

COLONIAL POLITICS OF POWER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION *VIS-À-VIS* EUROPEAN EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES PERIODS

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Abstract: Dengan membawa perspektif “sejarah sebagai interpretasi yang terus berkembang”, kertas kerja ini meninjau kembali sejarah penjajahan di Indonesia. Pendidikan menjadi diskusi utama pada bahasan ini karena perkembangannya telah memberikan sumbangsih terhadap terbentuknya identitas budaya masyarakat Indonesia. Terbatasnya akses pendidikan ala Eropa di masa itu telah memposisikan Pendidikan Islam beriringan dengan pola pendidikan arus-utama saat itu. Politik dan kebijakan pemerintah kolonial berpengaruh terhadap implementasi pendidikan ala Eropa bagi pribumi setelah politik etis diberlakukan. Di sisi lain, Pendidikan Islam mulai meneguhkan posisi oposisinya. Setelah tahun 1900-an, akulturasi situasi kolonial, Islamisme, dan ideologi lainnya membentuk secara jelas identitas kultural baru Pendidikan Islam di dalam ruang kelas sekolah dan pada superstruktur pemerintahan kolonial untuk merespons penindasan dalam beberapa cara tertentu

Keywords: Kolonial; politik; Islam; pendidikan; identitas.

Introduction

The colonial occupation of the Netherlands in Southeast Asian Archipelago shifted from the monopoly-trading strategy to the governmental arrangement in the early nineteenth century. After VOC, the Netherland Trading Venture Company for East Indies, collapsed due to corruption in its internal body, the colonial established the Netherland Indies Government in order to maintain domination of natural resources

and spices in the archipelago, which is now so called as modern Indonesia.¹

As the consequence of the governmental establishment, the politics of “Dutchification” appeared in the social and cultural layers of the society. Although some religious-related efforts -such as evangelization- were rapidly maintained in particular areas, from political lens, the main purpose was to familiarize the *inlander* with the Dutch culture rather than to convert them into Christianity. In this context, the Gospel mission could be seen as the pioneer touch of western education in the archipelago.

From the visible aspects of education, the western style of schooling is, at least, both classical and standardized. The classical dimension appears evenly in the Christian religious class, the Sunday school. In addition, standardization is found in the entirely formal schooling with particular format of grades and diplomas. Native education of the archipelago appeared differently during the colonial period. Islamic educational institution such as *Pesantren* in Java or *Dayah* in Aceh was not standardized. For instance, *Ijazah* or the diploma sometimes was not even written. Mostly this was delivered orally from the master to the students as their legitimatization accomplishing education in the *Pesantren*. Therefore, the coming of Dutch education brought a new social arrangement within the *inlander*. Schultz and Felter confirms that the Dutch education had become a main mechanism to Dutchify the locals under the colonialism.²

From the perspective of power, education in that period were mostly managed to maintain the domination of the Dutch colonial government. The presence of western schooling was only accessible to elite families or those who were ruling in the area. Access to the schooling was not only a social stratum symbol, but also implicitly a symbol of local elites’ subservience to the colonial regime. Oostindie and Paasman states that the Dutch respected local elites as long as they were cooperative.³

¹ G. Oostindie and B. Paasman, “Dutch Attitudes towards Colonial Empires, Indigenous Cultures, and Slaves”, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Spring, 1998), 351.

² D. F. Schultz and M. Felter, “Education, History, and Nationalism in Pramoedya Toer’s “Buru Quartet”, *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2002), 143-175.

³ Oostindie and Paasman, “Dutch Attitudes”, 351.

Ricklefs illustrates one of several attempts of maintaining colonial power in the format of power abuses by the elites and encouragement to abuse power to satisfy the colonial government purposes.⁴ Therefore, this can be inferred that access to education was a special gift from the colonial in which only few of locals may taste.

The marginalization in education created social clusters. Western education became another border line between the elites and the grassroots. For sure, the number of elites were few and those who were in the schooling was even fewer. Vandenbosch argued this could be a strategy to keep the colonial power long lasting by cornering *inlander* political development.⁵ Since schooling is very much associated with people identity construction, keeping away the natives from western education in the middle of western language of governmental created dual type of leadership within the societies. The native leader would govern the people traditionally and the Dutch appeared with western style of leadership. In other words, the native leadership would not have ability to speak in a language of western leadership whenever unfair regulation was found to suffer the natives.

Several efforts to utter humanity issues in Java to European were made by European themselves. Eduard Douwes Dekker in his *Max Havelaar*, was an example of telling the brutality of the colonial regime through politics of *cultuurstelsel*, the cultivation system.⁶ The locals must provide particular portion of their agriculture product for export. The aims was to pay the colonial debts due to some previous wars. The situation was very rough and, therefore, in Indonesian history, the cultivation system is called *Tanam Paksa*, planting with enforcement. Live in Java was even harder due to corrupt leadership in both local and colonial element. While colonial government made taxes compulsory, the traditional local leaders abused their traditional power by forcing their people to work for nothing. The *Havelaar* is not only a novel, it is facts. Another effort was *Een eereschuld*, an article by van Deventer, a lawyer who was in the archipelago for almost two decades. He contended that

⁴ Merle C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C.1200*, 3rd edition (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 167.

⁵ A. Vandenbosch, "The Effect of Dutch Rule on the Civilization of the East Indies", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Jan, 1943), 501.

⁶ Eduard D. Dekker, *Max Havelaar or The Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company*, Trans. Baron Alphonse Nahuys (Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1868).

the Netherland had to pay “a debt of honour” to the colonial subjects for the wealth which was diminished from the country.⁷ Furthermore, political debates happened in Europe and resulted in the abolishment of *cultuurstelsel* in the entire area of East Indies.⁸ This began a new period of liberal colonial government in the twentieth century. In 1901, Queen Wilhelmina announced *Ethische Politiek*, the Dutch Ethical Politics in which the colonial government was in debt through the exploitation in Java and therefore was responsible to the welfare of the natives. This policy included development of education, irrigation, and emigration.⁹

In the context of education, the limitation of access to formal schooling in the nineteenth century could be the catalyst of reconstruction of Islamic educational identity in the archipelago. The dimension of piety-oriented as the original essence of Islamic educational institutions was in contrast to the Dutch schooling nuance. The limited access to the schooling system strengthened the position of the Islamic institutions as the alternative or even the opposition. The large number of followers created a new educational movement with Islamic identity. However, this was not clearly visible on the surface until the new age of colonialism beginning in the early 1900s.

In this paper, I present the liberal age of colonialism from the beginning of the twentieth century and how this more liberal colonial governmental system impacted the construction of Islamic educational institution identity. The discussion is divided into three parts. The first part presents the ethical politics and how it is perceived as the new language of exploitation. The second one is the colonial policy on western education development. And the last part is the development of education by several Islamic movements. The emergence of Islamic group in different color of western ideologies produced different kinds of Islamic educational system. The dialogue between colonialism, Islamism, and other ideologies constructed a continuum of ideological acculturation from the very left to the very right. Therefore, the notion such as liberalism, nationalism, up to communism was found in the schooling formats.

⁷ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 193.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁹ Queen Wilhelmina, “Dutch Colonial Policy”, *World Affairs*, Vol. 107, No. 2 (June, 1944), 91.

The Ethical Policy as a Liberal Way of Maintaining Power in Java

The question rising up from the Ethical Policy is whether the policy really deserved to improve the Native welfare or this was only a new arrangement to alleviate critiques and political pressures in Europe as a result of oppression in the Indies. This always been surrounded by quantitative and qualitative questions such as how far the Native welfare increased and what policy practices contributed to the welfare itself. The historian debate always falls the argument into who was benefitted more from the policy, the Netherlands or the Indies Natives.

In its purposes, the Ethical Policy was a phase of European's responsibility to the natives' life quality. This often time is regarded as the civilizing mission. Drakeley illustrates this policy as a direction to improve the Native welfare under "the Victorian-era parenting".¹⁰ This means that the civilizing mission was under authoritarian leadership style in which "children" were powerless and less knowledgeable compare to their "parents". Particular philosophical perspective takes part in the mission. How the regime defined who the natives are and what being civilized means constructed a specific policy whereas development was evaluated in expertise-oriented framework, the colonial regime. In this circumstance, the regime would have no ability, or may be less concern, about what was considered good from the native perspective.

Apart from the Victorian educational approach of disciplining people through policy and education, actually local wisdom should had been included in the policy. However, I understand that the situation at that time was not sustainable enough to gather people and ask for their opinion. The novel Max Havelaar illustrates public cynicism to both native leadership and the colonial one before the liberal colonial period. Any attempt to bring change would results in nothing due to the absence of power in the oppressed Javanese side. From political perspective, the situation happened due to the bargaining position was stronger in the regime's side rather than the native's. Despite the fact that native leadership did exist together with the colonial one, native leaders were managed to support colonial purposes. In other words, there were no people of power from the Native sides to speak out the native aspiration. Therefore, natives as the weakest subjects were just following what was instructed into them. In addition, the long period of colonialism from

¹⁰ Steven Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005).

the VOC period (1602-1799) to Netherland Indies period (1800-1943) didn't give any chance to many of the natives to see what equality and freedom were. Therefore, natives as the oppressed had internalized colonizer guidelines by putting themselves as the "follower".¹¹ In other words, the colonized had developed their identity as the oppressed due to superstructure (culture) handed down from colonial period to the next one.

The colonial period affected significantly to the development of people's identity. The oppressed natives learned the dominant idea about who they were and, again, Freire considers this idea as the cause of "fearful of freedom".¹² The native inferior identity was dangerous since it had become dominant in the public sphere. What can be inferred from Baker about the dangerous of the developmentalism is its dominance resulting in a particular way of thinking towards personal and collective identity.¹³ Walkerdine summarized the developmentalism as "the dominance of a set of practices for thinking, what came to be called "abstraction" that generated "rationality" as the pinnacle of developmental theories".¹⁴ Furthermore, he argues that the rationality is dangerous as a foundation of thought to marginalize others.¹⁵

In the colonial politics implementation, the ethical policy was very much based upon the colonial rationality and therefore neglecting local wisdom that might be needed by the colonial subjects. The dis-involvement in the policy practice is a language of cultural inferiority to face another superior. The birth of ethical policy was promoted by European who cared about the life situation in the East Indies. Later on, the policy was made in the Europe by European who perhaps some of them never been to the Indies. This decision making process was a strong potential of mistranslation in the policy practices.

The idea of ethical policy seems to bring an age of prosperity to the Javanese. The commitment of developing welfare in the colonial subjects through irrigation, emigration, and education was built above logic to

¹¹ See Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th Anniversary ed. (New York: Continuum, 2005), 47.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ B. Baker, "The Dangerous and the Good? Developmentalism, Progressivism and Public Schooling", *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (1999), 797-834.

¹⁴ As cited by Baker at B. Baker, "The Dangerous, 828.

¹⁵ Ibid.

develop natives' welfare. Plenty amount of money was poured to create business activity infrastructure, such as road, rail transportation, education, et cetera. Despite claims of colonialism to bring modernization in the Netherland Indies was sometimes claimed, many historians find malpractices in the policy. The interpretation of Ethical policy as a more structured exploitation within the liberal regime is reflected through the policy of irrigation, emigration, and education.

Moon links the Ethical Policy to the economic development rather than to understand its three component as the individual solution for each main social problem at that time.¹⁶ The irrigation projects were purposed to increase peasant rice yields and therefore the native's income would increase. Alongside with the policy, over-populated Java Island became a main rationale to migrate the people to other islands. This was not only intended to distribute the population, but also to expand the wet-rice agriculture to the rest of the archipelago. Some technical schools of agriculture were developed to train people with the modern agricultural system. With this triangle approach, the colonial regime received more taxes alongside the increase of agricultural product quantity. Due to this reasons, the Ethical Policy is often called a half-hearted policy of welfare improvement. In one side, the colonial was criticized for its oppressive acts, but they also didn't want to lose the advantage from the colonial subjects. For those who do not believe in the technological issues as the cause of poverty in Java, the tax is to be blamed. Brooshoof emphasized the reduction of tax in order to increase the native welfare.¹⁷

The Dutch Education as a Mechanism of Ethical Policy

A noticeable Dutch colonial politics nuancing all other policies in governmental and education was the politics of non-assimilation. Despite the change in colonial style after the ethical policy in the beginning of 1900s, the European education in the liberal age was distinguished in terms of its purposes and its quantity. Drakeley stated that the education was designed to provide low-cost civil servant from

¹⁶ Suzanne Moon, "The Emergence of Technological Development and the Question of Native Identity in the Netherlands East Indies", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Jun., 2005), 191-206.

¹⁷ As cited by Moon at *Ibid.*, 202.

natives.¹⁸ This purpose reflects the absence of positioning native leadership in a high-rank level. The maximum status can be achieved by the native in the governmental structure was the middle-class officer. This educational policy practice strongly adopted the non-assimilation policy which resulted in a “dogmatic rule” race to determine social class. The class reproduction happened from generation to generation as both the colonizer and colonized had learned to be who they were from their childhood. Therefore, the hegemony of European power was still dominant on the top leadership position.

Regarding the quantity of European schools, Ricklefs noted that the establishment of HIS (*Hollandsch-Inlandsche School*, the Dutch-Native School) and MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Ondervijis*, more extended lower education) in 1914 had opened new opportunities for the natives to study in the European standard formal schools up to middle school level.¹⁹ Despite the schools were no longer for the ruling elites only, the minimum family income was required as the enrolment pre-requisite. Ricklefs describes the school reform and educational development efforts in post-ethical period had no impact to the native lower class. The financial problem was not only an extreme problem for the people, this was not even affordable to the colonial government. In 1918, the estimation expenditures to take all native children to the second-class school were f.417 per annum.²⁰ This number was even larger than the colonial government’s expenditure in total. Despite some efforts of providing the third class of education such as *volkscholen*, people’s school to produce supervisory agent in a factory or a clerk in a commercial agency, which was more affordable, the number of natives at school was still very low compared to the total number of the population. As a result, only 8 percent of native children were at school and 178 attending university in 1931.²¹

The education scarcity was caused by fewer numbers of schools against the large number of population. This became even not accessible due to the awesome tuition. As a result, enlightenment by education only touched the upper and middle-class people. The small number of

¹⁸ Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 46.

¹⁹ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 201.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 202.

²¹ Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 46.

educated people sustained the government to be more authoritarian. As it is mentioned before, education and class reproduction were beneficial for the modernization and domination of influence in the colonial side.

Another important aspects of the policy in education were the selection of language of instruction. Snouck Hurgronje and the first director of education in Ethical Policy period, J. H. Abendanon, preferred European style of education and chose Dutch language as the language of instruction.²² Furthermore, Ricklefs mentioned some purposes of the education, such as to create cooperative native elites, to provide native civil servant at low cost, to create inspiring image of successful personalities for low level of the natives, and to prevent “Islamic” fanaticism over the colonial regime. All of those purposes were created to support the hegemony of colonial influence and therefore the national security in many aspects became more stable.²³

The revolts by Islamic group in several ways including education will be presented in the next subset. Besides those revolts, the rise of communist party in 1920 and the tax revolt movement feared the colonial government. Bertrand emphasized the importance of western education to acculturate the Javanese people with western tradition in order to muffle movement within the Javanese. In purpose to support the educational mission, not only HIS and MULO established for those with particular amount of minimum salary, 1881 Christian vocational school was established in Celebes, Java, and Sumatra.²⁴ Another foundation, the Kartini foundation, was established in the Netherlands in 1913 to support women Dutch language school in Java.²⁵ Technical schools were available in Batavia, Bandung, and Surabaya. For instance, STOVIA (*School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen*, the school of native doctor in Java) graduated plenty of native doctors in that period.²⁶ However, the discrimination is identified in their degree as they are called the Javanese Doctor, which was not equal to Dutch doctor. In order to

²² Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 199.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Romain Bertrand, “La «politique éthique» des Pays-Bas à Java (1901-1926) (The Netherland’s «Ethical Politics» in Java (1901-1926)”, *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’histoire*, No. 93 (Jan.-Mar., 2007), 123.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 199.

get “full degree”, the Javanese doctors had to go to Netherlands and study there.

If we see closely, most schools presented in the history of Indonesian colonialism were technical. Particular social courses such as politics and laws were not mentioned. Those who inquired the courses had to go to Netherlands universities such as Leiden. I believe that it could be dangerous for the colonial regime if many of the natives learned political science. In shorts, the colonial regimes maintained their power and hegemony through education.

Acculturation in Islamic Education to Respond the Colonial Power and Ideological Conflicts

Before discussing about the acculturation of Islamic education institution with other model of educational system, defining the origin of Pesantren’s identity become important to limit the scope of the discussion. In addition, this also defines which premises being used in defining identity of the early Islamic educational institution in the archipelago. Pesantren as the institution for spreading Islamic religious teaching becomes a very debatable topic in terms of its first establishment. Where the first Pesantren was established and who took part in the establishment would need more and more archeological evidence.

The spread of Islam in the archipelago arose together with the coming of Muslim merchants far before the coming of European for spices. On his observation, Tomé Pires records the Kings in Sumatra and Java were Muslims despite the absence of Islamic states in the areas within 1512 to 1515.²⁷ Although this report is not considered accurate in every detail, this indicates the establishment of Islam as a dominant religion in the sixteenth century. The paternalistic culture in the area leads into a conclusion that the society was already Islamized along with the Islamic identity of their kings.

Clifford Geertz’ work on Javanese anthropology contributes significantly in terms of tracing the tradition of Pesantren from the Majapahit Empire period (13th-15th century). According to Geertz, the structure of Pesantren originally came from Majapahit Hindu-Buddhist

²⁷ Ibid., 6.

monasteries.²⁸ In the Majapahit period, pesantren-like institution was commonly found as found with several characteristics similar to nowadays pesantren. First of all, the institutions consisted of disciples around one prominent holy scholar.²⁹ This character is the same as nowadays Pesantren where Santris (disciples) come to study under one Kiai. Secondly, in the Majapahit period, the king assigned monks to create and lead “religious villages” called *Perdikan* in purpose of establishing religious social structure in the empire.³⁰ This concept of *Perdikan* is also similar to *Pesantren* whereas this institution is in real village format and the Kiai becomes the top-leader. The structure of Pesantren is a miniature of governmental system due to their leadership characteristics and their “autonomous legal system” beyond the wall of *Pesantren*.

Geertz’ anthropological work on Islamic educational institutions emphasized the identity of Pesantren as a merging tradition between Islamic teachings in the Hindu-Buddhist schooling structure. This structure is quite different as compared with the middle-eastern tradition of the same teaching in the eighth or ninth century. Hefner and Zaman characterize the traditional Islamic education at that period with the existence of informal group study (*Halqa*) under an orthodox teacher (*Shaykh*) guidance.³¹ This usually was conducted in a mosque and didn’t charge the students for tuitions. Also, this was supported by endowments from the society.³² In short, the Pesantren-tradition’s soft element is the voluntarily Islamic teaching missionaries which were conducted in the previous dominant religious cultural approach. Several efforts of acculturation are claimed as the important factor of mass conversion to Islam in Java.

In many culture and regions, westernization in governmental system pushed Islamic educational institution to change its format. Learning from a couple of Muslim countries such as Turkey, before the modernization and *étatization* of *madrassa* (Islamic school), the role of

²⁸ Clifford Geertz, “The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Jan., 1960), 231.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ R. W. Hefner and M. Q. Zaman, *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

³² *Ibid.*, 6-7.

Ulama was very influential as both religious and informal leader in society. According to Hourani, before madrasas was supported by states, at least *Ulamas* had two big roles in their communities.³³ First, *Ulamas* were the preservers of human morality.³⁴ In this context, *Ulamas* were regarded as the agent to continue the role of the prophet on the earth. Therefore, *Ulamas* were responsible to guide the Prophet's followers (*Ummah*) into the path of the prophet's life. Theologically, al-Qur'an (2:30) mentions that every human being is a leader on the earth who is responsible to manage the life on it and to preserve God's sanctity. This means that *Ulamas* have responsibility to spread the message so that mankind will live in the way that is blessed by God. The second role of *Ulamas* mentioned by Hourani is *Ulamas* as authoritative agents of determining Islamic laws.³⁵ Laws in this context are strongly tied to particular school of thought (*Madhhab*) in term of *Syariah* and *Fiqh*. Divergent views on determining *Syariah* and or *Fiqh* towards a problem is inevitable. Therefore, domination of certain *Madhhab* in particular area was possible to avoid. In short, although traditional *Ulamas* did not affiliate to any governmental institutions, they had a very strong social capital to actuate people through their religious statement dealing with particular social issues (*Fatwas*).

The *Ulamas'* social capital could be beneficial and also threatening to the state power where the *ulamas'* followers lived. Al-Qur'an[4]:59 does teach mankind to comply with their leaders; however, obeying God and the Prophet are in the first and second priority respectively. In other words, theologically, complying with *Ulamas* is more strongly legitimated by the name of God and the Prophet. This unique leadership elements of *Ulama* as religious leaders cannot be separated from their roles in social affairs. The religious and cultural values to obey *Ulama* is a unique informal legitimation but very effective to carry out a social movement. For these reasons, the European education in the East Indies was directed by Snouck Hurgronje to weaken the "Islamic fanaticism" that was a very potential threat for the colonial regime. Hurgronje really understood the situation in the grassroots level due to his long period of

³³ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1991).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 158.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

working as an anthropologist with both European and Islamic background of education.

The ethical policy with purpose of “modernizing” the East Indies was not easy to execute in different areas. Vlekke argues that the replacement of colonial exploitation with development strategy was the only way to achieve secure colonial politics and loyalty from natives in the East Indies.³⁶ However, due to the long period of exploitation, the anti-colonial attitude had been firmly rooted and resulted in the cynicism towards any new colonial policies. This turned even worse when the policy executors didn’t deserve the loose of advantage from the colonial subjects due to the policy. In this context, this is so difficult to investigate which party was the most responsible for the half-hearted policy implementation. Whatever happened in the colonial elite level, resistance toward the colonial regimes had increased either in a form of direct-physical resistance or the ideological one.

Acehnese anti-colonial resistance is an example of how Islam became a big threat for the colonial regime in post-ethical period. The Acehnese was not only ideological against the regime, but also physical. Hurgronje blamed *jihadi* (holy war) doctrine as the cultural-religious legitimation against the colonial administration.³⁷ In his observation, Hurgronje found the potential aristocratic element to constraint the power of *ulamas*. The aristocracy put respect and honor to the *ulama* and Islamic norms; therefore, the *ulama* had privilege and partly lead people movement.³⁸

In other areas such as Minangkabau and Java, the resistance in post-ethical period was more ideological rather than physical. Therefore, social movement and education became some methods to protest the colonial policy. Ricklefs put the past conflict with colonial regimes as the reasons for the Javanese and Minangkabau to change the political order.³⁹ Java became the central of colonial government since the occupation of the VOC in the seventeenth century. Similarly, the Dutch involved in civil war between puritan and their rival in Padri War. The drawbacks for the colonial involvement in Java and Minangkabau

³⁶ As cited by Jung at D. Jung, “Islam as a Problem: Dutch Religious Politics in the East Indies”, *Review of Religious Research* (2010), 292.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 291.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 292-293.

³⁹ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 206.

transformed the resistance pattern from direct action to be more diplomatic.

The movement in Java was began and dominated by the middle-class and upper-class of Javanese called *Priyayi*. For sure, the lower-class didn't take major part of the awakening because European education was untouched by them, at least in its beginning. Pioneered by Dr. Wahidin Soedirohusodo, the *Priyayi* movement established Budi Utomo (the highest endeavor) with its original vision to restore the Javanese culture. It is the fact that the culture is much inspired by the Hindu-Buddhist tradition. The support of Dutch education to restore the culture means to put Javanese values and identities through European style schooling. Ricklefs calls this action as the partly blamed of the constraint of Javanese culture due to the coming of Islam.⁴⁰ Despite getting less support from the older generation of Javanese officials, the colonial government blessed this organization by giving them a legal status in 1909. The politics of power appeared in both sides of Javanese officials and the colonial government. This movement was very potential for the rising of lower class *Priyayi* in ruling position. However, the Dutch colonial saw this movement as the indicator of ethical policy. Dissatisfaction within the Javanese in general could not be avoided. Budi Utomo was suspected as a quasi-official government party.⁴¹ In shorts, the conflict of interest in the rise of *Priyayi* movement affirmed the distrust between upper class and lower class in terms of power exercise.

People of pesantren involved in several efforts against the colonial regime. This is a very common history of pesantren founding fathers to lead rebellion towards the colonial. Most the efforts were physical. The independence war of tenth of November in Surabaya was a massive rebellion supported by the pesantren people outside the city. The doctrine of "holy war" was and in some extent is still an influential religious-cultural legitimation to actuate mass-direct action.

The first formal organization of Islamic movement was established in 1909 by Tirtoadisurjo, a former colonial government service who later on worked as a journalist. Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah (SDI) proclaimed their loyalty to the colonial regime in 1913.⁴² Most organizations had to

⁴⁰ Ibid., 207.

⁴¹ Ibid., 209.

⁴² Ibid., 211.

be cooperative to the Dutch government as “a must prerequisite” to gain legal recognition. In its beginning, SDI was a union of Batik Muslim merchants, but in its development it had transformed into a formal organization called Sarekat Islam (SI). This broadened the membership to not only limit to the merchants. As a result, low class natives were able to take part into social movement through SI. This movement was the opposite of Budi Utomo in which the members were limited only to the high-class and middle-class Priyayi with Dutch education background. SI also in opposite concerning with the cultural values in the organization. While Budi Utomo was intended to uphold the Javanese culture in a Dutchified social systems including education, SI took Islam as their background identity with purpose of fighting poverty within the natives.

The coming of communism with H. J. F. M. Sneevliet to the archipelago in 1913 shortly put communism in a visible form. *Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging* (Indies Social-Democratic Association, ISDV) in Surabaya was established in Surabaya just one year after Sneevliet. Ricklefs also mentioned that the party was dominated by Dutchmen.⁴³ The interest in larger mass involvement encouraged the communist party to infiltrate SI. The ideology of communism was adopted by several SI important leaders. However, it happened in a way of acculturating the idea of fighting oppression and domination of the colonial government. Therefore, the acculturation between Islamism and communism (AKA “Islamic Communism” in Ricklefs’ terms) resulted in another genre of social movement, which is different from Leninist-Marxist communism in the Europe, particularly in terms of theological beliefs in God. This concept is prominently called Pan-Islamism. Tan Malaka, one of the prominent Pan-Islamist, narrated how SI School in Central Java as a rival of the Dutch’s HIS -which was not affordable for lower-class natives- earned hard-counter reaction from the colonial regime.⁴⁴

SI school was the earliest Islamic group ideological manifestation in education. Several movements and organizations were established after the ethical policy. However, many of them were based upon cultural, religious, or ideological identity. In terms of schooling, there were not only ideological organizations established formal schooling system. Some

⁴³ Ibid., 216.

⁴⁴ Read Tan Malaka, *SI School dan Ondervijis* (Jakarta: Yayasan Massa, 1987).

of them were also orthodox Islamic schools which was established in Java and Sumatra and adopted graded systems. The policy *Goeroe Ordonnantie* (Teacher Ordinance) in 1905 is the early warning signs from the colonial regime to only allow the “safe” material at the schools. This indicates that the regime saw the Islamic education as a threat due to its strength in quantity. Protests in both Java and Minangkabau to the policy resulted in the policy suspension from the governor general of East Indies.⁴⁵ The policy had become a boomerang and a politicization of anti-colonial government.

Religious, cultural, or ideological schools were mushrooming with or without legal recognition. Another policy launched in 1932 called *Wilde Scholen Ordonnantie* (wild schools ordinance). The policy reflects the uncontrolled growing of education in the East Indies. The national campaign by Ki Hajar Dewantara suggested in alliance with Islamic groups. In the name of supporting education, every organization including Budi Utomo joined the alliance. This effort seems fruitful as the Dutch Governor General suspended the second ordinance policy.⁴⁶ The more important thing was not the suspension, but the unity of several organizations with different ideological background. Budi Utomo -which blamed the coming of Islam as a drawback to the Javanese culture- joined the opposition. Before this period, it was so hard to build up the idea of Indonesia due to too many differences in all social aspects in the East Indies.

In short, the urgency of Islamic education movement within the colonial period contributes to the new identity of education in the East Indies. First of all, schooling and western style education shifted from social-stratum symbols into the language of enlightenment. Previously, education with European style arrived in the Indies and became a matter of consumption by middle and upper class, particularly in the ruling circles both in colonial sides as well as in the native's. This circumstance cultural transfer of identity in education in the format of European schooling system. The inability to enter into the schooling circle by natives in the lower class and existence of Islamic native education system promoted a transformation in the body of Islamic schooling itself. Existing Islamic movement acculturate the standardized education

⁴⁵ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern*, 224.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 239.

system as a framework of Islamic schooling. This resulted in the new platform of modernized Islamic schooling as the mode of organizational brotherhood, Islamic cultural capital investment, and enlightenment in education's roles.

Second, acculturation in Islamic education made it possible as an affordable modern education with firmly rooted local values. The new format of Islamic teaching in conduct by Muslim agents in the period confirmed the dynamic efforts of local identity preservation by Muslim agents. As it happened in the history of archipelago, anthropologically, the coming of Islam made a success story by keeping local structure of education system while taking inside the Islamic contents. This aligns with the effort of Muslim agents after the ethical policy to bring European education system into a more "grounded" education without setting aside local values.

Last but not least, the involvement of non-Islamic movement into the Islamic schooling alliance created a new atmosphere of unity in diversity. In this context, the coming of Budi Utomo in the same voice as the Islamic agents' side against the school ordinance contributed a unity identity within the movement. This is not mentioned literally here that the organization had a very strong idea of Indonesia. However, the identical understanding and attitude towards the collective issue intentionally or unintentionally promoted the unity in diversity as the language of movement in the period.

Critical Theory Examining Colonial Power Hegemony and Education

Many different philosophical foundations take part in defining what constitute as colonial situation. However, all of them begin the discourses with the same starting point, what drives human beings to do certain action. Perspectives on materialism may be is the oldest one in this respect. According to Fromm this started in by Greek pre-socratic philosophers.⁴⁷ The main idea is that material acts are the foundation of composing the universe.⁴⁸ This notion later became more popular by Karl Marx's concept of "historical materialism" that examines causality

⁴⁷ Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1997) 8.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

based upon “objective, economic-sociological” factor.⁴⁹ An objective condition will drive human being to determine his “mode of production” that therefore social organization as the structure tying the man determines what his interest is.⁵⁰ The main idea of this Marxism is that human consciousness to do acts is driven by economic and social condition embedded in a social structure. Therefore, human will have no choice to escape from the system, but to work within it “consciously”. This is the basic idea what Fromm as “dehumanization”.⁵¹ In line with this, Clignet emphasizes the impact of social-superstructure with alienation of human being from others due to the emergence of privilege gotten by others.⁵²

The theorization by Fromm and Clignet aligns with colonial situation in the past of Indonesia. The social classification appeared in form of social reproduction in which the oppressed could not move up within social stratification made by the colonizers. Education became a symbol of privilege and demarcation between the colonized and the colonizer. The weakness of the colonized without education just catalyzed the class reproduction consciously. The reproduction appeared repeatedly over generations due to the mode of production in the colonized side occurred constantly over times. In other words, the native as the colonized only internalized the value of being followers. Therefore, when the movement began to introduce the new values through education, the native started to internalize a new mode of production, looking for social equality.

Clignet continues with some ideas against Marxism. However, those ideas still have the similarities to Marx’s –the use of superstructure in colonizing certain groups. First, Economic or Political Determinism observes colonial situation as economically or politically dominant group to make use superstructure (for instance: education) as the general system.⁵³ Therefore, this results in colonized people being marginalized

⁴⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1990).

⁵² R. Clignet, “Damned If You Do, Damned If You Don’t: The Dilemmas of Colonizer-Colonized Relations”, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (1971), 297.

⁵³ Ibid.

ideologically and culturally. Second, liberal colonialism idea, which recognizes their struggle between ideology and their presence in colonial situation nuances colonizer position in a survival mode.⁵⁴ The statement “being evil or being ill at ease”⁵⁵ indicates pragmatic stance in a difficult situation. The superstructure here is not mentioned explicitly whether this is created by colonizers or by third party. However, I would assume that they would say the superstructure developed naturally. The colonizers seem to escape from being responsible for the existence of superstructure. The long-standing colonial regime in the past of Indonesia made everyone in the established system reluctant to leave behind the economically safe zone. Therefore, it must be hard for everyone in the system to transfer their privilege to the colonized. In this context, the ethical policy reflected the half-hearted development as the colonizer still defended their prosperity in the name of developing others. The ordinance in both schooling and teacher selection area shows the mitigation of cultural development within the native.

The situation above occurred for centuries and nothing significantly changed. Psychologically, identity of beliefs gradually constructed along with the repetition of colonial action in generation to the next generations. Mannoni brings behavioral perspective in examining colonial situation. There are two main ideas why colonial situation happens. First, colonial enterprises recruit actors to do what they expected within economic and political development.⁵⁶ Second, both colonizers and colonized people learned from the social pattern in their lives to be the independent and to be the dependent respectively.⁵⁷ The ideas above imply that colonizers learned to colonize from socio-economic superstructure and are facilitated by the structure to do so. On the other hand, colonized people learned from the structure to be dependent and unable to escape from the situation. In this context, education that was conducted by Islamic movement provided opportunity for native to learn and shift up from the colonized minds. Therefore, education in post ethical policy can be said as the resource of internal conflict within the colonized to reconstruct their new identity.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 298.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ As cited by Clignet (1971), 298.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 299.

In short, socio-economic situation and psychological conditioning are potential to create colonial situation if and only if they are supported by superstructure that enforce human being to involve in the expected situation. Then, superstructure can be driven by materialistic prior causes and or psychological accustoming. The created situations can establish or perpetuate certain processes in social systems, including education. Therefore, through the dynamics after the launching of ethical policy, Islamic education in a more modern mode and in conducted both legally and illegally had introduced the colonizer sides' way of thinking as well as strengthening the position of Islamic community with its local attributes. The two previously mentioned elements in Islamic education set up the identity of society with theology of liberation.

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