th centuries. Despite Azra's research summarising the network of Nusantara ulama with Middle Eastern ulama, particularly during the 17th–18th centuries¹, and works like Ridwan Saidi's *Profil Orang Betawi: Asal Muasal, Kebudayaan dan Adat Istiadatnya*², and Abdul Aziz's *Islam dan Masyarakat Betawi*³ discussing Betawi, these books still address Betawi in general and do not focus in-depth on the works of ulama and their intellectual genealogy. Hence, when Azyumardi Azra gave the introduction to this book (*Intellectual Genealogy of the Betawi Ulama*), he was very appreciative, considering it a comprehensive work that could fill gaps in existing research, especially regarding the intellectual network of Betawi ulama from the 19th to the 21st centuries AD.⁴ The work on the intellectual genealogy of Betawi ulama is entitled "*Intellectual Genealogy of Betawi Ulama: Tracking the Betawi Ulama Network from the Beginning of the 19th Century to the 21st*", written collectively and led by Rakhmad Zailani Kiki. According to the author, in general, the approach used in this book is a historical approach with a diachronic analysis model. The analysis in this book could be more comprehensive if combined with a synchronic analysis. The theory used is the genealogy of knowledge theory, although the operationalisation of this theory is not explained in detail in this book. The genealogy of knowledge theory is often employed in historical studies, particularly to describe the intellectual history of people. This theory clarifies the links between connected variables, whether they are about the history of knowledge, the evolution of knowledge, or the continuity of knowledge in the actuality of a figure.

This book has six chapters. The first chapter covers the framework of genealogy and how it is used in historical research. This chapter not only explains genealogy, but also offers a brief history of Betawi leadership. Two kinds of leadership are highlighted: 1) Leaders who are regarded and followed, such as a Guru or *mua'llim*; and 2) Leaders who are just respected, such as *Jagoan* (fighters). The Betawi people are well-known for producing numerous ulama, as well as for their *Jagoan* (fighters). Thus, beginning

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¹ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaharuan Islam Indonesia* (Kencana, 2013), IX-XII.

² Ridwan Saidi, *Profil Orang Betawi: Asal Muasal, Kebudayaan Dan Adat Istiadatnya* (PT. Ganara Kata, 2001), 11.

³ Abdul Aziz, *Islam Dan Masyarakat Betawi* (Logos Wacana Ilmu, 2002), 4.

⁴ Rakhmad Zailani Kiki et al., *Intellectual Genealogy of Betawi Ulama: Tracking the Betawi Ulama Network from the Beginning of the 19th Century to the 21st Century* (Jakarta Islamic Centre, 2022), 15.

in the 18th century AD, the Dutch colonial government attempted to formalise leadership structures within the Betawi ethnic group. In this system, the position of *Bek* (guard/warrior), which was the lowest rank in the hierarchy, was directly associated with the Betawi identity and was well-known among the local population. However, this formalised leadership position did not gain widespread social legitimacy as an authoritative Betawi leader. The respected and influential leaders followed and obeyed by the Betawinese were the *Guru* and the *Mu'allim* (*ulama* leadership). In contrast, the *Jagoan* or *Bek* was respected for his strength and fighting prowess but was not regarded as a leader to be followed. Although the leadership structure of the Betawi ethnic group exhibited dualism, the relationship between the *Mualim* and the *Jagoan* was non-confrontational. The *Jagoan* reads certain *wirid-aurad-dhikr* (prayers) to increase his ability in punching force (*maen pukul*). Additionally, the weapons used by the *Jagoan*, such as the *golok* (a traditional Betawi blade) — including variations like the *golok ujung turun*, *golok betok*, and *golok piso raut* — were often inscribed with religious spells (*wafak* in Arabic), a practice taught by the *Mu'allim*.⁵

During the post-independence period, there was no formal structure in the leadership of the Betawi ethnic group. There were only the leadership of the *Ulama* and the *Jagoan*. However, the efforts to form the Betawi ethnic leadership structure apart from the *Ulama* and *Jagoan* were continued, either in a broad scope or in a limited scope in the form of organisations based on lineage, friendship, profession or any other interests. Even though there are *Bamus Betawi* and other Betawi organisations being shaded by the Betawi figures who led them, still the *Ulama* and the *Jagoan* occupy central positions in the leadership or elite of the Betawi ethnic group. It is the Betawi *Ulama* (Betawi Muslim scholars) who remained the most influential of these two Betawi elite groups. This is quite understandable because the high sense of religiosity of the Betawi people has made them dependent on their *Ulama*. This dependence directly increased the intensity of the meeting between the two and certainly intensified the transfer of knowledge from the Betawi Muslim scholars to the people. It is from this society that the next generation of the Betawi *Ulamas* were born.

The final section of the first chapter describes the scope of this book's research, which focuses on the intellectual genealogy of Betawi *ulama* from the early 19th century, notably Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi, until the 21st-century *ulama*. Sheikh Quro', an early Betawi *ulama* who promoted Islam in Kerawang, Betawi, will be briefly examined, as data on early Betawi *ulama* up to the 18th century still needs to be collected and excavated.

Chapter two discusses the history of Islam's advent in Betawi. The arrival of Islam into Betawi is similar to the history of Islam invading Indonesia in many variations. However, the most frequent narrative is that Islam arrived in Betawi on June 22, 1527, when Fatahillah (Fadhillah Khan) stormed Sunda Kelapa to end the Portuguese occupation. Sheikh Quro' was a key *ulama* in the early growth of Islam in Betawi, spreading Islam in Karawang. Sheikh Quro' is also known as Sheikh Mursyahadatillah and Sheikh Hasanuddin. He is from Champa (Cambodia) and is the son of Mecca's critical scholar, Sheikh Yusuf Siddik. Sheikh Quro established the first pesantren in Karawang. Following Sheikh Quro, several localities became intellectual centres for the Betawi *ulama* in the 19th century AD, such as Pekojan, Menteng Atas, Kuningan, and other regions. During the post-independence and New Order periods, communities in Klender, Gondangdia, Matraman, Kampung Melayu, and Pancoran continued to serve as key centres of Islamic learning. In the Reform Era, new intellectual and religious centres developed in Jatiwaringin, Cibubur, Jatinegara, and Kalimalang. The final section of this chapter discusses Betawi *ulama's* contributions to Indonesia from pre-independence to 1945, including Guru Thabrani (Pasebean), Guru Mansur (Jembatan Lima), Kiai Rahmatullah Sidik (Kebayoran), Kiai Syam'un (Kampung Mauk), and others. Many *Guru*, *mu'allim*, and Betawi *kiai* battled against the colonists, but only a few are named and regarded as national heroes (Pahlawan Nasional), and their names are rarely documented in history books.

The genealogy of Betawi *ulama* from the 19th to the 21st centuries is then detailed in this third chapter, beginning with Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi, a prominent Betawi *ulama* as well as a Nusantara *ulama*, who lived in Makkah in the early 19th century. Sheikh Junaid Al-Batawi was instrumental in nurturing six renowned Betawi *ulama* under his tutelage: Guru Manshur Jembatan Lima, Guru Marzuqi Cipinang Muara, Guru Madjid Pekojan, Guru Mughni Kuningan, Guru Khalid Gondangdia, and Guru Mahmud

⁵ Saidi, *Profil Orang Betawi: Asal Muasal, Kebudayaan Dan Adat Istiadatnya*, 89-90.

Romli. Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi, also known as Sheikh Mujitaba, is an essential intellectual connection among Betawi intellectuals. Guru Mansur of Jembatan Lima is among the Betawi intellectuals who studied under him. Then, among the six Betawi *ulama* stated before is: 1) Guru Manshur Jembatan Lima (1878-1967 AD) was followed by five *ulama*: Mu'allim Rojiun Pekojan, Syaikh KH. Muhadjirin Amsar Ad-Dary, Mu'allim Rasyid, Mu'allim KH. M. Syafi'i Hadzami, and Abuya KH Saifuddin Amsir. 2) Guru Marzuqi Cipinang Muara (1876-1933 AD) and his 11 students became prominent *ulama* in Betawi, including KH. M. Baqir, KH. Noer Alie, KH. Abdullah Syafi'ie, KH. Thohir Rohili, and others. 3) Guru Mughni Kuningan (1860-1935 AD) had two excellent students (*ulama*): Guru Na'im (KH Muhammad Na'im) Cipete and Sheikh Dr. Nahrawi Abdussalam Al-Indunisi. 4) Guru Madjid Pekojan (1887-M) taught two *ulama*, KH Najihun and KH Asirun. 5) Guru Khalid Gondangdia (w. 1946 M), his students were Guru Mujib bin Sa'abah and Mu'allim Thabrani Paseban. 6) Guru Mahmud Romli (died 1959 AD) had two students: Guru Asmat and KH. Fathullah Harun.

At the end of this chapter, a discussion of 14 Betawi academics who did not directly study under any of the six aforementioned *ulama*. According to the author, the *sanad*, or intellectual genealogy, of Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi still requires further tracing, particularly in relation to Sheikh Quro'. Given that Sheikh Quro' was an early 19th-century *ulama* who spread Islam in Betawi, it is plausible that Sheikh Quro' and Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi had an intellectual relationship, either directly as a teacher and student or indirectly.

Meanwhile, Chapter Four discusses the Betawi *ulama* in the *Kepulauan Seribu* (Thousand Islands). *Kepulauan Seribu*, or Thousand Islands, is part of the DKI Jakarta Province. The number of settlements in the Kepulauan Seribu is concentrated on 11 islands, namely, Sebira Island, Harapan Island, Kelapa Island, Kelapa Dua Island, Panggang Island, Pramuka Island, Lancang Island, Pari Island, Tidung Besar Island, Payung Island, and Untung Jawa Island. Among the *ulama* who spread Islam in the *Kepulauan Seribu* (Thousand Islands) were KH. Mursalin bin Nailin (d. 1972) in Pulau Panggang, Pulau Kelapa, Tidung, and other islands. Additionally, there is Habib Ali bin Ahmad bin Zen Al Aidid (d. 1895) in Pulau Panggang, and KH. Abdul Hamid in Pulau Tidung, followed by his two students, H. Jafar Aras and H. Jafar Aep.

In this book, the fifth chapter delves into the lives and contributions of female Betawi *ulama* from the 20th and 21st centuries. Among the notable figures is Nyai Hj. Siti Zubaidah KH. Hasbiyallah was born around 1941 or 1942. She dedicated herself to teaching at 22 female Majelis Taklim each month, with her influence spreading across various areas, including Klender, Tanah Koja, Bulak Village, Sumur Village, Rawa Badung, Jati Village, Cipinang, and Pulo Kambing. In addition to her extensive teaching, she was a permanent instructor at the female Majelis Taklim in Jatinegara Village, Cakung District, East Jakarta. Her commitment extended to managing the Putri Al-Banatul Wathoniyah Islamic Boarding School, a responsibility entrusted to her by her husband. Dr. Hj. Tuti Alawiyah, who lived from 1942 to 2006, was another prominent figure. She was deeply involved in various social organisations, both locally and internationally. Her roles included being a founding member of the As-Syafi'iyah Foundation, Chancellor of the As-Syafi'iyah Islamic University (UIA), and Deputy Chair of the Advisory Council for Muslim Scholars in Indonesia (ICMI). She also served as Deputy Chairperson of GUPPI, a member of CIDES, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Betawi Community Consultative Council (BAMUS BETAWI), and Minister for Women's Role during the New Order era. Dr. Hj. Siti Suryani Taher, born in 1940 and passed in 2015, was an alumna of Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Upon her return, she established the female Majelis Ta'lim Kaum Ibu At-Tahiriyah, holding regular *halaqah* at the Mushalla At Taqwa every Saturday morning. As the number of worshipers grew, the Attaqwa Jami Mosque was built in 1968. The Majelis Ta'lim later expanded into Arabic and Religious Language Courses, which produced many intellectual *mubalighs* (preachers). Hj. Saidah Said, born in 1945, founded the Al-Hikmah Foundation in 1970. The foundation was officially inaugurated in 1972 after receiving the blessing of Betawi scholar KH. Abdullah Syafi'ie. The Al-Hikmah Foundation aimed to develop Islamic symbols, and today, it boasts thousands of members, with 35 Majelis Taklim spread across the Greater Jakarta area.

The final chapter of this book provides a conclusion that does not focus on the specific study conducted. Instead, it explains that this book and its contents are part of a series of Betawi *Ulama* research projects carried out by the Jakarta Islamic Center (JIC) for the preparation of the Betawi *Ulama* Atlas.

There are still many Betawi scholars, especially female scholars, who have not been discussed in this book because the data obtained are still being explored and completed. In its concluding remarks, the book highlights that despite Jakarta's rapid modernisation, its religious atmosphere remains palpable. However, the endurance of this religious character ultimately depends on the ability of the *ulama* to sustain scholarly regeneration and the commitment of the people to continue studying Islam amidst the distractions and challenges of contemporary life.

The author's general analysis of this book highlights several key points. *First*, the book is a historical study utilising a genealogical model, which ideally requires tracing the intellectual connections of every figure discussed. These connections can be direct, such as teacher-student relationships, or indirect, where figures lived during the same period and knew each other. In chapter one, this analysis is less evident, particularly in tracing the intellectual genealogy between Sheikh Quro' and Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi. Both played significant roles in the spread of Islam in Betawi, with Sheikh Quro' as a pioneering scholar in the early 19th century and Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi as a central figure in the scholarly network up to the 21st century. *Second*, when elaborating on the contributions of Betawi female *ulama*, it is insufficient to merely describe their works; it is essential to explore the connections among these female scholars. *Third*, the writing should combine synchronic and diachronic analyses to not only focus on the time period but also thoroughly analyse the events within that specific timeframe.

In conclusion, at least three points should be highlighted: *First*, the Archipelago's contact with the Middle East was extremely strong from the 17th to the 19th centuries. As a result, nearly every location in the Archipelago had scholars who served as intellectual centres for the next generation of the *ulama*. Al-Batawi became the intellectual ancestor of the subsequent generation of Betawi *ulama*. *Second*, this book clearly shows the intellectual genealogy of Betawi academics, such as those who did not study directly under Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi but whose scholarly pedigree is connected to six critical scholars who are Sheikh Junaid Al-Batawi's disciples. *Third*, consider the genealogy and contributions of female *ulama*, particularly in areas that are infrequently written or researched. *Ulama* are not exclusively male, making this book significant as it not only presents male *ulama* but also explores the genealogy and achievements of Betawi female *ulama*. *Fourth*, the study in this book is comprehensive because it presents the intellectual genealogy of Betawi *ulama* from the classical era, including figures like Sheikh Quro' and several other scholars. While the main focus is on scholars from the 19th to 21st centuries AD, further research is needed, particularly on the relationship between Sheikh Quro' and Sheikh Junaid Al-Betawi, as well as the connections among female scholars in Betawi.

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