

Title : A Brief History of Indonesian Muslims Society (In Addition to Political Perspective)

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A Brief History of Indonesian Muslims Society (In Addition to Political Perspective)

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Abstract

There is sort of theory about the invaded of Islam in Indonesia. The most of theories is depends by the complex phenomena, such as Islam or Muslim does not originate from a place or country, nor is it brought by some group of people and not at the same time. Another thing that influences the diversity of theories is the difference in evidence, elements of interest, religious subjectivity, and historians ideology. Although there are conclusions about the early entry of Islam into Indonesia in 1963, the process of the arrival and development of Islam in Indonesia is a study that is constantly changing. So there is still an opportunity to improve or strengthen the existing theory. These crystallized characteristics of the propagator of Islam made Islam develop effectively. Islam was developed by ulama through three channels, for instance cultural (dakwah, education, art, culture, and marriage), structural (politics and power), economics (trade routes). In means, the process of Islamization in Indonesia was influenced by political forces and the spirit of dakwah. This research was held as normatively and historically research, by trying to combine and dissect the contents of various Islamic history books and Islamic article journals. In this paper, the first discussion is more focused on the beginning of the entry of Islam into Indonesia and the current state of Islam in Indonesia. Then in the second discussion, it is more focused on the response or condition of Islam to politics in Indonesia, especially regarding the western view of Islam and Islamism. After reading this writing, the reader is expected to be able to know in more detail the initial state of Islam in Indonesia and the state of Islam in its politics.

Keywords : *The arrival of Islam in Indonesia, The Islam and Islamism, The politic of Islam*

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A. Introduction

Islam basically is a universal religion then it is called the religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin, even though it was authentically revealed to the community in the Arabian. In the next period, after Islam spread to all corners of the Arabian it then penetrated outside the Arabian peninsula to areas very far from the center of the source of the invaded of Islam, sort of to the Continent of Europe, China, and Southeast Asia. When the spread of Islam enters an area, sometimes the kind of local elements color the values in Islam. The relationship between the two can be dualistic, making it difficult to concentrate. This is of course especially when local containing contradictory traditional values meet the substance of Islamic teachings giving birth to a syncretic religious understanding.⁵

The Historians have so much different perspective regarding the coming or arrival of Islam in the archipelago, especially Indonesia. Although in some respects there have been common ground. This relates to three focus issues, sort of the place of origin of the arrival of Islam, the carriers of Islam and the time of that arrival. This difference arises because of the lack of information from existing sources, including the existence of some historians supporting or rejecting certain theories. Then there is a strong tendency for a main theory to emphasize only specific aspects of the three particular problems, while ignoring another aspects. Because of this, some of the existing theories failed to explain the arrival of Islam, when the local population's religious conversion took place, and the processes of Islamization involved.

The region of Indonesia in the form of an archipelago that stretch from Sabang till Merauke provides some logical consequence of the diversity of politic and religious situations. ⁶This paper beginning and focus on a critical study of the entry and development of Islam in the archipelago, basically on the study of the theory of the origin Islam carriers to the archipelago, the carriers of Islam and the time of their arrival. The issue between Islam and the State in modern times is one of the important studies in world politics as well. Although this study has been debated for several time, but it has not yet been resolved.⁷

History was took a facts that Muslims do not have a reference on how the ideal state according to Islam should be. As an religion, in which there are values that are universal in nature, in the context of state politics, Muslims seem to be "confused" in determining the track among the relationship between Islam and the State.⁸ With the arrival of the second half of the 20th century, the process of Islamization of Indonesia was forced to take a new direction. Confrontation with the Dutch over the previous 100

⁵ Abdul Ghoffur, *Telaah Kritis Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Nusantara*. Jurnal Ushuluddin Vol. XVII No. 2 (2011).

⁶ Muryanti. *Penguat Persaudaraan Masyarakat Muslim di Pedesaan*. Sosiologi Reflektif Vol. 9 No. 1 (2014).

⁷ Azyumardi, Azra. *Pergolakan Pemikiran Islam dari Fundamentaslisme, Modernisme Hingga Post-Mdernisme*. (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996), p.1.

years, colonialism took the form of Cultivation. The requirement for very rapid and drastic change supersedes ethical systems and policies. Rapid acclimatization to a faster step on the road to independence resulted during World War II, the Japanese occupation gave birth to this. Muslim activists were not only forced to adapt to the significantly changing circumstances in the following decades; in the face of an increasingly repressive government, they were effectively forced to reinvent themselves between the late 1950s and the end of the century to continue their Islamization efforts under these restrictive conditions. Then, on the threshold of the new millennium, a shift in government opened a new window for democratization.⁹ As a result, the political history of postcolonial Indonesia can be divided into three phases, each ruled by a different regime with its own style of administration, offering a variety of contexts in which the process of Islamization had developed over the previous seventy years. The first two decades of independence were marked by Sukarno's presidency, with the 1955 general election as a kind of cesura. The period begins with a decade of nation-building when the fledgling republic was founded. initially involved in armed confrontation with the Dutch (1946-199).

B. Method

The method used in this review research is the critical and normative historical method, by trying to combine and dissect the contents of various Islamic history books and Islamic article journals. Some writings on Islam have been widely published and contagious, but research and studies on the development of Islam in Indonesia is still need to be studied in more depth and detail. In this paper, an explanation will be made in a comprehensive and very actual manner.¹⁰

C. Discussion

1. The Entry of Islam in Indonesia

Based on the entry of Islam-Muslim in Indonesia, there is some perspective from historians in Indonesia. Some experts argue that the first entry of Islam to Indonesia has been since the first century of Hijriah or the 7th century AD, and some of them said that Islam only arrived in the 13th century AD, especially in Samudra Pasai. So because of that, there are come theories about the entry of Islam in Indonesia.¹¹

⁹ Carrole Hillenbrand, *A History of Islam in Indonesia*. (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University 2017).

¹⁰ Tri Ramadhan, *Islam in Indonesia and Analysis of its Historical Aspects (Books Review and Analytical)*. Jurnal Kajian, Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pendidikan Sejarah (2020).

¹¹ Latifa Annum Dalimunthe, *Kajian Proses Islamisasi di Indonesia*. Jurnal Studi Agama dan Masyarakat Vol. 12 No. 1 (2016).

a. Makkah Theory

The first theory was Makkah. Hamka giving birth to a new theory, This correction was inform in his speech, since his speech above, which was later strengthened in his refutation at the seminar on the entry of Islam into Indonesia, in Medan on 17-20 March 1963, Hamka rejected the view that Islam entered the archipelago in the 13th century and originated from Gujarat. Hamka based his view on the role of the Arabs, followed by the Persians and Gujarats as carriers of Islam to Indonesia. Gujarat was declared as a mere stopover, and Mecca as the center, or Egypt as a place of taking Islamic teachings. Hamka's analysis differs from that of Western historians or orientalists, by adding his observations on the problem of the Shafi'i School, as a special school in Mecca and has the greatest influence in Indonesia. In addition, Hamka rejected the opinion that Islam had only entered the 13th century archipelago, because in the 13th century the political power of Islam was established.¹² A similar opinion regarding the entry of Islam in the first century hijriyah, by Thomas W. Arnold in *The Preaching Islam*, was brought by Arab traders since the first century hijriyah.¹³

b. Persia Theory

The founder of Persia theory in Indonesia was P.A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat. His focus of this theory's view on the entry of Islam into the archipelago is different from the theory of Gujarat and Mecca, even though they have the same problem with Gujarat, as well as the Shafi'i School. The Persian theory focuses more on the culture that lives among the Indonesian Islamic community which is felt to have similarities with Persia, including the 10th anniversary of Muharram or Ashura as the Shia memorial day for the martyrdom of Husayn. This commemoration takes the form of making Ashura porridge. In Minangkabau the month of Muharram is called the month of Hasan-Hussein. In West Central Sumatra, called the month of the Ark, is commemorated by parading Husein's coffin to be thrown into the river or into other waters. The coffin is called the ark taken from Arabic. The similarity of teachings between Sheikh Siti Jenar and the teachings of the Iranian Sufi Al-Hallaj, even though Al-Hallaj had died in 310 H/922 AD, his teachings continued to develop in the form of poetry, thus enabling Sheikh Siti Jenar who lived in the 16th century to be able to study it. The use of Iranian terms in the Arabic spelling system, for signs of vowel sounds in early-level Quran recitation.

c. Gujarat theory

And the last but not list was the Gujarat Theory. Starting from the view that the origin of the state brought Islam to the archipelago from Gujarat. The founder of this theory is Snouck Hurgronje, in his

¹² Ibid, p. 82

¹³ Samsul Munir Amin, *History of Islamic Civilization*. (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2013), p. 304.

book *L'Arabie et les Indes Neerlandaises*, focuses more on Gujarat based on The lack of facts that define the role of the Arabs in spreading Islam to the archipelago. And secondly Indonesia-India trade relations have been established for a long time. And the last one that the oldest inscriptions on Islam are found in Sumatra, providing an illustration of the relationship between Sumatra and Gujarat. The country of origin that influenced the entry of Islam into the archipelago was Gujarat. With the reason that Islam was spread through the trade route between Indonesia-Cambay/Gujarat Middle East-Europe. W.F. Stutterheim argues that the reliefs of the tomb of Sultan Malik Al-Saleh are Hinduistic in nature and have similarities to the tombstones in Gujarat. For some reasons above W.F. Stutterheim is no different from Snouck Hurgronje, basically from Gujarat. This information is reinforced by the oldest inscription in Sumatra dated to 1297, five years after the arrival of Marco Polo. The form of this inscription is in the form of a tombstone bearing the name of Sultan Malik As-Saleh.

Indonesia is a country made up of thirteen to 19,000 islands (6,000 of which are inhabited), stretching more than 3,000 miles from the coast of Malaysia across the Indian Ocean to Australia and the Philippines, and linking the Pacific and South China Seas. It is the fourth largest country in the world, with about 250 million inhabitants and about 300 ethnic groups, the majority of whom are at least Muslim.¹⁴ The arrival of Islam to Indonesia, initially through trade routes, and its acceptance shows two different patterns.¹⁵ Who was the first to bring Islam to Indonesia? There is a difference of opinion among historians to answer this question, are they Arabs or Indians? According to Snouck Horgounje, it was the Indians who first brought Islam to Indonesia towards the end of the 13th century AD. This opinion also answers the area where Islam came from. This opinion is supported by Van Bonkel, a Dutch professor by showing the influence of the Tamil language in Indonesian, namely the term "lebai" which comes from "labbai" or "lappai" which means merchant in Tamil.¹⁶ Although both support Snouck Horgounje's opinion, O'Sullivan disagrees that the existence of the term Tamil in Malay is the reason that it was the Indians who brought Islam to Indonesia. The opinion about the Indians who first brought Islam to Indonesia is also supported by G.E Marrison, but according to him not from Gujarat but from South India, the Coromandel coast. According to him the presence of tombstones from Gujarat does not mean Islam is from Gujarat. Among Marrison's reasons are :

- a. If it's believed that Islam originated in Gujarat, then what about the fact that Islam was already in Indonesia before Malikul Saleh died, namely in 1297. If there is a possibility that Islam was

¹⁴ Edward Schiener, *Muslim Democracy Politic, Religion and Society in Indonesia*. (New York : Routledge 2016).

¹⁵ M. Sauki, *Perkembangan Islam di Indonesia Era Reformasi*. Tasamuh: Jurnal Studi Islam Vol. 10 No. 2 (2018).

¹⁶ Hadji Muhammad Said, *Mentjari Kepastian Tentang Daerah, Mula dan Tjara Masuknja Agama Islam ke Indonesia dalam Risalah Seminar: Sedjarah Masuknja Islam ke Indonesia*. (Medan:Committee on the History of the Entry of Islam to Indonesia, 1963), p. 220.

already in Gujarat in 1297, what about Marcopolo's findings which stated that the people of Cambay in 1298 were still infidels.¹⁷

- b. Ibn Battuta's account of the beauty of the mosque building which was built by immigrant merchants in Cambay in 1325 AD.
- c. The existence of trade routes in the past, Arab merchants have been active in the waters of Arabia and Indonesia with a stopover in Sri Lanka. Therefore Islam came to India at the same time as the arrival of the Arab brothers to India.
- d. Ibn Battuta's findings are that Indonesia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and North India are adherents of the Shafi'i School, while the Gujarati are Sunni or Shi'a.¹⁸

Meanwhile, Husayn Nainar, an Indian scholar who argues that the Indians were the first carriers of Islam to Indonesia, is based on his view that the influence of India has been widespread and embedded in Indonesia. In contrast to Snock, according to him, Islam had reached Indonesia in the first century of the Prophet and maybe even when the Prophet Muhammad was still alive.¹⁹ Tregonning in his book "World History For Malaya, from Earliest time to 1551" argues that Arab and Indian Brothers are two nations that play an important role in bringing Islam to Indonesia but are still unanswered, who plays the main role? In his further discussion Tregonning shows the role of Arabia in shipping and trade. According to him, long before Islam came, Arab traders had controlled trade in almost all Indian ports, and it was from these Indian ports that Arab traders controlled the spice trade and brought Islam to Southeast Asia²⁰. According to the author of this last description, it can be understood that it was Arab traders who first brought Islam to Indonesia, where on their very long journey they had also stopped at Indian ports for several reasons; either because of economic factors or for reasons of subsidies for fuel and clean water, then continue the journey to Indonesia.

All Muslims around the world must know that 12 Rabiul Awwal is the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad.²¹ Islamism is an understanding of religion (Islam) in the form of a state order, namely an Islamic state. Islamism groups have idolized Islam at the time of the Prophet. in Medina, and they are trying to restore the practice of Islam today to return to the practice of Islam at the time of the Prophet, namely the era of fourteen centuries ago. The main agenda of Islamism is to establish an Islamic state order and mobilize Muslims in order to build a totalitarian order known as Islamic nizam.²² The Islamism group was the first Muslim group to exist in Indonesia, long before the new Post-Islamism emerged in the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p., 222.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 82-87.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 221.

²⁰ *Ibid.*,p. 223.

²¹ Hadji A Salim, *Kedatangan Islam di Indonesia*. (Jakarta : Tintamas Jakarta 1962).

²² Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*. (Bandung: Mizan, 2016), p. 292.

1970s. Islamism groups who hold the view that Islam is the most perfect religion compared to other existing religions (Christianity or Judaism),²³ Shari'a is also pure from Allah, and can be an alternative to reject the practice of power which, according to them, is not Islamic in Indonesia.

2. Muslim Response to Political Change (Old West Point of View)

Is Islam change? A question asked by the leading Muslim scholar Ziauddin Sardar was told a clear answer that "Islam can change". What Sardar aim by "Islam" is sharia. It is the Shari'a that controls the here after and worldly phenomenon of Muslims. For decades and especially since September 11, 2001, said Sardar, Muslim reformers have continued to question Islamic doctrines rooted in Shari'a. From Morocco to Indonesia, Muslim reformers recognized the need for a fundamental change in their view of Islam. They realized sought to abandon medieval descriptions of Islamic law and seek to apply the visions of justice, equality, and beauty rooted in the Qur'an.²⁴

The authenticity of Islamism appearance in Indonesia, Religion and politics seem to be united in a historical Muslim country, since the time of the Prophet. In Medina, because of the efforts of the Prophet. using religion (Islam) with the guidance of revelation to respond to the problems of the people at that time. The author argues that this is the root cause of the long debate that has led to misunderstandings between Islam and politics. This issue has given settle to confusion and misunderstanding of what Islam really is. The Western world understands that Islam is a political religion. Islamism groups understand that Islam and politics are an inseparable unit (din wa daulah).²⁵

There needs to be clarify about what the West understands "Islam is a political religion". The reason is that Islam established its existence through military conquest. This Western statement is a form of misunderstanding of the true meaning of Islam, because it does not understand what Islam is and what Islamism is. Where Islam is not a political religion, there is definitely difference between Islam and Islamism. Islam is an understanding of the religion of monotheism that invites faith, while Islamism is an understanding of religion (Islam) in the form of a state order, namely an Islamic state. They have used religion for political gain.²⁶

²³ Siti Mahmudah, *Reformasi Syariat Islam (Thought criticism Khalil Abdul Karim)*. Jurnal al-Adalah, Vol. 13 No. 1 (2016), p. 83.

²⁴ Luthfi Assyaukanie, "Ideologi Islam dan Utopia Buku utopia." (Jakarta : Freedom Institute 2011), p. 31.

²⁵ Siti Mahmudah, *Islamisme : Kemunculan dan Perkembangannya di Indonesia*. Jurnal Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality Vol. 3 No. 1, (2016) p. 4.

²⁶ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Islam Politik di Dunia Kontemporer : Konsep Geneologi dan Teori*. (Yogyakarta, Suka Press 2012).

D. Conclusion

At the end of this paper, as we expected that the readers should understand to the topic above. So it can be concluded that Islam entered Indonesia through several theories, such as the Gujarat, Persian, and Arabic/Makkah theories. In writing, these theories can have an impact on two things, namely strengthening each other or even colliding with each other. But we people who are historically literate must be able to accept the conditions or views of these historians, because we need to understand that Islam came from various paths and different people, so that if there is a little debate it is a natural thing and we need to accept. This discussion also explains a little about the practice of Islam at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Namely the existence of an Islamism group that focuses on establishing a state order, the Islamism group has explained that they are people who view that Islam is the most perfect religion because its teachings are from Allah SWT.

In the political context, the state of Islam in its politic, people should to know the previous situation, as we written above about Islam is also sufficient to refute that there are beliefs from the west that think that Islam is a political religion, even though it should not be, Islamism which is considered a political understanding is a mistake. Islam and Islamism are comparisons of different things, Islam is an understanding of monotheism that invites faith, while Islamism is an understanding of religion (Islam) in the form of a state order, namely an Islamic state. So that makes westerners think that Islam is a political religion.

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