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Indonesian Islam during the Reign of Colonialism (1600-1942): An Historical Account of Challenges and Responses towards the Dutch Policies

Islam Indonesia di Zaman Penjajahan (1600-1942): Cabaran dan Tindak Balas terhadap Dasar Belanda

Nadzrah Ahmad*

Abstract

Indonesian Islam was marked by a long history of struggles between the three centuries Colonialization power and the responses of the Muslims to emerge above the socio-political challenges towards reclaiming their identity. During the three hundred years of its ruling, the Dutch attempted its best to gain not only political power over the economic produce of the country but also to win supports and admiration by the public. Along these attempts the Colonial power implemented strategies by means of culture and the *adatlaw* and other forms of national policies in order to tone down the newly found voice of Reformism reverberated by the Middle Eastern prominent *mufassir* Muhammad Abduh. Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama became the platforms between Traditionalists and Modernists Islam of Indonesia. This paper attempts to assess the extent of Colonial involvement in giving the Indonesian Islam its identity together with responses exhibited by the Muslims towards the these challenges. Historical accounts of Islam in Indonesia shall be examined from year 1600 until 1942.

Keywords: Indonesian Islam, Dutch Colonial Policies, Muslim Responses, Modernist Movement, Traditionalists.

Abstrak

Islam Indonesia melalui sejarah perjuangan yang panjang selama tiga abad penjajahan Belanda ke atas Indonesia serta respon umat Islam ke atas cabaran sosiopolitik bagi mengekalkan identiti mereka. Sepanjang tiga ratus tahun pemerintahannya, Belanda berusaha sebaik mungkin untuk mendapatkan bukan sahaja kuasa politik ke atas hasil ekonomi negara tetapi juga untuk memenangi sokongan masyarakat Indonesia. Sepanjang usaha ini, kuasa Kolonial Belanda melaksanakan strategi kebudayaan dan undang-undang adat sebagai suatu bentuk dasar kebangsaan bagi menundukkan

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^{*} Assistant Professor, Department of Quran and Sunnah Studies, Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Email: anadzrah@iium.edu.my.

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pengaruh Reformisme yang diketengahkan oleh pentafsir Timur Tengah terkemuka Muhammad Abduh. Muhammadiyah dan Nahdatul Ulama menjadi platform perbalahan antara Tradisionalis dan Modernis Islam di Indonesia. Artikel ini cuba menilai sejauh mana penglibatan Belanda dalam mencorak identiti Islam di Indonesia juga meninjau respon yang dipamerkan oleh umat Islam terhadap cabaran-cabaran ini. Data-data sejarah Islam di Indonesia akan diperiksa dari tahun 1600 hingga 1942.

Kata Kunci: Islam Indonesia, Polisi/Dasar Penjajahan Belanda, Tindak balas Muslim, Modernis/Reformis, Tradisionalis.

Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelagic country consisting of more than 13,600 islands. Situated in the south Eastern of Asia, the extend in which the islands of Indonesia spread was bound by the Indian Sea, Straits of Malacca, South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Widely scattered that means of traverse mainly via the waterways; seas and rivers. It is through the same route that religions, languages, ideologies, and genes moved and spread. Located on the Sunda Shelf, the major parts of the islands – Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan – were believed to be connected to the mainland Asia and this includes the Malay Peninsula.¹

Ethnographically, the people of Indonesia were believed to be a product of mixed inter-racial blend of Melanesian and Austronesian. Melanesian-speaking people are mainly found in Papua while the Austronesian-speaking people were believed to have travelled from the south of china. These people were the first to have inhibited the islands of Indonesia. Later through the history, the spread of religions, and the rise of agriculture and trades contributed to mixture of multi-racial and cultural interactions which, resulting in the today's Indonesian people.²

The history of Indonesia entails an extremely lengthy eras and centuries. The Current Era of 1-1500 CE witnessed the rise of states predominated by the Hinduism-Buddhism religious strata. Srivijaya and Mataram were prominent rulers of the period.³ The Age of Commerce took place from 1400 to 1700 CE witnessed the arrival of traders from Westbound and Northbound. It was during this era that Islam was believed to have hit the islands through Muslim traders – although there were opinions saying that it was earlier than 1400 CE –. It was also during this era that the Europeans found their way to the archipelago with

¹ Colin Brown, A Short History of Indonesia the Unlikely Nation (Crows Nest, 2003), 5–9.

² Ibid. 9–10.

³ Ibid, 29–48.

intentions to monopolize the spice trade and then later in history, the spread of Christianity. Later in the history of Indonesia, the activities were marked by colonial intrusions over the country, which prolonged for more than three centuries.

The Coming of Islam

Islam came to the islands of Indonesia through the trade networks. There was no evidence to prove the exact time of arrival of Islam to the archipelago. The first hard evidence was a gravestone marking the burial of a Muslim in East Java with no adequate information as whether the person buried there was an Indonesian Muslim or a foreigner. However, a Venetian traveller Marco Polo mentions Muslims in Perlak. While, in the neighbouring Pasai, a royal gravestone inscribed in Arabic dated 1297 CE belongs to a royal Muslim with the title of Sultan Malik al-Salih was found. A Moroccan traveller, Ibn Batuta also mentions Muslim when visiting Samudra-Pasai in 1345 while on his way from Bengal to China.⁴

Arguments regarding the issue of how did Islam came to the archipelago also varied. Nevertheless, one thing, which was definite, was Islam came to this area through the channel of trade.⁵ Perhaps the idea of Arab merchants came to the islands and spread along their faith was the most reliable explanation. This notion was supported by Azra looking to the facts and probabilities of trade flow in the area.⁶

The initial spread of Islam, took up a slow pace and in most cases, the existence of Muslims were apparent in central areas where trades took place. The same pattern also could be seen in the coastal area as compared to the inlands where Muslims were rare to be found. The population of the Muslims grew throughout the centuries and Islamic Sufism gained the utmost interest and perhaps one of the reasons for this religion to win the interest of the indigenous whom were by far associated to the animistic belief. Today Indonesia is one of the highest populated countries with Muslims covering ninety percent of the entire population.⁷

⁴ B. Andaya and Y. Ishii, "Religious Developments in Southeast Asia c. 1500–1800," in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, N. Tarling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 513, https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/CHOL9780521355056.011.

⁵ Brown, *A Short History of Indonesia the Unlikely Nation*, 31. ⁶ The point has been discussed and elaborated in Chapter One.

⁷ Vincent J. H. Houben, "Southeast Asia and Islam," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588, no. 1 (2003): 152.

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Indonesia and the Colonialism

The history of arrival of the colonial powers in Indonesia was marked by the coming of the first Europeans to the archipelago in search for the monopoly of the spice trade. Although these Europeans were not in advance in terms of technological equipment as compared to the Muslims whom at that time monopolized the spice trade in Asia, they possessed extraordinary courage and will pushed by need to control and monopolize the trade of spice from the East. These European powers were the Portuguese, Dutch and English. The interaction between Islam and the colonial ruling was marked by segments of interactions between the Dutch and the locals of Indonesia. Worth noted here that the discussion on these interactions between the Muslims of Indonesia and the Colonial power is limited to the Dutch only; thereby, leaving behind the Portuguese and the English. The significance of the scope is apparently due to duration and depth of intervention by the Colonial power over the region. The Dutch has indeed established themselves in Indonesia way too long compared to the other two; the Portuguese and the English.

The Dutch

Like the Portuguese, the Dutch came to the East Indies with similar intention of gaining monopoly over the spice trade. Their expedition to discover the Portuguese's East Indies at that time was triggered by a war, which cut out the supply of spice to the Dutch.⁸ It is worth noted that during this time, when the Dutch traders first arrive in the East Indies in 1596, they exercised hardly any military or political influence in the region. In fact their visit during this time was merely exploratory in nature and this could be seen from the main figure who were on board the first ship sent by the *Compagnie van Verre* departed for the East Indies in 1595 and returned after two year with an opened prospects of profit.⁹

In 1602, the competing companies of the Dutch merged to form the United East India Company or the VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*).¹⁰ Since then, the VOC placed itself in the East Indies to fit in their purpose of monopolizing the spice trade and later to gain power and control over the locals who were mainly Muslims in religion. Manifestation of the VOC in the East Indies or Indonesia lasted for another

⁸ Houben, 26.

⁹ Karel Andrian Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V, 1993), 11.

¹⁰ Merle Calvin Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300* (Basingstoke: The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1993), 27.

three centuries. Changes of reaction and treatment of the Dutch towards the locals; or the Muslims precisely, was marked by an indeed lengthy historical struggles, fights and at times, acceptance from both parties.

Dutch Policies with Regard to the Muslims

The Dutch government finds it necessary to have control over the people of the islands in order to achieve monopoly over the spice produce of the region.¹¹ The intensity of such needs was apparent in the policies administered by the colonial government over the people for a period of centuries. These policies were set out with an aim not only to establish power over the regions of the Islands but also to prove in command of the people who were by majority Muslims in belief. In doing so, vital facts, which must be thoroughly considered, were the Muslims, their Islamic customs and laws.

Het Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken

Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken¹² was authorized to provide advice to government on the issue concerning the natives. It has stood since 1899 although at that time the advisor was only supported by some people and the office was not officially established yet. The year of 1899 was the watershed of the commencement of a policy which ensures the moral interests of Indonesia. The '*Etische Politiek*' or 'Ethical Policy' was introduced by Queen Wilhelmina in 1901 stated that the Dutch carries a moral responsibility towards the people of Indonesia. Thus, balance out the economic interests carried out by them for over centuries. Establishment of Kantoor voor Inlansche Zaken was then part of the ethical obligation of the Dutch towards the Indonesians particularly the Muslims.¹³

The main job scope for the *Kantoor* was to administer indigenous issues and run investigation on Islam. Although it came under the De-

¹¹ Muslims of Indonesia and of many other regions prefer dealing with fellow Muslims especially in business and trades. For this reason, the Dutch finds it rather intrigued to the fact that Muslims of Indonesia sells their produce to other than the Dutch. Such phenomenon caused them great loss in spice trade as they wouldn't be able to monopolize the whole produce of the region. See Colin Brown, *A Short History of Indonesia the Unlikely Nation*, 31.

¹² Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken was not a policy but an office which implements policies of the Dutch government with regard to the indigenous and Arabs; hereby notably the Muslims.

¹³ Suminto Husnul Aqib, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda. Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Penerangan Ekonomi Dan Sosial*, 1985, 99–100.

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partment of Education, Religion and Industry, the operation of the *Kan-toor* was under the surveillance of the Governor General thus making it and independent body. It manages all religious affairs – other than Christianity – in relation with the indigenous and the Arabs.¹⁴

In conclusion, the *Kantoor* serves as the nucleus of the Dutch administration in Indonesia. It assists the government in determining its wisdom of polity.¹⁵ Intellectuals – hereby advisors, which will be discuss soon – work for this *Kantoor* ensure the effectiveness of the government's policies dealing with the indigenous and the Muslims in particular. Movements of the locals and their meetings are observed closely and their language, culture, belief, and history are being examined and studied in order to comprehend the nature of the subject, thus assisting in administration of power and control.

The Adviseur

Part of the attempts of the Dutch dealing with the Muslim locals was the appointment of Honorary Advisors for Native Affairs (*Adviseur voor Inlandsche zaken*). In between 1850-1940, eight advisors had exercised great influence on the Dutch's policy towards Islam. They were Karel Frederick Holle, Dr. Christian Snouck Hurgronje, Godard Arend Hazeu, Dr. D.A. Rinkes, R.A. Kern, E. Gobee, Dr. G.F. Pijper and Dr. Hoesein Djajaningrat. Among them, Snouck Hurgronje could be considered as the most successful figure dealing with issues concerning the Muslims.

Christian Snouck Hurgronje

Snouck Hurgronje was born in 1857 and at the age of eighteen, he became a student of Faculty of Literature at the University of Leiden. There, he studied the Arabic language and literature and as for the continuation of a study, he visited Arabia. By adapting to the custom of Islam, he managed to stay in Mecca for six months.¹⁶ He then returned to Leiden to teach before decided to take relief from teaching task and suggested to the Governor General for himself to be deported to the East Indies to study the religious movements there.

¹⁴ Ibid, 107–9.

¹⁵ Ibid, 110.

¹⁶ Steenbrink, Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950, 88; Suminto Husnul Aqib, Politik Islam Hindia Belanda. Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Penerangan Ekonomi Dan Sosial, 115–16.

In 1889, he arrived in Batavia was granted a permanent position in the government. In 1891, he was appointed as Advisor for Eastern Languages and Islamic Law and eight years after as Advisor for the Indigenous and Arabs, which held by him until 1906.¹⁷ Throughout his service with the Dutch East Indies, Hurgronje placed the base for Islamic polity of the government and held a great influence over the colonial authority.¹⁸

As an advisor to the colonial government, Hurgronje eliminated the long lasted fear of the Dutch towards Islam. He stressed on the idea that Islam is free from the *clerical* layer. He also indicated that the Turks Caliphate in Turkey remains only as a symbol of Islamic unity to the helpless Muslims. He found Pan Islamism as a vague ideology and a great threat to the colonial government. He stressed the notion that *ulama* are not priory fanatics and *Penghulu* is a subordinate to the indigenous authority, not its superior. Independent *ulama* are not a conspiracy but merely desire for *ibadah* and going for Hajj in Mecca indicates neither fanaticism nor hostility.¹⁹

Although his understanding of Islam was explicit, Hurgronje stressed the idea that Islam should not be considered as trivial.²⁰ Islam in Indonesia is flourishing and expanding and wisdom of the colonial government determines much of its direction. Hurgronje believed in leniency when dealing with Islam and the Muslims. According to him, Islam under attack and oppression provokes fellow believers and aggravate them to stand against the attacker to defeat. On contrary, he believed that like many other religion, Islam in Indonesia would disappear gradually in time as faith of the Muslims would also weakened and diminished by it-self.²¹ Evidently, Snouck Hurgronje has unravelled a clear understanding

¹⁷ Suminto, 119.

¹⁸ Ibid, 114.

¹⁹ Ibid, 11; Harry J. Benda, "Christian Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundation of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia," in *The Journal of Modern History* (The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 338–42.

²⁰ Benda, "Christian Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundation of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia," 341. Here, Benda referred to Hurgronje's repudiation to his compatriots whom had hoped for a large-scale conversion of Indonesians to Christianity. According to Hurgronje, although the faith of peasantry seems very mixed up with "impurities", they still consider themselves to be good and devout Muslims. Therefore, the idea of large-scale conversion is yet to meet disappointment.

²¹ Ibid. Here, Hurgronje was referring to the Javanese *abangan* whom are mainly Muslims by faith but do not practice Islamic rituals. He argued the fact that these *abangan* in the end would leave their belief. This is a natural case of negligence in faith

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of Islam and the Muslims which has been the fear of the Colonial power over the centuries.

The Adatlaw

The idea of cultivation and preservation of the *adatlaw* founded by Hurgronje and considered an outstanding finding and the proudest achievement of Dutch oriental scholarship.²² The basis of this policy is to encourage the Indonesians – the Muslims in particular – to give emphasis on cultural or *adat* activities hence support the "*kepala adat*" (indigenous *adat* leader) and promote the regional spirit. By so, Indonesian Muslims who occupied themselves with the *adat* would become astray from their religion.²³

By promoting the *adatlaw* among Indonesian Muslims, Hurgronje deemed for Islam to become a religion merely limited to the mosque activities, thus, excluding all other components of life. He also propagated the idea of social association at community level with manifestation of cultivation the *adatlaw*²⁴. The emphasis of *adat* implies distance on a Muslim from his religion thus, creating a social as well as psychological barrier between a Muslim and Islam. This, in Hurgronje's opinion, hinders Islam from gaining power in the East Indies and implementation of Dutch laws and exercise of its sovereignty would be then without opposition.

"Islamic Politics"

During his years as the *Adviseur voor Inlandsche zaken*, Hurgronje implements several policies, which initiate the founding of "Islamic Politics"²⁵ in Indonesia. With this policy, he suggested thorough separation between Islamic rituals and Islamic politics. According to him, Islam as a practice in rituals and customs is harmless compared to

²³ Suminto, 24.

and would be the case for many other Indonesian Muslims. Rather, provoked Muslims, would rise in counter attack to protect their belief, which also a natural phenomenon to a group under threat.

²² Benda, The Crescent and the Rising Sun, 44.

²⁴ Ibid. Harry Jindrich Benda, "The Crescent and the Rising Sun", A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies at Cornell University for fulfilment of Doctorate Degree, 1955, 8.

²⁵ S.C. Hurgronje was the architect of Islamic Politics in the Netherland East Indies. He was the founder of the policy, which regulated issues and matters related to the Muslims polity in Indonesia. See Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950*, 88.

Islam as a political system. Here, the policy in concern proved secular in notion. Hurgronje emphasizes that Islam is not a colonial enemy but Islam as a political doctrine is a dangerous threat to the government. In his "Islamic Politics", he underlines the insights of separation between Islam and its political feature.²⁶ The "Islamic Politics" asserts that where the rituals and the pure religious dogma are concerned, the colonial government is to stand as neutral towards the issues. None of Pan Islamism deserves toleration from the European power.²⁷

With this policy in hand, the Christian Dutch government is able to curb the uprising of antagonism among the Muslims of Indonesia. However, the successfulness of the policy is a long debated issue²⁸, the impact it created determines the pattern of education and social makeup of later Indonesia.

The Association Policy

The association programme intended to strengthen ties between the colonies and the motherland in North Europe by the means of culture in which the field of education became the main platform.²⁹ The targeted population was the nobles. This group was expected to become the "heir" to the association pattern hence, a partner to the Dutch government in social and cultural life. According to Snouck Hurgronje, a cultured native was relatively far from the influence of Islam and the Western influence they carry will facilitate their union with the European government. He also believes that Islam in Indonesia will have the final defeat through the association of its adherents into the Dutch culture.³⁰

By associating Indonesians, Hurgronje hoped to produce a community in which mentally and psychologically so well adapted to the European culture that disagreement in any related area could be easily dismissed. In this regard, the nobles are the subject of association programme. The reason is clear. At social strata, this group proven to be influential over the lower groups of their fellow Indonesians particularly the peasantry. In the future, this is hoped to bear a positive outcome in winning Indonesians interest onto Dutch propaganda. The main aim of

²⁶ Suminto, 12.

²⁷ Ibid, 13.

²⁸ Steenbrink, Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950, 91.

²⁹ Suminto, 40.

³⁰ Ibid, 43; Benda, "Christian Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundation of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia," 244–46.

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the association therefore bears an entity of defeating Islam through social encounters thus subverting the colonial enemy.

The existence of Islam under the colonial power always perceived as having another state in the existing one (staat in den staat) due to the ability of Islam to provide guidance in all dimensions of life. However, Hurgronie believes that Islam would meet its final defeat in the end through association - in cultivation of *adat* and also in education - of its fellow believers into Dutch culture with the assistance of Christianization. Nevertheless, the fact that the Dutch failed to see was the possibility of Islam to absorb external drive in order to elevate itself to suit modernity and changes. Association in education involves sending few Indonesians student to the Netherlands in order to further studies at the Leiden University. Although, the very idea of sending the locals abroad was doubted by not only the Dutch but also the Indonesians alike, the feat of Hoesein Djajadiningrat to obtain Doctorate Degree from the Leiden, proved that an indigenous is capable of such achievement. Later, the idea to educate indigenous cadres was officially legalized hence funded by the Dutch government until 1931.³¹

Nevertheless, the educational system introduced by the Dutch to the Indonesian received opposition in later years especially during the economic crisis. Thus, the favor given by the locals was lost to the struggle of preserving indigenous culture as well as reducing Western influence in education. In this regard, Indonesians were looking for an education without abandoning Indonesian spirit. This was clear in the Educational Congress of 1930 organized by Budi Utomo in Solo, rejecting the idea of the colonial government to revise the former educational system. Apparently, Indonesians are looking for a system adequate for a both modern and spiritual life. This is obvious in the founding of Muhammadiyah schools, which later flourish rapidly all around the country. Muhammadiyah introduced a school system, which caters the need of Indonesia. It balances between the Western system and matched with the need of both Indonesia and Islam. Even with such effort in education, majority of Indonesian were still neglected of education and this was the result of policy for maintaining colonial power ran by the Dutch over Indonesians for a very long period.³²

³¹ Suminto, 42–50.

 $^{^{32}}$ Ibid, 46–49. The Dutch believe in exercising limitation over Indonesian education in order to ensure the long-lastingness of colonial entity in Indonesia. Apparently, education for the locals could be set as a dangerous threat to the Dutch which might in the end overthrow them from the islands.

In exercising its educational policy over Indonesians and hereby, particularly the Muslims, the colonial government underlined few guidelines meant to control and indirectly repress the flow of Islamic education and its teachers. These guidelines involve the following; *Educational Policy and Islam'*, *Teachers Ordinance* and *Wild School Ordinance*.³³

The **Hajj**

Hajj or Pilgrimage to Mecca is one of pillars of Islam. Therefore, Muslims around the world including from Indonesia leave their country since hundreds of years ago to perform this religious duty. Considering the Malay Archipelago, Indonesians were among the majority³⁴ whom found in the Holy City for the *hajj* and at many times as $muq\bar{i}m\bar{i}n$ (residents) there.³⁵

During their stay in the Holy City, the Indonesians took opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Islam. Here, their sentiments of culture and Sufism, – due to the *tariqat* movement – which mixed up with their understanding of Islam were eliminated and replaced with pure Islamic concept of belief and practice. Further, the ideology of reformism in Egypt spread to the Arabia and the dynamism of the movement affected all including Indonesians alike. To the Dutch, this ideology carried by the *Hajis* returning home from Mecca, was the impetus of opposition and commotions in certain areas.³⁶

Consequently, the *hajis* were perceived as rebellious fanatics by the Dutch government to some extent the journey for pilgrimage was banned by the authority in 1908.³⁷ However, the embargo only managed to run for a very short period. Snouck Hurgronje who found this idea to be inefficient in warding off the Pan Islamism – brought by those returning from Mecca –, suggested lenient and reverse measures of dictation over the *hajj* and the *hajis*. He believed that association of culture and education would keep the interest of Indonesian Muslims on *hajj* at bay.³⁸

³³ Suminto, 49–63.

³⁴ Karel Andrian Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek Tentang Islam Di Indonesia Abad Ke-19* (Jakarta: P.T. Bulan Bintang, 1984), 249–53.

³⁵ Suminto, 93.

³⁶ Ibid, 94.

³⁷ Ibid, 24.

³⁸ Ibid, 96.

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The Indonesian Reactions

Dutch in Indonesia have had numerous encounters in their attempt to gain control and sovereignty over the islands. Nevertheless, the people of Indonesia never failed to react to the governmental policies which to an obvious extent attempting to minimize the Muslims upsurge and revival. Therefore, history of Indonesia was marked with many of its people's struggles and clashes against the colonial government as a response to the treatment given. Few examples from such account; The Diponegoro War, The Acheh War, The Padri War, establishment of Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah and so on.

The Padri War

The Padri movement was a movement lead by three *hajis* from Minangkabau in 1803. They were Haji Miskin from Pandaisikat Luhak Agam, Haji Sumanik from Luhak Tanah Datar, and Haji Piobang from Luhak Limapuluh.³⁹ The three who had stayed in Mecca for some time, came back with the idea of Wahhabism and began to teach and impart the ideology and caused clashes and conflicts with the *adat* supporters who claimed for balance between religion and Islam.⁴⁰ As a result, the Padri War broke.

The initial aim of the Padri movement embedded in the social declination faced by the people of Minangkabau. The movement opposed to the social decadence at community level.⁴¹ Azra added to the motive of the war by stating that the main purpose of the Padri movement was to clean the society from the ignorant practices such as cockfights, the use of opium, drinking wine mixed with buffalo blood, stone war between the tribes, aspects of matriarchal customary law as well as the generally lack of observance of the formal ritual obligations of Islam.⁴²

The movement gained fame and support from Minangkabau *ula-ma* due to its manifestation of "soul purification" realized in actions and behaviours. Therefore, they demanded for the *sharī* 'ah to be superior to

³⁹ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Reformis Dinamika Intelektual Dan Gerakan* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 1999), 185.

⁴⁰ Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra* (New York: Cornell University, 1971), 5.

⁴¹ Bertram Johannes Otto Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies: Selected Works of B.J.O. Schrieke* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1955) 150. See also Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300*, p.141.

⁴² Azra, Islam Reformis Dinamika Intelektual Dan Gerakan, 186; Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 141.

all other rulings. The movement also condemned traditional religious practices which had mixed up with *bid ah* and against the *sharī ah*. They also combated social institutions protected by the *adat*. These attempts by the Padri created conflict within the harmonization of the Minangkabau world. Later, the conflict intensified and a war erupted.⁴³

In 1821 and lasted until 1837, witnessed the intervention of the Dutch – whom always had economic and political interest⁴⁴ over Minangkabau – in the Padri War. This accelerated the accommodation – of religion and *adat* – between two combating sides. Moreover, declination of the Wahhabist movement in the Arabia caused a setback to the Padri movement in Minangkabau.⁴⁵ When the war ended in 1837, it was clear that the movement had not substantially changed Minangkabau political and social structure. However, it had strengthened the force of Islam and enlarged its scope within the social system thus, religion became the superior of *adat*, and with the intervention of the Dutch, a governor was placed in a supra superior position.⁴⁶

The Dutch also introduced an Elementary School for the indigenous in 1840s and later a Teacher Training School (Kweekschool) in 1855 which accommodate only children from noble family. Parent were given no choice but to send their children to study in Mecca. This phenomenon led to another Islamic revolution in the future of Minangkabau and then West Sumatra.⁴⁷

Sarekat Islam

In 1909, Raden Mas Tirtoadisurrjo⁴⁸ founded Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah in Batavia and later in 1910, in Bogor.⁴⁹ The designation was to

⁴³ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 141.

⁴⁴ Minangkabau during this time was an active commerce centre with most dealing done with Americans and British, See Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300*, 140-141.

⁴⁵ Azra, Islam Reformis Dinamika Intelektual Dan Gerakan, 187.

⁴⁶ Taufik Abdullah, Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra,
6.

⁴⁷ Azra, Islam Reformis Dinamika Intelektual Dan Gerakan, 188–89.

⁴⁸ Tirtoadisurjo was one of few well-educated Indonesians at that time. He was a graduate of Dutch administrator's school OSVIA. He left government service and became a journalist. Source: Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300*, 166. Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 103.

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support Indonesian traders due to "the rising competition in *batik* trade and attitude of superiority towards the Indonesians on the part of the Chinese following the success of the Chinese revolution in 1911, and the suppression suffered by these Indonesians from the nobility of Solo."⁵⁰ On 11 November 1911, the name Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah was changed to Sarekat Islam (SI) under the lead of Omar Sayed Tjokroaminoto, who joined in at Surabaya in May 1912.⁵¹ SI was considered an Islamic elite movement and as "the first prominent political spokesmen influenced by Islamic modernism and reformism in Indonesia."⁵²

In 1919, the membership of Sarekat Islam nearly reached 2 million.⁵³ This might be due to its objective towards a harmonious Indonesia. They also proclaimed loyalty⁵⁴ to the Dutch government and in return, the Governor-General Idenburg favoured them and granted the Sarekat Islam a legal recognition.⁵⁵ The organization faced breakage of its members as PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia), the Indonesian Communist Party win over many of its supporters and in 1923, the Sarekat Islam changed its name into Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia with little hope for a recurred zenith.⁵⁶

Kaum Muda and Pan Islamism

Kaum Muda was a movement inspired by the idea of modern Islamic reformist movement. The idea founded and extended to the Muslims around the world, gained its enigmatic force through lectures and writings of prominent Egyptian scholars; Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and his student Muhammad Rashid Rida. The move-

⁴⁹ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300*, 166; Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 102.

⁵⁰ Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942*, 102.

⁵¹ Noer, 104; Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 166.

⁵² In this regard Benda asserts "..in spite of the new movement's name even, it would be misleading to assign the Sarekat Islam a primarily Islamic significance. Umar Sayed Tjokroaminoto, Haji Agus Salim and the movement's other leaders belong more correctly to the political elite of the nascent Indonesian independence movement, than to the leaders of the Islamic renaissance proper." Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 14.

⁵³ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 166.

⁵⁴ Ricklefs, 166; Brown, A Short History of Indonesia the Unlikely Nation, 120.

⁵⁵ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 167.

⁵⁶ Brown, A Short History of Indonesia the Unlikely Nation, 122.

ment, which came to be known Modernism centred in Cairo, Egypt.⁵⁷ It proposed that Islam should be understood and practiced through its original sources – those are the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) – and by so, no other sources of belief or practices should be regarded as authoritative by the Muslims. In this regard, the Modernist intended to break free of the domination of the four *madhāhib* (mediaeval schools of law) to return to only the Quran and Sunnah.⁵⁸

The modernists stated that the door for *ijtihād* is still open and *taqlīd* is not permissible. Therefore, the Muslims should be learned and able to comprehend the knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah. According to them, Islam must be purified from any form of illegal innovations (*bid ah*), which had crept into it over the centuries.⁵⁹

The Modernists in Indonesia found their initial movement through the *ulamā* of Minangkabau. Three prominent figures played important role purifying Islam from the long infested *bid ah* in practice and misleading ideas and belief due to *taqlīd*. By mid 1910s, the students of Syeikh Ahmad Khatib in Mecca; Syeikh Muhammad Jamil Lambek from Bukittinggi, Haji Abdullah Ahmad from Padang Panjang, Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) from Maninjau and Syeikh Muhammad Taib Umar from Batu Sangkar returned from *Hajj* to propagate the idea of orthodox reform in their home district.⁶⁰ Among them, Haji Rasul was known to be the most argumentative and always to lead debates between them and the traditionalists.⁶¹

The first problem faced by these young $ulam\bar{a}$ – as most of them aged around 30s – was *Tariqat Naqshabandiyyah*, which has reached its utmost popularity in Minangkabau. As for Haji Rasul, his return to Indonesia from Mecca was met with an initial but temporary silence. This is due to his reluctance to correct his most honoured father who was a famous and prominent *tariqat guru* (teacher). However, when a gathering of *ulamā* was held in Kampung Pondok Padang, a debate took place between the old and young generation *ulamā*. The old represented the *tariqat* were mainly teachers of the *tariqat* and very lack of argument especially when the original sources was highlighted. While, the young

⁵⁷ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 213.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 213.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 213.

⁶⁰ Taufik Abdullah, Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra, 13.

⁶¹ Hamka, Ayahku Riwayat Hidup Dr. Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah Dan Perjuangan Kaum Agama Di Sumatra (Jakarta: Umminda, 1082), 75–92.

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represented the reformist ideas of returning back to the sources directly from the Quran and Sunnah. It was during the debate that the term 'Kaum Muda' and 'Kaum Tua' was coined referring to the old traditionalists and the young reformists.⁶²

When the Dutch policies were in concerned, the cultivation of the *Adatlaw*became a major clash with the reformists. The Modernists in this regard saw the *adat* as being the manifestation of *bid* '*ah*. Therefore, they rejected the entire idea of the *Adatlaw*. In Minangkabau especially, where the *Adatlaw*played a major role in the political and social strata of the Minang people, the reformists viewed the law of inheritance and marriage to irrelevant to the Quran and Sunnah. They rejected the practice and many other practices, which base could not be traced in the two Islamic original sources. When the reform idea spread throughout the islands of Indonesia, similar approach was undertaken and this proven a major clash with the *adat* people (i.e. *Penghulu, Tuanku Laras*) and the Dutch government.

Muhammadiyah

Muhammadiyah was the most significant and successful reformist organization of Indonesia. It was established in Yogyakarta by Kiyai Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923) in 1912. In 1890, he went to Mecca and became a student of Syeikh Ahmad Khatib⁶³ and others. Upon returning home, he was determined to reform Islam and resist Christianization by the Western missionaries. The association itself aimed at reforming Islamic teaching and resisting the advance of Christianity as well as superstitious beliefs among the locals. In 1917, a women section called Aisyi-yah was also established to assist in modernization of Indonesian women.⁶⁴

In the Javanese area, Muhammadiyah grew slowly due to opposition by the Javanese whom mostly against the idea of Islamic reform.

⁶² Hamka, 75–92.

⁶³ Ahmad Khatib was a forerunner of the reformists in the Minangkabau area who spread his ideas from Mecca. Born in 1855 from a family with both religious and *adat* background, he went to Mecca in 1876 and achieved the highest-ranking position as Imam for the *mazhab* Shāfi'ī in Masjid al-Haram. Ahmad Khatib was known for his opposition against the Tariqat Naqsyabandiyah as well as *adat* regulations of inheritance. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942*, 31-33. James L. Peacock, *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadijah Movement in Indonesian Islam* (California: The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, 1978) 29.

⁶⁴ Harry Jindrich Benda, "The Crescent and the Rising Sun" (Cornell University, 1955), 21; Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300*, 171.

This was due to orthodox practice of Islam, which was the case of most Javanese. Muhammadiyah in this regard was "against sterile orthodoxy no less than against impurities and the clusters of mysticism surrounding much of the age-old Muslim practices in Indonesia."⁶⁵ The fact that the organization was packed with a sense of dynamism in reform – by applying revived methods of propagation – and Islamic modernism, still it did not find much followers among the Javanese.

However, when it was introduced into the dynamic Islamic world of Minangkabau by Haji Rasul in 1925, Muhammadiyah grew rapidly. From previously 4,000 members in Java, the number increased into 24,000 within 5 years of activity in Minangkabau. By 1938, the organization spread throughout the main islands and ran 834 mosques, 31 public libraries, and 1774 schools.⁶⁶

The idea of Islamic reformism, which was evident in Muhammadiyah derived from the ideas of Muhammad Abduh of Egypt. Ahmad Dahlan himself was thought to have come across Abduh's idea prior to the formation of Muhammadiyah. This was apparent in Dahlan's perspective over certain issues pertaining to Muslim life.⁶⁷

Muhammadiyah was indeed a modernist observation of Islam where life was introduced to new paradigm and perspective thus changed the traditional age-old of perceiving matters of daily life. The organization also sought for better opinion and viewpoint regarding Islamic fundamentals of *hukm* (law) and related issues to enable a broader conceivable space for Muslim life.

Nahdatul Ulama

Nahdatul Ulama was founded as a response of the orthodoxy to the idea of reformism by Muhammadiyah, which equated to the Wahhabi fold of Ibn Sa'ud.⁶⁸ In addition to that, they had a low opinion in the leadership of Sarekat Islam; Tjokroaminoto,⁶⁹ and a growing fear that the Shafi'ī School of law in Mecca and Cairo will be ignored as in Indone-

⁶⁵ Benda, "The Crescent and the Rising Sun," 171.

⁶⁶ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, p.171.

⁶⁷ Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942, 76.

⁶⁸ Benda, "The Crescent and the Rising Sun," 22.

⁶⁹ In this regard, Noer asserts "There was besides doubt as to Tjokroaminoto's sincerity in his activities; there had been reports on the mismanagement of Sarekat Islam funds, and his marriage to a former dancer of Solo diminished his prestige as a leader." Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942*, 229.

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sia.⁷⁰ The purpose of Nahdatul Ulama was to act as a counter organization to the Comite Chilafat (Caliphate Committee)⁷¹, which was gradually being dominated by the reformists, and; to appeal to Ibn Sa'ud, the new ruler of Arabia, that traditional religious practices should be continued.⁷²

Therefore, in 1926, the Nahdatul Ulama (the Rise of the Religious Scholars or NU) was founded by Kiyai Haji Hasjim Asjari (1872-1947) who was a head of a Java pesantren (religious schools) at Jombang in East Java and main objective of this organization was to defend the interest of Orthodox Muslims in Indonesia.⁷

Apparently, since the formation of Comite Chilafat, the struggle of NU was mainly towards defending the practices of mazhab Shafi'i from being totally lost to the upsurge of reformist movement and their activities. At one instance, the NU cabled the King Sa'ud a petition for improvement of *hajj* and also for giving freedom of the Shafi'ites to practice their rituals accordingly. In reply, the King accepted this notion stressing the point that the practice of Shafi'ī would be sustained as long as it is in accordance with the fundamentals of Islam.⁷⁴

Apart from preserving the practice of mazhab – hereby Shafi'ī –, NU also founded several schools or pesantrens which carried out curriculum and syllabus compliant to the traditionalists practice of the mazhab Shafi' $\overline{1}$.⁷⁵ NU also was concerned with *fatwa* management derived from the views of four *mazahib* and they adhered to the notion that *taqlīd* was

⁷⁰ Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300, 177.

⁷¹ The Caliphate Committee was formed as a response to a caliphate congress planned by Egypt in order to find solution to the issue of abolishment of the Turkey Caliphate. The committee was established on 4 October 1924 in Surabaya and participated by delegations from Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, and also the Traditionalists. Later, K.H.A. Abdul Wahab and his supporter withdrew from the Comite due to rejection of their proposal to preserve traditional Syafi'i practices in both Mecca and Cairo, the two contested countries for the caliphate seat. This group, later on, called for a meeting of traditionalist ulama from Surabaya, Semarang, Pasuruan, Lasem, and Pati to find the Comite Merembuk Hidjaz (Committee for Consultation about Hijaz Questions) which later on transformed to become the Nahdatul Ulama in Surabaya meeting of 31 January 1926. See Noer. The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942, 222.

⁷² Ibid, 222.

⁷³ Howard M. Federspiel, Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals of the 20th Century (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006) 33. ⁷⁴ Ibid, 225–26.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

compulsory. Other than religious agenda, NU was active with trading bearing in mind that many of its members were traders.⁷⁶

Conclusion

The Dutch policy in Indonesia had – largely – shape the whole feature of the Indonesian society. The Muslims in particular, had transformed into a more dynamic community due to both supervision of the government and conflicts erupted by unwelcomed interventions of the authority.

As the Dutch deemed for full control over the region they had no choice but to deal with problems related to its people. In accomplishing such aim, the Dutch had launched several campaigns and unique treatments were regulated towards the Muslims as means of gaining trust and hence control. Establishment of offices and departments as well as campaigns was part of efforts taken by the Dutch authority. As the policies were aimed at cultivating an identity far from Islamic values among the Indonesians, the appointment of the advisors play vital role at ensuring the successfulness of such aim.

Misconceptions towards the Muslims and their religion at many times led into dramatic reactions from both sides. Through these responses, the purpose of Indonesian Muslims could be clearly understood – to maintain freedom and authority over pure religious belief and practices. The founding of Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyyah and Nahdatul Ulama were among others becoming proofs of the relentless fight of the Indonesian Muslims towards such entity.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 233.

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