

## SARASWATI AUTOBIOGRAPHY

My name is Haruming Sekar Saraswati, and you can call me Saras. I originally come from Jogjakarta, a classical Javanese city. My childhood was spent in Jogja, Klaten, Manado, and later in Surabaya and Jakarta. Since I was 13 years old, my siblings and I have been living away from our parents who often moved from one city to another, due to their jobs. So far I have enjoyed living in Jakarta, but I always call Jogja my home.

I work as a lecturer in Trisakti University Jakarta. I got my undergraduate degree from Gadjah Mada University as *Sarjana Ilmu Politik* / B.A. in International Relations. I also graduated as *Sarjana Ekonomi* / Bachelor of Commerce from the Faculty of Economics, Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII), International Program, where I studied economics and management, including Islamic Economics. I got a scholarship from the Exxon Mobil Oil Scholarship for my undergraduate studies.

After working for a few years, I continued to study in Magister Manajemen, Gadjah Mada University, with a scholarship from Bank Mandiri. I got the opportunity to study at the International University of Japan, Niigata, in a student exchange program in 2004.

My fields of work are economics, management, and international relations. I participated in the Islamic Banking and Education Colloquium 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 2005 I entered some marketing competitions. I won the Nokia Marketing Award 2005 and the Cerebrovit Marketing Innovation Award 2005 for my marketing concepts.

I like travelling, reading books, some sports, and writing. I have written articles for some mass media, such as *'Exploring Women's Political Characteristics'* in the Bernas Daily News, *'Learning from Japanese Style'* in Spice Magazines, *'Hirokami Harvesting'* in IUJ Bulletin Japan, and some others.

Learning languages is my other passion. Besides bahasa Indonesia and Javanese as my native languages, I speak English and a little Japanese. I have learned French and German, and I love to discover how some languages are similar to one another. Now I am trying to learn Dutch, since I want to know more about the people and the culture in Netherlands.

Since I was a bachelor student, I have worked for various NGOs. In 1999-2000 I worked for Lentera PKBI, an NGO in HIV/AIDS prevention. I then joined the committee for the ASEAN Tourism Forum in 2001-2002. Then I worked for Lappera Indonesia in 2002-2003, an NGO in rural development. I visited many villages in Yogyakarta to conduct some research. I continued to work for the R&D Department in the Faculty of Economics, Gadjah Mada University. Having graduated from Magister, I started to work as a lecturer in Trisakti University Jakarta. I enjoy teaching, because I can share my knowledge with many people, and learn from them at the same time. My previous jobs brought me to poor villages in remote areas such as in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, and others. I saw many children have to walk miles just to get to their school. That made me realize that education is very important, and that teaching is a noble job.

I was in the beginning of pursuing my MA in Islamic Philosophy from the Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS) Jakarta, but I had to postpone it as I got the opportunity to study Islamic Studies in Universiteit Leiden, and here I am now in the

Netherlands. It is a great opportunity for me to study in Universiteit Leiden, where I can study in an international atmosphere and get advanced knowledge from prominent lecturers. I believe this will enrich my knowledge and experience in the future.

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